

Statement of Philosophy

Kenmore West Kindergarten (KWK) is an incredibly special and unique learning environment for young children and their families.

Our kindergarten is homely, safe and welcoming with a happy and relaxed atmosphere. We have a beautiful, engaging and natural environment, rich in biodiversity and opportunities for children to explore, investigate and wonder.

Our professional educators implement an innovative child orientated program that empowers children as independent, creative, confident and resilient thinkers and learners.

It is these qualities and the following values, beliefs and understandings that make Kenmore West Kindergarten the special place it is.

Children's words that describe KWK -

It teaches us, it takes care of us, the teachers are interesting, kindy is so fun and interesting, we get to try all new things, there are lots of animals to explore, all the things we can play with, the paints

Our values, beliefs and understandings of:

Children

- We believe that children have rights.
- We believe that all children are unique, competent and capable individuals with a wealth of knowledge, ideas and experiences.
- We believe that children have an intrinsic desire to seek meaning of their world. In our supportive learning community there are opportunities for children to question, inquire, co-construct, take risks, create, imagine, explore, investigate, experiment, problem solve and communicate.
- We believe that when children participate as active citizens, negotiate their learning and contribute to curriculum decision making processes they will develop a lifelong love and a sense of ownership of their learning.
- We embrace each child's individual needs, strengths, interests and culture and are passionate about providing an environment which fosters each child's social, emotional, cognitive, creative, spiritual and physical development through expression in the many languages.
- It is imperative children have opportunities to grow in confidence and resilience through taking risks and testing their capabilities in a safe and supportive environment.

Words used by parents to describe their image of children at KWK –

Are loved and respected at KWK; Supported through play, exploration and learning; children and teachers are partners in leaning and playing; precious; all children are greeted with genuine affection; accepted; happy; relaxed; inquisitive; creative; encouraged; confident; self belief; joyful; content; resilient; respect; take chances; love; friendship; fun; independent learners; leaders; appreciated as individuals; in the moment; inspiring; unique; engaged.

Families

- We believe that parents are partners in their children's learning. Educators at KWK draw upon the parents' understanding, wisdom and knowledge of their child and work together to support their child's learning and development.
- We actively encourage parents and other family members to be collaborators and co-learners within the learning community.
- We believe every family brings an incredibly rich and diverse set of beliefs, talents, and skills.
- Every family must feel valued and have a sense of belonging within the community.

Words used by parents to describe their image of families at KWK –

Are vital to a great community; encouraged to be involved; consulted; valued; friendly; supportive; united, caring; accepting; approachable; welcoming; confident; connected; home to children; are not just mum and dad; treated as a friend as well as respected as parents; always heard; love; strength; great communication emails sent with useful and well grounded information, research and advice.



Community

- KWK is an inclusive community.
- We strive to develop strong and equitable relationships amongst all members of our community.
- Communication is the key to a healthy and positive learning environment and community.
- We foster a strong sense of social justice and understanding of human rights, local and global issues.
- KWK values and celebrates diversity. We are committed to ensuring all members of our community feel a sense of belonging regardless of their social or cultural background, their physical or linguistic needs or their unique learning style.
- We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which KWK resides, the people of the Yuggera and Turrbal nations and honour their elders, past and present.
- Our program is rich in opportunities to explore and connect with our local community, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander communities.

Words used by parents to describe their image of community at KWK –

Close knit; team spirit; appreciating cultural differences between families; belonging; creates safe learning for everyone; commitment; differences; inclusive; supportive; connected; diverse, rich in learning opportunities; involved; helps to shape who we are and who we can become.

Educators/Leadership

- Our role as Early Childhood educators is as a co-constructor of knowledge. Through collaboration with all members of the learning community, we aim to provide an environment, which is supportive, inspiring, engaging and rich in meaningful learning experiences.
- We believe in building strong, positive and respectful relationships with all members of the community.
- It is imperative that educators listen to, question and challenge every child.
- We aim to develop a deep understanding of every child and to facilitate and guide their learning and development through careful observation, evaluation, assessment, reflection and informed Early Childhood research.
- We have a responsibility as a documenter of children's learning...telling their stories, making learning visible.
- Educators have a responsibility to advocate for Early Childhood Education and rights of the child.
- Educators engage in open, honest communication, maintain relationships based on respect and equity, share and value ideas, skills, strengths and contributions and challenge one another in a positive and supportive manner.
- We are committed to ongoing Professional Development and regular reflection and evaluation of our teaching practices.
- We ensure children's rights in terms of child protection and safety are met at all times.
- Educators along with the management committee demonstrate responsibility for implementing the National Quality Standard and other legislative requirements.
- It is the role of educators to work in partnerships with the management committee to promote a dynamic, professional and energetic organisational culture with a commitment to continuously improve the service in order to maintain clear directions and values towards quality education for our children and families.
- At KWK we provide strong leadership to ensure confidentiality, the continuity of high quality educators and effective administration systems eg: records, policies, procedures are maintained and reviewed regularly to ensure the efficient operation of our service.

