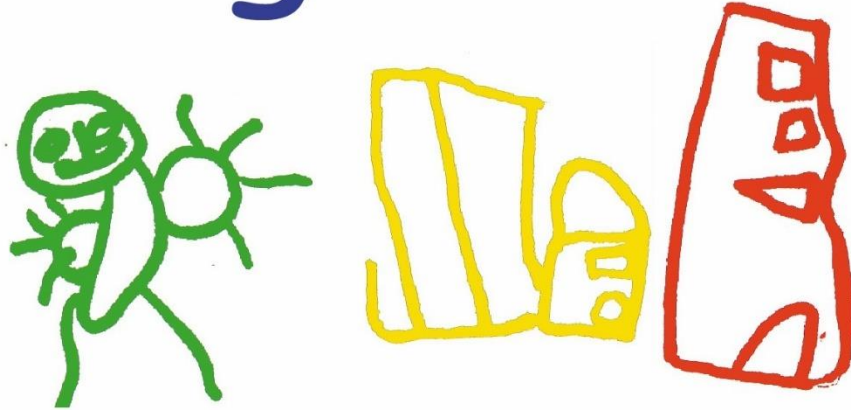


Information Handbook

Ridgehaven



Preschool

Respect Persistence Success

We provide a safe and caring learning environment for all Preschool children and their families.

We look forward to sharing this experience with you and your child.

Address Ridgehaven Preschool
479 Milne Road
Ridgehaven SA 5097

Phone 8265 3140

Email Ridgehaven.Preschool928@schools.sa.edu.au

Welcome to Ridgehaven Preschool

Our Philosophy

At Ridgehaven Preschool we provide our community of learners with a safe, nurturing and inclusive environment which fosters each child's sense of identity, agency, curiosity and wonder to shape lifelong learners.

We believe families are a child's first and most influential educators.

Therefore we:

- Work in partnership with families to develop authentic, inclusive and respectful relationships.
- Encourage families to celebrate and share their culture and values with us. These are embraced and reflected within our program, displays and interactions with children, families and wider community.
- Value the diverse strengths, skills and interests of our families and encourage them to share this expertise with us to enrich our learning program.
- Invite families to be active influencers and participants in their child's learning journey, to share in decision making and goal setting.

We believe that each child is a unique, capable and powerful learner.

Therefore we:

- Build strong, reciprocal, respectful relationships by learning about each child's story – their strengths, motivations and aspirations
- Authentically listen to children's voice, interests and theories and support children to share their opinions, ideas, knowledge and experiences with educators and peers.
- Provide stimulating provocations that allow children to explore and extend their own thinking, theories and wonderings.
- Create a safe, secure environment that supports children to confidently explore, experiment, take risks and become leaders in their learning.

We believe that play is crucial to children's development and learning.

Therefore we:

- Provide an inquiry rich play-based program which is flexible, challenging, developmentally appropriate and fosters the development of positive lifelong learning dispositions.
- Provide extended periods of uninterrupted time to allow children to follow their sense of agency and immerse themselves in deep exploration and self-directed learning.
- Utilise our environment as the third teacher with intentionally designed learning spaces and provocations.
- Use our local Outdoor Learning Environments to foster appreciation and respect for nature and an understanding of the importance of sustainable practice.

What we offer

- **Playgroup** for 0-4 year olds - Friday 9:00-11:00am
- **Early Entry** for 3½ year olds with additional needs e.g. speech or developmental delays
- **Preschool** aged children are entitled to access 15 hours per week. This will be a combination of two full days and one half day (am/pm).
- 3 year old Aboriginal children are eligible to access 12 hours per week in their first preschool year (4 half days) and 15 hours in their second year.
- *Children are entitled to **four terms of Preschool** education prior to commencing reception.*

Our Preschool Program

Our program is emergent and informed by children's voice with an inquiry-based approach to learning, developing the children's connections and understanding of their world, with a focus on nature play and sustainability.

Our program is informed by critical reflection to ensure all children's developmental, social, emotional and wellbeing needs are met. Within our play-based curriculum, learning experiences are intentionally designed to develop skills for life and learning, while supporting children to have fun and to be successful.

