Collaboration
Commitment
Community
Hurlingham
preschool

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## A Message from the Committee of Management

Welcome to Hurlingham Preschool. We are proud to be a community-run preschool, where families, educators, children and committee work together to create a warm, joyful and supportive environment for learning and belonging.

At Hurlingham, children are at the heart of every decision we make. Our play-based programs are designed to spark curiosity, build confidence, and nurture children's natural sense of wonder. We are fortunate to have a dedicated, highly skilled team of teachers and educators who bring expertise, warmth, and genuine care to their work every day.

As a community preschool, the partnership between home and kinder is incredibly important. Your involvement can make a meaningful difference, whether that's helping in the classroom, attending events and working bees, coordinating fundraising and joining the volunteer Committee of Management.

By joining the Committee, families **contribute directly** to the governance and sustainability of Hurlingham, strengthen community connections, and help shape the learning environment for your own children. Our Committee is made up of dedicated parent volunteers who takes up a specific role to guide and support the smooth running of Hurlingham Preschool. Each role contributes to the success of our kinder community, and your efforts are truly appreciated. Please visit: https://hurlinghampreschool.org.au/about/committee-of-management/

Our Class Reps play a vital role in strengthening the heart of Hurlingham's community. They help welcome new families, share updates, coordinate social catchups, and create opportunities for parents and carers to feel connected and included. Often, these small acts of communication are what make our kinder feel like a true village.

While government funding provides the foundation, it is the generosity of our community that allows us to go above and beyond for our children. Your voluntary contribution helps us provide high-quality learning materials, outdoor resources, and enrichment experiences beyond our basic funding.

Voluntary Contribution options are:

1. $500 donation per family ($400 voluntary donation & $100 maintenance levy)
2. $400 donation per family and attending working bees each term
3. $200 in Term 1 and $200 again in Term 3 and attending working bees each term

Every contribution large or small directly enriches the preschool experience for our children. These funds will provide opportunities and materials beyond our standard budget.

Your support, whether through time, energy, or contributions, helps us live our guiding values of Collaboration, Commitment, and Community. Together, we can continue to ensure Hurlingham is a place where every child thrives.

This handbook has been prepared to answer common questions and support a smooth and enjoyable start to your year at Hurlingham.

We look forward to an exciting year ahead!

With appreciation,
**Committee of Management, Hurlingham Preschool**

## A Message from the Director

Wominjeka and Welcome to Hurlingham Preschool. I am delighted to continue this journey with our children, families and community as Director, Nominated Supervisor, Educational Leader, and Teacher of our 4-year-old Koala Group.

I joined Hurlingham in 2015, after watching my own children grow, flourish, and discover who they were in the kindergarten environment. It was during that time that I saw the immense impact early childhood education can have not just in preparing children for school, but in shaping their sense of self, their curiosity, and their place in the world. More than twenty years later, my passion for this work continues to deepen. I believe that every day, we have the privilege to offer children the world, to give them life-changing knowledge and experiences. We relish the possibilities.

At Hurlingham, children are at the centre of everything we do. Our programs are thoughtfully designed to spark joy, encourage independence, and nurture each child's natural curiosity. Play is the foundation of learning here , play that invites children to explore, imagine, question, collaborate, and grow. We honour children as capable learners and active contributors to their own learning journey.

As Educational Leader, it is my role to inspire, support, and guide our teaching team along a path of continuous reflective practice. This is deeply collaborative work, grounded in research, conversation, and shared values. Together, we strive to ensure our practices are exemplary and that the learning environment we create is rich, intentional, and responsive to the needs of our children and families.

Family partnership is essential to our philosophy. We encourage open communication and value the insights you bring. When families and educators work together, children experience a greater sense of belonging and confidence and it is in this space that learning truly thrives.

I look forward to a year filled with discovery, connection, and joyful learning. Please know that my door is always open, we are here to support you and your child every step of the way.

Warmly,

**Dee**
Director, Nominated Supervisor, Educational Leader & Koala Group Teacher
Hurlingham Preschool

## A Warm Hello from our Operations Manager

Hello everyone,

I'm so pleased to be joining the Hurlingham Preschool community. My role as Operations Manager is to help keep things running smoothly behind the scenes, from enrolments and administration, to supporting our teachers and educators, liaising with families, and ensuring we remain aligned with our policies, regulations, and the needs of our community.

I'll be working closely with our staff team and Committee of Management to make sure our processes are clear, communication is consistent, and families feel supported and informed. Please feel free to reach out if you ever have questions, my door (or inbox!) is always open.

I'm very excited to be part of such a warm, community-focused preschool and look forward to getting to know each of you throughout the year.

Warmly,
**Sally**
Operations Manager

## A Message from our Accounts & Bookkeeper

Hello everyone, and a warm welcome to Hurlingham Preschool.

I'm Kat, the bookkeeper, and I take care of the financial side of things, making sure our accounts, budgeting, and day-to-day financial processes run smoothly behind the scenes.

I love supporting the committee and teaching teams so they can focus on what matters most: creating a wonderful learning environment for the children. Please feel free to reach out if you ever have questions about unfunded day fees, voluntary contributions, or anything finance related, I'm always happy to help.

Wishing you and your families a fantastic year ahead!

