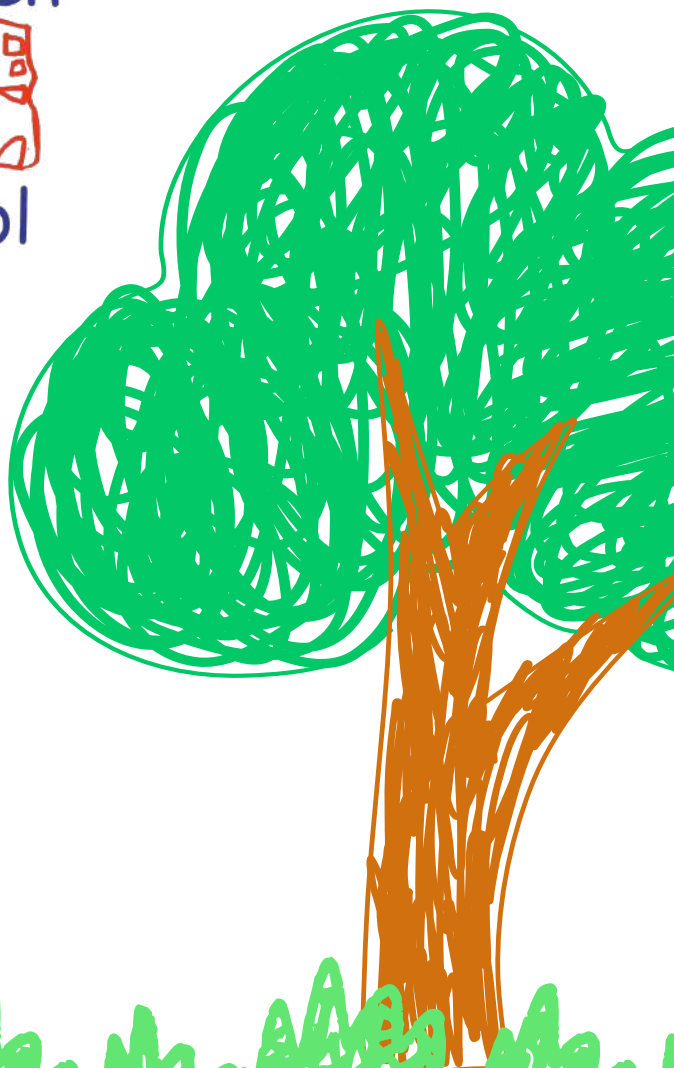
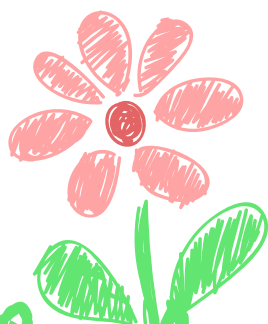
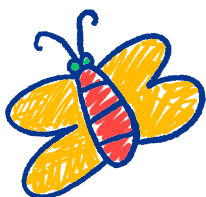


Parent Handbook

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.

Ridgehaven Preschool Staff

Our preschool team is committed to creating a safe, nurturing and engaging environment where every child feels valued and supported. The team includes our Principal, Deputy Principal, Preschool Teachers and Co-Educators, who work collaboratively to foster children's learning, wellbeing and sense of belonging.

The benefit of a school based preschool, is that we work together as a whole school community. Our Principal and Deputy Principal regularly connect with preschool children through visits, lunch duties and school events. These interactions help build positive relationships and ensure children feel confident and connected as they transition through their educational journey at Ridgehaven Primary School.



Laura Tambe
Principal, Ridgehaven Primary



Martin Woodcock
Deputy Principal, Ridgehaven Primary
Overseeing preschool



Ming Zhou
Preschool Teacher



Claire Merrett
Preschool Teacher



Renae Ladhams
Co-educator



Claire Robertson-Holland
Co-educator



Martina Pike
Co-educator

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.

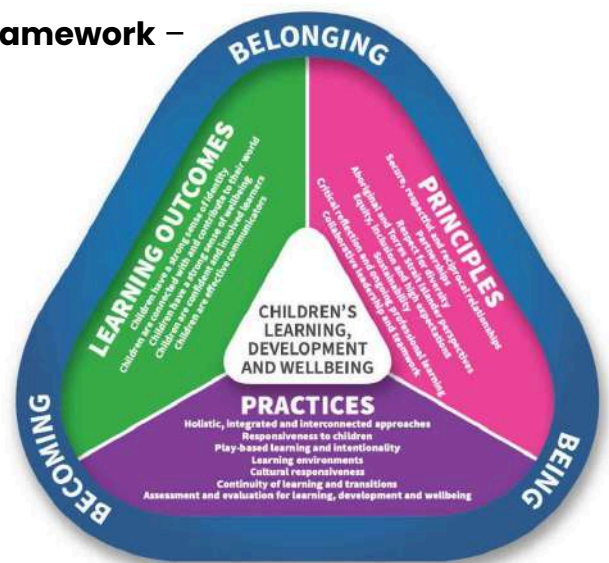
Our curriculum follows the **Early Years Learning Framework – Belonging, Being and Becoming**.