Our curriculum follows the **Early Years Learning Framework – Belonging, Being and Becoming**.

Within this framework there are five Learning Outcomes:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators

We aim to encourage and further develop:

- A positive attitude to learning, risk taking and the ability to complete a task
- Self-confidence and self-help skills, resilience and consideration for others
- Decision making and problem-solving skills
- The ability to work with others while making independent contributions
- Pre-reading, literacy and numeracy skills

Attendance

Our preschool is staffed on attendance figures, so regular attendance is important to maintain staffing levels. Coming to preschool regularly is also in the best interest of your child and promotes good attendance habits for school. Please advise staff if your child will be absent.

Preschool Session Times

Group 1

Mondays and Wednesdays 9:00am – 3:00pm
& 3 hours on a Tuesday or Thursday (To be decided at enrolment)

Group 2

Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:00am – 3:00pm
& 3 hours on a Monday or Wednesday (To be decided at enrolment)

Transition to School Program is provided for children the term prior to commencing school at Ridgehaven School.

Arrival and Dismissal

Upon arrival at preschool, children will need to

- Hang up bag
- Place lunch box in lunch trolley
- Sign in
- Place drink bottle in container
- Place snack box in their tray
- Please remember to check your child's communication pocket regularly

Eating times and rolling snack time

We implement 'rolling snack times'. This means that we will eat fruit together at fruit time, and lunch together at lunch time, but children can snack throughout the day as needed.

This supports children with developing skills in becoming independent and listening to their bodies. There is a designated 'snack' table inside and outside where children can sit together and eat if they get hungry in between group eating times.

To help support children with this, we ask families to bring a lunch box containing lunch foods and a second snack box containing their fruit snack and additional snacks.

For children staying for a full day (9am - 3pm) lunch boxes can be placed in the trolley baskets. An additional snack box may be kept in your child's drawer containing a fruit snack and additional snacks.

For children staying for a half day (morning 9am – 12pm) a snack box may be kept in your child's drawer containing a fruit snack and additional snacks.

For children staying for a half day (afternoon 12pm – 3pm) lunch boxes can be placed in the trolley baskets. An additional snack box may be kept in your child's drawer.

Please send a healthy snack e.g. fruits or vegetables for each fruit time and a named **water** bottle. As our centre has a **Healthy Food Policy** we ask parents to send suitable snacks, preferably fruit, alternatively cheese, dry biscuits, sandwiches, dry fruit and **NO NUT PRODUCTS** due to some children who suffer **ANAPHYLAXIS** (highly allergic reaction to nut products). Please refer to the Healthy Food Policy.

Drop off and pickup routines

Families are welcome to come in with children in the morning and engage in an activity together before saying goodbye. At the end of each session we ask parents/caregivers to wait under the verandah until children are farewelled by a staff member.

If someone other than a parent is collecting your child, please advise staff. Only authorised persons nominated on the Collect Authorisation form (completed at enrolment) are able to collect children. Identification is required if an unknown person comes to collect a child. When custody orders exist, staff must be notified. Orders need to be sighted and recorded by staff. Please phone the preschool if you are running late so staff can reassure your child while others are leaving.

Emergency Contact Information

On enrolment we require parents to nominate at least two adults who have the delegated authority to be contacted in an emergency if we are unable to contact either parent. If these contact people, numbers or any other enrolment information changes, please advise staff as soon as possible.

What to bring...

WOW – Wipe Out Waste - At our preschool we practise reducing landfill and recycling. Please help us to reduce landfill by providing named, reusable containers for snacks and lunch.

- A named bag to encourage children to be organised, responsible and independent with their belongings
- A named lunch box and snack box
- A named water bottle – Puratap water is available at all times for refills
- A named SunSmart hat - broad brimmed (cord removed) or legionnaires to protect ears & back of neck.
- Sun safe clothing – shoulders must be covered (no singlets or strappy dresses)
- Appropriate footwear for running and climbing (no thongs) – **shoes that children can independently put on and remove.**
- A change of clothes including underwear (a couple of sets)
- **We discourage children from bringing small or precious toys which may be lost or damaged.** We encourage the children to be observant and welcome items from nature or any object which may pertain to our program.