Kat

## Contact Information

Hurlingham Preschool
1 Palmer Avenue, Brighton East 3187
Email: manager@hurlighampreschool.org.au
Website: www.hurlighampreschool.org.au
Phone: 9553 8491

Director: Dee Millar
Operations and Enrolments Manager: Sally Anne Greenwood

President of Committee: Neale Sutton (Koala , 2026)
President@hurlinghampreschool.org.au

Bookkeeper: Kat Clarke
Accounts@hurlinghampreschool.org.au

**Director : Dee Millar**
✉ koala@hurlinghampreschool.org.au

**Operations Manager (including Enrolments)**
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0426 206 202

**Accounts** Kat Clark
✉ accounts@hurlinghampreschool.org.au

**President, Committee of Management**
President@hurlinghampreschool.org.au

**Teacher Contacts**

**Echidna Group (3-Year-Old Kinder – Mon & Wed)**
✉ echidna@hurlinghampreschool.org.au

**Bilby Group (3-Year-Old Kinder – Tue & Thu)**
✉ bilby@hurlinghampreschool.org.au

**Wombat Group (4-Year-Old Kinder – Mon & Wed)**
✉ wombat@hurlinghampreschool.org.au

**Koala Group (4-Year-Old Kinder – Tue & Thu)**
✉ koala@hurlinghampreschool.org.au

## Important Dates

Welcome Picnic: Sunday 1st February, 2pm – 4pm, Landcox Park

Term 1: Wednesday 28th Jan – Thursday 2nd April

Term 2: Monday, 20 April to Friday, 26 June

Term 3: Monday, 13 July to Friday, 18 September

Term 4: Monday, 5th October to Friday 18th December

Closed on public holidays, school term holidays, and designated set-up/clean-up days.
Dates align with the Victorian school term calendar.

## Hurlingham Preschool Profile

Hurlingham Preschool is a community-based, not-for-profit kindergarten, governed by a volunteer Committee of Management under the **Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012**. We are proud of our strong partnerships with families and our commitment to high-quality early childhood education.

Please visit our Hurlingham Rules of Association to find out more.

We operate as a **two-room centre**:

- 4-Year-Old Room - licensed for up to 27 children
- 3-Year-Old Room - licensed for up to 23 children

We offer both **3-Year-Old** and **4-Year-Old** Kindergarten programs, guided by the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) and delivered by qualified early childhood teachers and educators.
Find our more here: https://hurlinghampreschool.org.au/3-and-4yr-old-programs/
Our current program delivery includes:

- **3-Year-Old Kindergarten:** *15 hours of funded kindergarten per week*, supporting up to **46 children** annually
- **4-Year-Old Kindergarten:** *15 hours of funded kindergarten per week*, supporting up to **54 children** annually
- **Additional Program Hours:** We also offer an **extra 7.5 hours per week** for 4-Year-Old children, available via a low term fee, enhancing continuity of learning and supporting families requiring extended access. Please visit our Fee Policy found on our website: https://hurlinghampreschool.org.au/about/policies/

Together, our programs nurture children's curiosity, confidence, and sense of belonging, building strong foundations for school and lifelong learning.

## Our Philosophy

Our philosophy is visually expressed using the concept of a tree. From the foundation or roots of family life, cultural traditions and the experience of belonging to a community, Hurlingham nurtures every child's social, emotional and cognitive development by providing a safe, rich and engaging learning environment. Growth is guided by our values of inclusion, empathy, self-reliance, positivity, curiosity and communication. Hurlingham children form meaningful relationships with educators and contemporaries and are confident and ready to transition to school. We foster a strong sense of community and understanding of the role they can play in it, desire to learn and explore that will last a lifetime.

**Guiding principles:**

**Collaboration:** Our Committee, Educators, and Families work together to create a nurturing, fun and engaging environment where every child is supported to thrive, as an individual, a learner, a friend, and a valued member of the community.

**Commitment:** Our Committee, Educators, and Families are deeply committed to delivering high-quality early childhood education and care.

**Community:** Our Committee, Educators, and Families celebrate and respect the diversity within our preschool community. We actively draw on the skills, cultures and life experiences of our educators and families to strengthen every child's sense of identity, build belonging and connection to support foundations for a lifelong love of learning.

## Our Commitment to Child Safety

At Hurlingham Preschool, the safety and wellbeing of every child is our highest priority. We are committed to providing a child safe and child friendly environment where all children are respected, valued and listened to.

We uphold and embed the **11 Child Safe Standards** in all aspects of our practice.

We have **zero tolerance for child abuse**. We actively work to prevent, identify and respond to any risks, allegations, or concerns regarding child safety.

Our Commitment Includes:

- Preventing child abuse by identifying and reducing risks early.
- Following robust recruitment, screening and induction processes for all staff, contractors and volunteers.
- Providing ongoing training and supervision to ensure all adults can recognise, respond to and report child safety concerns.
- Actively listening to children and empowering them to participate in decisions that affect them.
- Promoting cultural safety and inclusion for:
    - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
    - Children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
    - Children with disability
    - Children and families of all identities and lived experiences
- Creating a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment for all children and families.

Please read our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy 2025 and feel free to come to us with any concerns at all for your child.

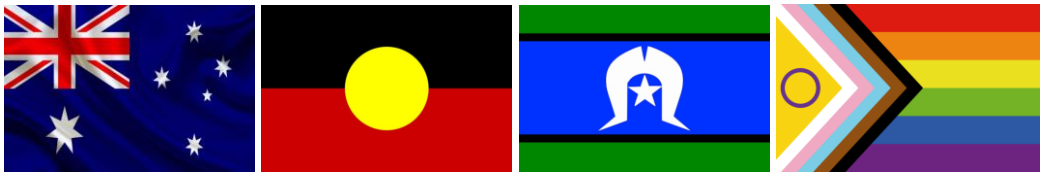
## Our Commitment to Reconciliation

We believe that early childhood is the time to nurture **respect, inclusion, and reconciliation**. Through our **Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)**, we thoughtfully embed First Nations perspectives of language, culture and histories into our daily teaching, learning, and preschool culture. Each session, committee meeting, and staff meeting begins with an **Acknowledgement of Country**, honouring the continuing connection to land, waterways, and community.