Words used by parents to describe their image of Educators at KWK –

Visionary; Allow children to have voice; true practitioners of the Early Childhood philosophy; holistic, experience, confident and competent leaders; model acceptance, peace and harmony; see the 'whole' child; lead by positive examples; supportive; engaged; valued; caring; fun loving; inclusive; professional; respectful; down to earth; happy; forward thinking; thoughtful; hard workers; energetic; enthusiastic; positive; flexible; patient; inspiring; welcoming; warm; wonderful; non judgmental; amazing; thoughtful; loving; nurturing; great inspiring leaders who obviously look for improving quality care and service for our children everyday.

Teaching and Learning

- We strongly believe in implementing an integrated, negotiated and emergent curriculum – a democratic environment where all members of the community – children, teachers and parents have the opportunity to be part of curriculum decision-making processes.

Teaching and Learning (cont.)

- We value peer mentoring to promote the children's co-construction of knowledge and to create a true sense of community.
- Clear expectations and guidelines for behaviour management are developed and discussed with children, parents and teachers.
- Documentation is an essential tool for teachers and children to re-visit, reflect and plan for future experiences.
- Exploration of feelings, emotions, friendships and social justice issues are central in our program.
- We believe in a flexible learning approach where children are given the time and space to engage in critical inquiry, participate as reflective problem solvers, test theories and entertain possibilities.
- The Arts are an essential part of children's educational experiences and an integral component of the curriculum at KWK. Offering a strong Arts program for young children stems from our understanding that The Arts are an invaluable means for children to explore and make sense of their world.
- Our program is rich with meaningful opportunities and experiences for the children to explore language, literacy and numeracy learning.
- We promote physical activity and healthy risk taking by providing challenges to develop agility, strength, flexibility, control, balance, coordination, confidence, independence and resilience.
- We support children's developing ability to take responsibility for their own health and physical well being by modeling healthy eating and nutrition practices, personal hygiene practices, independence and self help skills, rest and relaxation and safe play.
- Using a range of yoga and relaxation techniques, the curriculum at KWK fosters a strong sense of self-awareness.
- We recognise the importance for children to develop knowledge and skills with information and communication technologies and are committed to using a range of technologies to assist in inquiry based learning, explore and investigate ideas, solve problems, create and work in collaboration with other children and adults.
- KWK is working with children, families and the community to implement C&K's Reconciliation Action Plan and develop, with children, a deeper understanding of Australian Indigenous culture.

Words used by parents to describe their image of teaching and learning at KWK –

Emergent; exploration through play; happens in all directions; sharing the importance of artistic expression; democratic; resourceful; recognising different learning styles; choices about learning; flexible; respect for the children; fun; excellent teaching quality; innovative; interactive; creative; open ended; challenging; play-based; children's views, questions, understandings included; supporting children's curiosity; enabling, encouraging self mastery; child led; self reflection taught.

Environment

- We recognise the environment as a powerful resource for teachers to use to support the learning of young children.
- We believe in creating an environment that is aesthetically rich, with attention given to maintaining high quality resources and materials (built and natural) that foster self-expression, self and world discovery, inquiry learning and communication.
- We strive to ensure our environment is interesting, educational and full of discovery by providing a wide range of resources, including natural and recycled materials, which have enormous creative possibilities and encourage the desire to pose questions, investigate and discover.
- Education for Sustainability is an integral component of the KWK culture and curriculum. Children's intrinsic love and appreciation for our natural environment is fostered. There are ample opportunities for children to engage and interact in our natural environment. There are opportunities for children to engage in learning experiences that empower them as active citizens for a sustainable future.

Words used by parents to describe their image of our environment at KWK –

Allow children to get dirty and explore; open-ended; as free as possible; enable children to feel free; cherished; embracing nature; Indigenous; trees; vege garden; chooks; respect for the environment; enables independence; supports risk-taking; exploration; central to learning; rich; diverse; safe place to learn and grow; educational; important; comfortable; adventurous; natural; lots of open ended spaces which are well maintained and organised.

The KWK philosophy is dynamic. Through a process of self-review and critical reflection, the KWK philosophy and culture continues to grow and evolve; ensuring our unique qualities are maintained and that optimal learning outcomes for all children are achieved.

(Last Updated May 2019)