Within this framework there are five Learning Outcomes:

1. **Children have a strong sense of identity**
2. **Children are connected with and contribute to their world**
3. **Children have a strong sense of wellbeing**
4. **Children are confident and involved learners**
5. **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



Eligibility

Children who turn 4 years old:

- before May 1 are eligible to commence preschool on the first day of term 1 in that year.
- between May 1 and 31 October are eligible to either commence school in the term 3 mid-year intake of the same year or the first day of term 1 of the following year.
- after 31 October will be eligible to commence preschool on the first day of term one the following year.

Session days and times

Children are eligible to access 15 hours of preschool per week.

Group 1

Mondays and Wednesdays 9:00am – 3:00pm

& 3 hours on a Tuesday or Thursday morning or afternoon (decided at enrolment)

Group 2

Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:00am – 3:00pm

& 3 hours on a Monday or Wednesday morning or afternoon (decided at enrolment)

Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) is available for preschoolers.

Please contact OSHC directly once your child is enrolled, if you wish to access this service.

Whole school activities

We love being a part of the Ridgehaven School community and participate in many whole school activities, including:

- Sports Day
- Book Week
- Reconciliation Week
- Team Times (Assemblies)
- Junior Primary Events
- Visiting the library and gym

Many other school events throughout the year.



What to bring to preschool

- A named bag to encourage children to be organised, responsible and independent with their belongings.
- A named lunch box and snack box (instead of plastic bags)
- 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.
- At least 2 changes of clothes including underwear- named.
- During wet weather, we especially recommend gum boots or a spare set of old shoes and rain jackets- all named.
- 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.

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

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.



Arrival routine

Upon arrival at preschool, children will need to:

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



Drop off and pick up 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.

Settling into preschool

Some helpful hints for settling your child 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. While your child transitions, feel free to give us a call to check in on them later in the day.

Eating times

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 or dry fruit.

NO NUT PRODUCTS due to some children who suffer ANAPHYLAXIS (highly allergic reaction to nut products). Please refer to the Healthy Food Policy for further information.



Immunisation History

When enrolling a child in a South Australian preschool, parents or carers must provide a current Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement showing that the child is:

- Up to date with their vaccinations for their age; or
- On an approved catch-up schedule; or
- Covered by an approved medical exemption

Please log in to MyGov to access these details and provide a copy to the preschool upon enrolment and again when your child has their 4 year old vaccinations.

Messy Play

Please dress your children appropriately, as sometimes preschool can get messy! We provide painting smocks, however when children are actively involved in explorations with paint, water, mud 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.

Preschool Clothing

EduThreads provides us with comfortable and colourful optional preschool uniform, which you may choose to purchase for your child. We have t-shirts, long tops, jumpers and hats available in many sizes and colours.

Please follow the link below if you wish to purchase any clothing for your child. <https://eduthreads.com.au> and type in Ridgehaven Preschool.



Preschool
clothing now
available online!
www.eduthreads.com.au

eduTHREADS
EASY ORDERING · SUPER FAST DELIVERY · FAST AND EASY EXCHANGE
So you can get on with the important things.

Illness or 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.

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 via phone or Seesaw.



Health and Development services

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

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

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

School transition

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 Primary 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.

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. We encourage your involvement in our Preschool program.

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.

There are also other ways you could contribute towards the general running of the Preschool, such as: gardening (e.g. watering, planting, incidental weeding), taking small jobs home to do (e.g. laminating/creating resources), naming or organising new stock, end of term clean up.

Sun Safety

When the UV reaches over 3, children need to wear a wide brimmed hat and sunscreen.

During terms 1 and 4, please ensure your child has sunscreen applied before they arrive at preschool.

During terms 2 and 3, we will monitor the UV levels and apply sunscreen as needed.

If your child requires a specific sunscreen, please provide a new and named sunscreen each term, which will remain at preschool.

Cooking

We regularly cook with the children, who love making the food and eating it! Please advise us if your child has any food allergies or religious reasons for avoiding certain foods.

Birthdays

We enjoy celebrating each child's birthday and give out a certificate and sticker and sing Happy Birthday, on the preschool day closest to their birthday.

Due to Department for Education Policy we are unable to give out lollies or special foods on your child's birthday.

If you wish to celebrate it, you're welcome to bring in stickers or bubbles to give out.