We value and continue to build **partnerships with local Aboriginal communities**. Together, we are committed to guiding children toward **cultural awareness, respect, and understanding,** creating a foundation for reconciliation now and into the future. To learn more, visit www.reconciliation.org.au/narragunnawli.

### Acknowledgement of Country

*We acknowledge that we meet and work on the land of the Bunurong people of the Kulin Nations as the traditional owners and custodians. Hurlingham Preschool has zero tolerance towards child abuse and is committed to establishing and maintaining child safe and child friendly environments.*



## A Message form our Three-Year-Old Teachers and Educators

We feel incredibly privileged to be part of your children's first steps into their kindergarten journey. The three-year-old year is a time of wonder, curiosity, connection, and growth, and it is our role to nurture each child with warmth, patience, and respect. Every day, we see children explore their world with joy, develop friendships, test new ideas, and begin to see themselves as capable, confident learners.

**Three-Year-Old Group Program**

We aim to offer an emergent program that embraces the EYLF & VEYLDF learning outcomes of Identity, Community, Wellbeing, Learning, and Communication. Based on discovery through play, our program is dynamic and responsive to the needs and abilities of each child.

The ideas we build upon stem from the children's own interests, allowing play to develop in depth and extend over time. Activities and learning experiences are provided to provoke thought and curiosity, while also encouraging growth in all areas of development: physical, social, fine and gross motor, cognitive, language, perceptual, and emotional.

Intentional teaching, along with community and parent-based learning, is also integrated into the program. The program is displayed on the notice board in the room for parents to read and is emailed on a fortnightly basis.

Our program focuses on all areas of a child's development, including fine motor, gross motor, intellectual, social, emotional wellbeing, communication/language, science, literacy, and numeracy. Children will be immersed in language and literacy experiences that will develop their communication skills, extend their vocabulary, and introduce early reading skills.

Our imaginative play spaces, equipped with open-ended props, encourage imaginative games where children create plans, stories, roles, and interactions. Through these play experiences, children's language and social abilities are fostered. They are given opportunities to cooperate, negotiate, share, take turns, and develop listening skills as they explore different ways of being, doing, and learning.

In our 3-year-old program, children are offered open-ended opportunities to explore ideas. Time is allowed for the development of these ideas to grow. Materials to extend these ideas are offered or made available upon request by the children. Individual objectives are planned for each child based on their specific needs, in consultation with their parents.

Cognitive tasks arise naturally in children's play. They match, sort, and classify objects, learn to recognise colours, shapes, and numbers, and practice informal maths and science concepts. Children also solve problems and predict outcomes. Cognitive skills are further demonstrated when children create play goals with others and use language as a tool to facilitate these goals. Many other aspects of play also require and foster cognitive skills.

Imaginative play is a crucial part of our program. It allows children to create goals and act out roles within them. Dramatic play helps children understand their experiences of the world, while developing social skills such as taking turns, creating group goals, solving conflicts, and enhancing language skills.

Language skills are developed when children listen to and discuss stories, act out dramatic roles, share their ideas in play, talk about items of interest, communicate their feelings, and attempt to draw or write their thoughts.

We provide various activities to help develop fine motor skills. Children engage in painting, pasting, drawing, using scissors, threading, manipulating puzzles and construction pieces, and playing with clay, dough, and small beads.

Gross motor skills are practised when children climb, roll, swing, dig, run, skip, hop, jump, throw, and practise ball and bean bag skills. They also develop balance on beams, push and pull trolleys, dance, and move in a variety of ways.

**Three-year-old session**
8:30 am - Welcome, sign-in, wash hands, outdoor play
9:30-10.30 am -Progressive morning tea
11-11:30 am- Tidy up, transition to the classroom
11:30 am - Group time
11:45 am - Indoor program
12:45 pm - Group time and Transition to lunchtime
12:45 pm - Lunch
1:15 pm - Pack away lunch, wash hands, rest transition
1:30 pm - Relaxation time
2:00 pm - Outdoor program
3:15 pm - Afternoon tea
3:45 pm - Prepare to go home, group time
4:00 pm - Home time
Note: The routine is flexible and guided by the children's needs, interests, and intentional teaching strategies.

## Is Your Child Ready for Kindergarten?

A child's educational journey begins in 3-year-old kindergarten, which plays a key role in determining the timing of their transition to primary school.

As each child's development is unique, it is essential to carefully consider both their social and emotional readiness when deciding the appropriate time for them to start kindergarten.

Children born between January and April are eligible to begin kindergarten either when they turn three or in the year they turn four. However, research and professional observation suggest that children who turn three between January and April may benefit from waiting until the year they turn four to commence their kindergarten experience. This additional time can support a more successful transition, allowing for further social and emotional growth. We strongly recommend that children be toilet trained prior to starting kindergarten, as this supports their independence and helps ease the transition to the learning environment.

For more detailed guidance on when to enroll your child, the Bayside City Council provides an excellent resource on their website regarding kindergarten enrolment timelines.

Here is a link for further information: - Bayside Kinder Readiness Page - Setting your child up for success.

Thank you for entrusting your children to us. We look forward to continuing to learn, laugh, create, and grow alongside them, and with you and throughout the year.

Warmly,
**Shona, Julia, Amy, Anna & Annique**
3-Year-Old Teaching Team

## 3-Year-Old Teaching Team

**Shona – Teacher, Echidna Group (3-Year-Old Program)**

Shona joined Hurlingham in 2019 in the 3yo kindergarten program. As a qualified Teacher, Shona has been working in the Early Childhood sector for over 15 years, and her teaching philosophy focuses on each child's individual developmental needs. As a teacher she aims to provide a holistic program that values the whole child within the context of their family, community and culture.