Helpful Hints for Settling Children into Preschool

- Prepare your child by explaining that you will be leaving soon, and will be back at pickup time.
- If your child is distressed, we encourage you to hand over to an educator. At this time, we ask that you remind them you will be back soon and say goodbye – children generally do not remain upset for very long and quickly become engaged in play.
- If educators cannot settle your child, rest assured that we will ring you. Feel free to give us a call to check in afterwards.

Communication

Please watch for our preschool newsletters, overviews and term calendars which will be sent home regularly informing you of upcoming events. A separate notice will be sent home for any excursions, incursions, performances etc. which will require your signature.

These notes will be in your child's **Communication Pocket. Please check this pocket regularly.** Information will also be sent home via Seesaw App (see information and permission slip). We encourage families to follow the Ridgehaven Primary School Facebook page as updates are often posted here.

Each child has a tray for their belongings or any work they may wish to take home.

Messy Play

Please dress your children appropriately, as sometimes preschool can get a bit messy. We provide painting smocks, however when children are actively involved in explorations with paint, water, clay and sand, it is almost inevitable that some of those materials will end up on their clothes.

The sand pit and water play are a popular play choice all year round. While children are able to remove shoes and socks, clothes frequently end up wet and sandy. The “mess” happens in the context of some wonderful cooperative, risk taking and challenging learning experiences. Sometimes children are hesitant to participate in some activities, particularly messy activities, being conscious of getting their clothes dirty, wet or sandy. Please send your child to preschool in clothes suitable for messy play.

Library borrowing

We regularly visit the school's library for children to share in reading experiences. Children can borrow a book from the library to take home for the week.

Your child's start date

Children will be eligible to start at the beginning of the year (term 1) or mid-year (term 3) determined by date of birth.

Please speak to a staff member to clarify your child's starting date.

- Children who turn 4 on or before 30 April are eligible to commence preschool at the beginning of the school year (term 1)
- Children who turn 4 between 1 May and 31 October are eligible to commence preschool mid-year (term 3)
- Children who turn 4 between 1 November and 30 April are eligible to commence preschool at the beginning of the school year (term 1)

Materials and Service Fees

The Government provides an operating grant for Preschools. However, parents' financial contributions are needed so the centre can provide a stimulating and enjoyable learning program. **Materials and Service Fees are \$110.00 per term.**

Parents will receive an account for the full year. **The school office is very happy to make arrangements for you to pay in instalments.** Small regular payments are always welcome.

Payments can be made at the school front office or over the phone between 8:30am and 3:30pm.

Payments can also be made via the QKR app.

School Governing Council and Parent Fundraising Committee

The School Governing Council is the parent decision making body within the school. The council consists of preschool and school parents, staff and leadership.

Parent Fundraising Committee is a group which fundraises for the school.

Preschool parents are encouraged and welcome to become involved in any of these groups.

Health and Developmental Services

Throughout the year we provide the following opportunities for your child. You will be advised of these available services via letter.

- Health Checks
- Grow up smiling (GUS) Dental checks
- Podiatrist

If you have any concerns about your child's development please talk to our friendly educators as we may be able to contact other Department services on your behalf, such as speech pathologists or disability coordinators.

Statement of Learning

When your child leaves preschool to start school, you will receive a Summative Report, which is a summary of your child's development and distance travelled during his/her time at preschool. A copy of this report is given to the Reception teacher with parent's permission. The summative report is developed to help families, children and educators in both the preschool and school setting work together to support children's learning and development.

Transition to School

Throughout your child's preschool year, children will be regularly involved in school events such as assemblies, special events and buddy class. We provide ongoing opportunities for children to become familiar with classroom spaces, teachers, students, leadership and the school environment, ensuring a happy transition from preschool to school.

One term prior to commencing Reception at Ridgehaven School, children participate in our **formal Transition Program**. They will have the opportunity to visit the Reception classrooms for extended periods of time. Parents will be informed of the date Transition commences and a meeting with Leadership will be arranged at the beginning of the transition period.