*"I look forward to teaching and guiding your children through their kindergarten experiences and watching them grow into confident and independent individuals."*

**Julia – Teacher, Bilby Group (3-Year-Old Program)**

Julia is a fully qualified and experienced teacher who has worked across both Early Learning Centres and Primary Schools. She has worked with us previously and is looking forward to being part of our teaching team once again.

"From the moment I walked into Hurlingham, I knew it was a truly special learning environment. I'm passionate about creating inspiring and engaging spaces where children can explore, discover, and grow. As a creative educator, I love building on each child's unique ideas, needs, and interests. My three children have been my greatest teachers, and I continue to learn from them every day."

**Amy – Educator, Echidna Group.**

Amy has been an Educator in Early Childhood since 1997. She grew up in the Bayside area attending Brighton Primary School & Brighton Secondary College. She still lives in Bayside and cherishes her community, the families, the culture and the history of the area. She remembers the care, understanding, humour and education her teachers gave her, and this drives her in her work with your children. At home she is an artist, specialising in photo realism portraiture. She also loves film and music of all kinds and shares these passions and talents in her teaching

**Annique – Educator, Bilby & Echidna Groups**
Annique brings four years of experience across Early Childhood settings and a strong commitment to play, creativity, and nurture.

*“I love planning meaningful and engaging experiences where children feel supported, confident, and free to be themselves.”*

**Anna:  Educator, 3 & 4-year-old program, Wombat Group & Bilby Group**

Anna is a qualified teacher who joined Hurlingham in 2025 as an Educator in the Echidna Program.

*“Hi! I’m Anna. I began my Early Years teaching journey in 2015, teaching mainly in Singapore before moving to Australia to further my education and experience. What I enjoy most is watching children grow, develop, and achieve new skills. In my spare time, I love attending craft workshops and exploring new places to eat.”*

## A Message from Our Four-Year-Old Teaching Team

The four-year-old year is a time of growing confidence, deeper friendships, and expanding curiosity. As children prepare for the important transition to school, our role is to nurture a holistic independence and our aim is to inspire young minds to develop a love of learning.

In our four-year-old program, children are active participants in shaping their learning. Their interests, questions, and evolving identities guide the projects and experiences we offer. We value their voices, encourage curiosity, and celebrate the moments where learning unfolds through play. Our curriculum is enriched with First Nations perspectives, sustainability, and strong community connections. We create environments that invite problem-solving, creativity, exploration, imagination, and joy, indoors and outdoors, across the whole day

We value collaborative learning where children and educators work together as interests and intentional teach merge to form an emergent curriculum that is vibrant and varied, taking a different path every year.

The teachers' approach is underpinned by considerable knowledge of early childhood development, educational philosophies, current research all woven together over years of experience in intentional teaching. We follow Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences which offers a diverse range of learning experiences to accommodate all children's individual interests and approaches to learning.

**Key Learning Experiences**

- **Mat Times -** Songs, storytelling, science explorations, shared thinking and discussions building empathy, understanding, communication, confidence and cooperation
- **Indoor Play -**Construction, visual arts, imaginative play, puzzles, early literacy and numeracy experiences, decision making, prewriting and prereading skills
- **Outdoor Play-** Gross motor challenges, digging and building, cubby-making, water and mud play, quieter nature-based spaces, gardening, composting
- **Transitions-** sense of agency, caring for materials, setting up and packing away, contributing to group outcomes, understanding the purpose of safety and rules
- **Mealtimes –** Social engagement, self-awareness, self-help, healthy choices, hygiene
- **Quiet Reflection -** Mindfulness, yoga, relaxation, breathing techniques, reading and reflection
- **Physical Education -** PMP and other structured and unstructured movement opportunities to build coordination, visual orientation and confident body awareness

Children engage with excursions out in the local community, visiting specialists, and contributions from parents. These broaden experience through exposure to the world and extend learning across STEM, social studies, arts (visual art, drama, music and movement), literacy, cooking, gardening, and cultural experiences.

Self-esteem and confidence building are priorities of the program. When children develop a positive view of themselves and their capabilities, they are then able to learn and develop to their maximum potential.

School readiness is a journey that unfolds gradually through play, relationships, and everyday experiences. Throughout the year, we support children to grow in:

- **Self-care** – dressing, toileting, managing belongings
- **Attention & Concentration** – sustaining focus, listening, and following routines
- **Physical Skills** – strength, stamina, coordination
- **Emotional Regulation** – resilience, flexible thinking, managing big feelings
- **Language & Communication** – expressing ideas confidently, participating in group discussions
- **Social Skills** – turn-taking, friendship building, problem-solving with peers

Our goal is for every child to leave Hurlingham seeing themselves as capable, confident learners ready for school and excited for the next chapter. We feel incredibly privileged to walk alongside your children and families during this meaningful year.

## Is your child ready for school?

“Readiness” is a term used to describe preparation for what comes next. The most significant educational outcome in preschool is that your child starts school ‘ready to learn’. Research indicates that pre-schoolers who attend high quality programs:

- Enter school with skills necessary for school success
- Show greater understanding of verbal and numerical concepts
- Are more socially competent and emotionally regulated
- Show the ability to stay with an activity longer
- Are more likely to make typical progress through the primary grades

Whilst many people think of academics (writing their name, counting to 10, knowing the colours) as the important skills, school readiness refers to a much broader range of skills. In addition to a solid grounding in academic basics, skills also include self-care, attention and concentration, physical capacity (having the endurance to sit upright for an entire school day), emotional regulation, language skills, play and social skills. Our role in preschool is to actively facilitate this preparation by ensuring that children regularly participate in activities designed to develop the appropriate skills required to help optimal learning from the moment they start school.

There is great long-term benefit in supporting children to develop at their own pace and if the teachers form a view, through careful observation and analysis, that your child may thrive if school entry is put on hold, they will discuss the possibility of a second year of kindergarten. The age difference of children entering school can be considerable and age is not a determinant in isolation. Being young in the cohort can play a part but there are far more important indicators based on social and emotional indicators. We ask you to trust our experience assessment of children’s developmental milestones and if we do approach you to consider this option, know that we are motivated to ensure the best outcomes for your child.

Warmly, Dee, Felicity, Beti, Izzy and Anna.

## 4-Year-Old Team

**Dee - Director, Nominated Supervisor, Educational Leader and Teacher, 4-year-old program, Koala Group**

Dee joined Hurlingham Preschool in 2015. Dee's passion for early childhood education grew out of watching her own children blossom in the kindergarten setting, embarking on her learning journey, which continues more than 20 years later. Dee believes, 'Each day you can offer students the world, to give them life changing knowledge and experiences. Relish the possibilities.' Dee enjoys working with families to ignite a love of learning in children that they can carry into school and beyond.

*"As the educational leader it is my role to inspire, motivate and guide our teaching team along a path of continuous improvement ensuring our knowledge and practice are exemplary. This is a collaborative endeavour involving research and reflection; to provide the best possible outcomes in the important work our educators do with the children and families of Hurlingham Preschool."*

**Felicity – Teacher, 4-year-old program, Wombat Group**

Felicity is an experienced early years educator having worked in both community kindergartens and Early Learning Centres.

"*When planning a kindergarten program for children, my philosophy and passion is based on play-based learning. Children learn through play. When playing, children are organising, constructing, manipulating, pretending, exploring, investigating, creating, interacting, imagining, negotiating, and making sense of their world and environment. Play base learning encourages children to learn through doing, through investigation and through inquiry, developing lifelong skills along the way. Children's learning needs to be relevant and meaningful to them. A rich play-based program will assist children develop the foundations for a life-long love for learning."*

**Beti – Teacher, 4-year-old Platypus Group & Educator, 4-year-old Wombat Group**

Beti is new to our teaching team this year, having just completed a Graduate Diploma in Early Childhood Teaching at Melbourne University. She has five years' experience working in early childhood settings, a Diploma in Auslan (Australian Sign Language) and, holds both a Bachelor and an Honours degree in Fine Arts.

"I love following children's interests and am passionate about play based learning, as I believe it is through play that children can engage in a wide range of learning experiences. I value children's agency, and I enjoy creating child led experiences that support their interests. What I love most about my role is seeing the world through children's eyes. They are naturally curious, creative, and full of wonder, and it's a joy to support them as they develop their confidence and a love for learning. I'm excited to join the Hurlingham Preschool community and look forward to meeting you all."

**Izzy- Educator, 4-year-old program, Koala Group**

Izzy returns to Hurlingham Kinder as an Educator and is excited to be working in the kinder she attended as an early learner, and enjoying being in such a lovely community! Izzy commenced her career as an educator in long-day childcare initially for 2 years and has transitioned fully into the sessional kinder environment.

*"I love being a part of children's development and being able to make learning a fun and enjoyable experience for them. In my free time I enjoy ceramics, painting and all things creative. "*

**Anna: Educator, 3 & 4-year-old program, Wombat Group & Bilby Group**

Anna is a qualified teacher who joined Hurlingham in 2025 as an Educator in the Echidna Program. *Hi! I'm Anna. I began my Early Years teaching journey in 2015, teaching mainly in Singapore before moving to Australia to further my education and experience. What I enjoy most is watching children grow, develop, and achieve new skills. In my spare time, I love attending craft workshops and exploring new places to eat."*

**Teacher and Educator Qualifications**

All early childhood services in Victoria must meet the qualification and staffing requirements set by the Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) under the National Quality Framework (NQF). This includes the formal assessment of overseas qualifications to ensure they are equivalent.

At Hurlingham Preschool, we abide by these requirements to ensure that every teacher and educator holds approved qualifications and that educator-to-child ratios are always maintained. This is an important part of meeting our legal obligations and providing a safe, high-quality learning environment.

## General Information

## The importance of 3- and 4-year-old group orientation

The orientation period which includes staggered hours and smaller groups, is vitally important in helping children to settle into kindergarten.

This is the time when routines are introduced in a smaller and less threatening group. Even if children have been to another program in the previous year, they must adjust to different routines and expectations. It is vital during this time that they can build relationships with their teachers and the small group ensures lots of individual time to engage and build a connection. T Orientation sessions are often also the time when children make their first connections with others. As the groups are kept smaller at first, it enables them to get to know others more easily without being overwhelmed.

Finally, as the shorter sessions are at a time when the weather is often very hot, it provides children the opportunity to participate in short bursts that are satisfying, rather than longer ones which may be tiring and create anxiety in those who are not yet comfortable leaving their parents for long periods.

Our aim is for the children to leave wanting more and be keen to return for the next session, rather than creating anxious children who are reluctant to come or who are not gaining as much from the program due to overtiredness. During these shorter sessions, the staff will observe your children in small groups and begin to write up observations for further individual planning. The children settle into kindergarten much more quickly when offered this gentle introduction to the program.

We know these shorter sessions can be an inconvenience for parents, but they are worthwhile in the long run. We appreciate your understanding and your help with ensuring your child has a happy start at kindergarten.

# Taking the time -

## the benefits of a slow transition into kindergarten.

*Written by Deanne Millar, Hurlingham Preschools Educational Leader*

Kindergartens have a long tradition of a gradual bridging from family to teacher, underpinned by a sound understanding of why this is necessary. We want you to feel confident that your child is receiving the best start possible by beginning their education with us here at Hurlingham Preschool.