Pre-entry to Preschool

The **Pre-entry** program is in term 4 before children start their preschool year.

Our Pre-entry program assists children to develop their confidence within our preschool environment. **Please see preschool staff for more details.**

Playgroup

Playgroup meets on a regular weekly basis and caters for children from birth to preschool age. Our playgroup is run by a staff member and is held on **Fridays from 9:00am to 11:00am** (except for the last week of each term)

Our playgroup offers a variety of activities suitable for younger children including outdoor nature play and indoor construction, craft, painting, playdough, puzzles, games etc.

Playgroup is a great opportunity for parents and children to meet and have fun together while children learn to socialise outside of the home environment.

Playgroup contribution is **\$20** for **first child** and **\$10** per every other child per term.

Payment can be made through Playgroup Leaders or through the **QKR app**.

Volunteer Training

Volunteer training is only required for excursions. All excursion volunteers must have the necessary screening checks and attend a training session. See school front office for registration and relevant paperwork. Refer to Volunteer Management Policy for more details.

Parent Involvement

We believe that volunteers can make a significant contribution to our preschool community and supporting teachers in the teaching and learning program by giving their time and sharing their skills and expertise with others. Volunteers may have a wide range of interests and abilities that complement preschool programs, thus providing a wider range of interactions and experiences for our children.

We encourage your involvement in our Preschool program. You are always welcome to stay and spend time with your child, and other children, perhaps reading a story, making a junk construction or building with blocks – whatever is your thing! Perhaps you have a specific skill to share? i.e. cooking, computers, gardening, music and so on. Please talk with a staff member if you would like to register your interest.

We also rely on parents' help to assist with the efficient running of our centre and keeping it attractive and safe for our children. It is an expectation that, in fairness to everyone, each family will take responsibility for one load of washing (the smocks and rugs – **NO IRONING NECESSARY!**) at least once in their child's year at Preschool.

There are also other ways you could contribute towards the general running of the Preschool, such as:

- Assisting with gardening (e.g. watering, planting, incidental weeding)
- Taking small jobs home to do (e.g. preparing teaching materials/resources)
- Naming or organising new stock
- End of term clean up
- Cleaning of jigsaw puzzles / resource kits

We look forward to you volunteering your help, and making a small contribution to keeping Ridgehaven Preschool an attractive centre for all our families.

Immunisation History Statement

Following changes to the South Australian Public Health Act 2011 (the Act), from **7 August 2020**, children will not be able to enrol in or attend early childhood services unless all immunisation requirements are met.

The Act requires:

- An early childhood service must not enrol a child if all immunisation requirements are not met.
- A child cannot attend, or continue to attend, an early childhood service if all immunisation requirements are not met.
- Early childhood services must keep a current copy of an approved immunisation record for each child enrolled in, or attending that service.
- Approved immunisation records must be supplied by parents/guardians to the early childhood service at specified times.

These changes have been introduced to ensure a rapid response in the event of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease.

There are some approved exemptions. Parents and guardians should speak with their medical practitioner about whether exemptions to being vaccinated are considered valid.

For more information:

- SA Health immunisation information: www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/immunisation
- Australian Immunisation Register general enquiries line: 1800 653 809
- Recording immunisation details – Department of Education

Illness and Accidents

If your child is seriously injured or becomes ill during the day we will immediately contact you and/or obtain medical treatment. It is therefore, most important that we have your current address and telephone number, as well as emergency contact details. We provide written notification to parents for any first aid administered at preschool and will contact you in the event of a head bump/injury as soon as possible.

To prevent the spread of infectious diseases, please inform us as soon as possible if your child contracts an infectious disease such as measles, mumps etc. Please keep your child at home if he/she is ill to prevent spread of infection around the Preschool and School.

If your child is ill please notify us via phone on 8265 3140 or Seesaw.

Please contact us if your child has any of the following conditions: Allergies requiring medication, Bee Sting allergy, Epilepsy, Asthma or the need for regular medication or precautions which must be taken during school hours. We require a completed emergency action plan for treatment of the above conditions updated yearly by a Doctor.