Our transition program is based on both well-established and current research as to what best practice should be to ensure not just a positive start to kindergarten but, importantly, a positive influence on lifelong abilities to cope with times of stress. This guides our scheduling and the timing of our sessions as we follow recommendations for shorter sessions during transition, held in the morning, followed by time with family and calm afternoons.

We know that starting kindergarten will be stressful, but we also know that learning how to cope with stress is part of a child's healthy development and the goal is to minimise the level of stress while children are learning how to master it. The research tells us the key is the presence of a secure adult relationship that gives children reassurance and buffers the stress response.

For teachers to achieve this goal, separation from you requires a 'transfer of trust'. How best to affect this with minimal stress is a carefully considered approach to settling in or, 'getting into the habit' of attending kindergarten. It is recommended this should take at least two weeks.

Our Orientation Day begins the process, with this first day kept very short and at least one parent is present the whole time. We will spend time in discussion with you so your child can see and feel a relationship of the trust between us. A small group, of no more than 8, allows time for this relationship to develop and your child not to be overwhelmed or overly challenged to leave the security of your side and explore the new environment. It is a process of slowly and tactfully building a connection between home and a new situation and new people.
From then on, your child attends for brief periods on their own within a small group. Whilst they are with us we are nurturing and building a sense of belonging, children are engaging in self-chosen activities and gently guided through the routines of a kindergarten day. Once your child has attended a number of these short sessions, they are ready to move to a longer separation period and with the transfer of trust established to then come together as a whole group.

We consider our 4 year old group as a whole, to have had the benefit of experiencing positive transitions in their 3 year old program and, a greater emotional maturity to cope with transference of trust as well as a greater abstract understanding of separation and the passing of time. Transition is dealt with on an individual basis and if your child's personality dictates a slower, more parent supported approach then starting and settling in can be tailored to suit.

The mutual time of getting to know each other, or 'getting into the habit,' carries within the language the truth that this is a three-way partnership. Teachers and parents are the parties who decide how well the stage is set for your child to feel safe, secure and stress free, confident to build this new relationship and as we well know, getting to know each other in any relationship, takes time.

**Week 1**

- **Session 1**: Small group (max. 8) with a parent/guardian present. Children observe their family's connection with educators, supporting trust.
- **Session 2**: Small group session without parents. Children begin exploring with gentle guidance. Half group attendance for a morning or afternoon session

**Week 2**

- **Session 3**: Half group attendance for alternate morning or afternoon session
  **Session 4**: All group attendance for a morning session (1.30pm collection)

**Week 3** **Session 5:** Full sessions commence (with 1.30pm collection option ongoing)

We support smooth transitions through:

- **Consistent goodbye routines** – short, predictable farewells
- **Comfort items** – toys, blankets, family photos
- **Family input** – sharing routines, likes, and comfort strategies
- **Visual cues & songs** – daily timetables and familiar music
- **Belonging from day one** – each child has their own locker/cubby
- **Group connection** – games, songs, and name activities
- **Family reassurance** – updates in early weeks build parent confidence
- **Open communication** – families are encouraged to ask questions anytime

Our carefully planned two-week orientation program gives children a gradual, positive introduction to kinder. We use a **transfer of trust** approach, helping children move their sense of safety from family to educators by:

- Building warm, responsive relationships
- Creating predictable routines
- Supporting children to feel secure, confident, and connected

Some children will settle quickly and cope with the demands of a full days but, equally, some will benefit from a slower pathway. Educators work with families to tailor transitions to each child's needs and personality. The teachers strongly advocate for maintaining kindergarten as a positive experience and for this reason provide a 1.30pm collection time for any family wanting to support their child's slow start. This will remain an option throughout the year.

## Orientation Group Detailed Schedule 3 Year Olds

Your allocated session times for orientation will be emailed to you in the coming weeks.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ECHIDNA – 3 YEAR OLD PROGRAM | Week 1 | Monday, 26th Jan | Wednesday, 28th Jan |
| | | Australia Day holiday | Staff set up day |
| | | Monday, 2nd Feb | Wednesday, 4th Feb |
| | Week 2 | Parent/Child Orientation (1.5 hour sessions x 3) | Child only orientation (3 hour sessions x 2) |
| | | A1 9.00am – 10.30am | A2 + A3a 8.30am – 11.30am snack |
| | | A2 11.00am – 12.30pm | A1 + A3b 12.30pm – 3.30pm lunch |
| | | A3 a&b 1.30am - 3.00pm | |
| | | Monday, 9th Feb | Wednesday, 11th Feb |
| | | Child only orientation (3 hour sessions x 2) | Half day orientation (5 hour session x 1) |
| | Week 3 | A1 + A3b 8.30am – 11.30am snack | All children – 8.30am – 1.30pm Snack & lunch |
| | | A2 + A3a 12.30pm – 3.30pm lunch | |
| | Week 4 | Monday, 16th Feb | Wednesday, 18th Feb |
| | | Full sessions commence (1.30pm pick up option) | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| BILBY – 3 YEAR OLD PROGRAM | Week 1 | Tuesday, 27th Jan | Thursday, 29th Jan |
| | | Staff set up day | Parent/Child Orientation (1.5 hour sessions x 3) |
| | | | A1 9.00am – 10.30am |
| | | | A2 11.00am – 12.30pm |
| | | | A3 a&b 1.30pm - 3.00pm |
| | Week 2 | Tuesday, 3rd Feb | Thursday, 5th Feb |
| | | Child only orientation (3 hour sessions x 2) | Child only orientation (3 hours sessions x 2) |
| | | A2 + A3a 8.30am – 11.30am Snack | A1 + A3b 8.30am – 11.30am Snack |
| | | A1 + A3b 12.30pm – 3.30pm Lunch | A2 + A3a 12.30pm – 3.30pm |
| | Week 3 | Tuesday, 10th Feb | Thursday, 12th Feb |
| | | Half day orientation (5 hour session x 1) | Full sessions commence (1.30 pick up option) |
| | | All children: 8.30am – 1.30pm Snack & Lunch | |

## Orientation Group Detailed Schedule 4 Year Olds

Your allocated session times for orientation will be emailed to you in the coming weeks.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| WOMBAT – 4 YEAR OLD PROGRAM | Week 1 | Monday, 26th Jan | Wednesday, 28th Jan |
| | | Australia Day holiday | Staff set up day |
| | Week 2 | Monday, 2nd Feb | Wednesday, 4th Feb |
| | | Parent/Child Orientation (2 hour sessions x 3) | Half day orientation (5 hour session x 1) |
| | | A1 8.30am – 10.30am | All children : 8.30am – 1.30pm Snack & Lunch |
| | | A2 11.00am – 1.00pm | |
| | | A3 1.30am - 3.30pm | |
| | Week 3 | Monday, 9th Feb | Wednesday, 11th Feb |
| | | Full sessions commence (1.30 pick up option) | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| KOALA – 4 YEAR OLD PROGRAM | Week 1 | Tuesday, 27th Jan | Thursday, 29th Jan |
| | | Staff set up day | Parent/Child Orientation (2 hour sessions x 3) |
| | | | A1 8.30am – 10.30am |
| | | | A2 11.00am – 1.00pm |
| | | | A3 1.30pm - 3.30pm |
| | Week 2 | Tuesday, 3rd Feb | Thursday, 5th Feb |
| | | Half day orientation (5 hour session x 1) | Full sessions commence |
| | | All children: 8.30am – 1.30pm Snack & Lunch | (1.30pm pick up option) |
| | Week 3 | Tuesday, 10th Feb | Thursday, 11th Feb |
| | | Full sessions commence (1.30 pick up option) | |

## 2026 Kindergarten Timetable

| Group | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Wombat Group** (4YO) | 8:30am – 4:00pm (Funded) | | 8:30am – 4:00pm (Funded) | | 8:30am – 4:00pm (Optional, Fee Paying) |
| **Koala Group** (4YO) | | 8:30am – 4:00pm (Funded) | | 8:30am – 4:00pm (Funded) | 8:30am – 4:00pm (Optional, Fee Paying) |
| **Echidna Group** (3YO) | 8:30am – 4:00pm (Funded) | | 8:30am – 4:00pm (Funded) | | |
| **Bilby Group** (3YO) | | 8:30am – 4:00pm (Funded) | | 8:30am – 4:00pm (Funded) | |

**Funded Kindergarten**

Every child in Victoria is entitled to **15 hours of funded kindergarten per week** in both the **three-year-old and four-year-old program**. Hurlingham Preschool offers **government-funded places only**. If your child is enrolled in more than one kindergarten program (for example, an additional long day care kindergarten), you must nominate **one service** to receive the funding. To do this, each family is required to complete and sign a **Kindergarten Funding Declaration Form**.

**Optional Third Day of Kindergarten for 4 Year Olds**

Hurlingham Preschool offers an **optional third day of kindergarten**:

- **When**: Fridays (commencing 2026)
- **Who**: Available to four-year-old program children
- **Funding**: This day is **not government funded**. As a not-for-profit kindergarten, fees are charged to cover staffing and program costs.
- **Commitment**: To ensure consistency of staffing and program delivery, places are offered for the **full year**. Fees are invoiced on a **term-by-term basis**, payable in advance.

## Curriculum

At Hurlingham Preschool, our program is guided by research, best practice, and the National Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) in conjunction with the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF). We are committed to providing a nurturing and engaging environment where children feel safe, confident, and ready to learn.

Hurlingham's use of the **EYLF/VEYLDF** is consistent with ACECQA's approved frameworks under the NQF. Our emphasis on belonging, identity, wellbeing, learning, and communication mirrors the NQS expectations is represented in the five areas of learning outcomes:

1. Strong sense of identity
2. Connection with and contribution to their world
3. Strong sense of wellbeing
4. Confidence and involvement in learning
5. Effective communication

Our teaching is underpinned by

- Reflective practice
- Partnerships with families
- High expectations for every child
- Respectful relationships and responsive engagement
- Equity and diversity
- Assessment for learning and development
- Integrated teaching and learning approaches
- Partnerships with professionals

**Assessment and Rating**:
Every few years, Hurlingham undergoes an **Assessment and Rating visit** by the Department of Education (Victorian regulatory authority). The report and rating are published on the **ACECQA register** and visible to families on **StartingBlocks.gov.au**. Hurlingham's current rating is ***Exceeding.***

**Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)**. Our committee and staff review and update this regularly, ensuring progress towards higher quality in all 7 NQS areas.

**We celebrate**
Events that resonate with our community and generally include

- Easter
- Anzac Day
- Reconciliation Week
- Mothers Day & Special Persons Day
- Fathers Day & Special Persons Day
- Halloween
- AFL Football Day
- Christmas concert
- Significant Sporting Events
- Cultural events and festivals
- We encourage our families to share their celebrations with us through food, dress, music, and traditions.

**Excursions**

Our **Beyond the Gates** Program brings strong connections with our local community as we go for walks on Country within a 2km radius of our kindergarten. This can include:

- Exploring local parks
- Visiting the local schools of Gardenvale and St Finbar's Primary Schools
- Local shops
- Excursions further afield may take us on a bus trip or a tram ride to visit the local Library
- Bring your Bike Day - 4YO

**Service events**

Inviting visitors and educational programs into the kindergarten enrich our program and may include

- Nature Programs
- Body Safety Workshop
- Responsible Pet Ownership (Vic Gov't initiative)
- Road Safety Puppet Show (Vic Gov't initiative)
- Kid Crazy - Gardenvale Music Performance

## Communication

At Hurlingham, we value open, two-way communication between families and educators. By sharing information about your child's needs, interests, and progress, we can better support their learning and wellbeing.

Newsletter is sent via Mailchimp and shared by WhatsApp groups each term.

**Parent Teacher Communication**

- **Parent Helper** – Spend time with your child and observe their learning.
- **Quick Chats** – Brief conversations before/after sessions (longer appointments can be arranged).
- **Phone/Email** – Contact us anytime; educators will respond as soon as they can.
- **Appointments** – Confidential meetings available when needed.
- **Information Exchange Meetings** – Formal discussions in Term 2
- **Updates** – Check noticeboards, newsletters, emails, and WhatsApp groups.

Your child's teacher will regularly share documentation, photos, programs, and reflections via email.

**Class Reps & WhatsApp Groups**

Each class has two representatives who help communicate key reminders via WhatsApp. These groups are strictly for Hurlingham Preschool information

**Arrival & Departure**

Hurlingham uses **Arrival, a state-wide digital sign-in system.**

- Sign in/out each day with your mobile number and PIN.
- Record absences with a reason.
- Staff can assist if you or a carer doesn't have a phone.
- Children must only be collected by authorised adults.
- Arrive prior to session time commencing
- Late collection is distressing for children and can incur a financial penalty due to impact on staffing

This system is a **legal requirement** for safety and emergency management. Data is secure and handled under privacy laws.

**Safety : Passengers, cyclists and pedestrians**

Arrival and departure times are extremely busy periods with many alternative travel options. We are obligated to promote aspects of passenger safety and advise children should only exit the car through the 'safety door' onto the roadside. Please do not park in the No Standing zones. Please do not use the footpath for 3-point turns. If cycling, children should always wear a helmet. Please do not hold the entry gates open. Please do not bring dogs into the entry courtyard and ensure they are on a lead and tied up away from access paths.

**Contact details and availability**

It is essential that you are able to be contacted at any time during your child's kindergarten session in the event of an emergency. Please ensure your contact details are current, including phone numbers and email addresses. Please note you can add or remove people authorised to collect your child at any time.

**Compliments and Complaints Process**

Our 'Open Door' approach encourages families to always feel valued but if there is ever any feedback you would like to approach our Committee of Management with, we have a dedicated sub-committee, and you will find the details on display in the foyer.

**Eating at Kinder**

- Hurlingham is **nut-free**.
- Children bring **2 snacks + 1 lunch**, in labelled containers, plus a **water bottle.**
- We promote healthy eating and encourage nude foods.
- For birthdays/cultural celebrations, small gifts are welcome to be handed out at the end of the session. Speak with your child's teacher.
- We try to emphasise that good nutrition to support healthy bodies and learning. Consistent healthy lunchboxes set children up with habits they'll carry to school.

**Clothing & What to Bring**

- Comfortable play clothes (no thongs, crocs)
- Labelled clothing so lost property can be returned
- Coat and gumboots in winter.
- Extra labelled clothes
- A wet bag to return wet clothing
- Comfort toys (blanket/teddy) are welcome in Term 1 if needed, but no regular toys from home.

**Toilet training**

- We recommend that children are toilet trained prior to commencing kindergarten
- We recommend no pull-ups as this impedes body awareness
- We practice respectful changing interactions
- Soiled clothing will be rinsed but please provide a wet bag to return clothing in

**Parent Helper Duty**

- Optional but valued opportunity to share in your child's learning.
- Term Rosters circulated by class reps.
- Toddlers/babies may attend but remain your responsibility.
- Most importantly - join in play!
- Bring your Working with Children Card

**Sustainability**

Sustainability is embedded across our program and philosophy.

- Compost bins, rainwater use, and recycling are daily practices.
- Families are invited to contribute safe recyclables for creative play.

**SunSmart & Mosquito Protection**

- Each child receives a Hurlingham sunhat (kept at kinder).
- Families provide a roll-on sunscreen
- Families provide a roll-on mosquito repellent, if required
- Children are required to wear shoulder-covering clothing.

## Fundraising and Voluntary Contributions

At Hurlingham Preschool, we are lucky to be a community-managed kindergarten where families, educators, and committee members work together to create a quality early learning environment. While government funding provides the foundation, it is the generosity of our community that allows us to go above and beyond for our children. While participation in fundraising, voluntary contributions, and donations is voluntary, the support of every family is encouraged by inviting families to consider a voluntary contribution to enhance the quality of our programs and resources. Fundraising activities are also an opportunity for families to come together and build stronger social and community relationships

For 2026, we are inviting families to consider a voluntary contribution to help enhance the quality of our programs and resources.

Contribution options are:

4. Upfront financial support: $500 voluntary donation per family (includes $400 voluntary donation and $100 maintenance levy)
5. Upfront financial support and volunteering: $400 voluntary donation per family and attending working bees each term to support the Preschool's maintenance requirements.
6. Instalment financial support and volunteering: $200 in Term 1 and $200 again in Term 3, and attending working bees each term to support the Preschool's maintenance requirements.

Every contribution large or small directly enriches the preschool experience for our children. These funds will support learning resources and teacher "wish list" items, enriching opportunities and materials beyond our standard budget. Your support, whether through time, energy, or contributions, helps us live our guiding values of Collaboration, Commitment, and Community. Together, we can continue to ensure Hurlingham is a place where every child thrives.

## Working Bees & Social Events

- **Working Bees** – 4 per year, one per term. Families are required to attend at least one per year to help maintain our kinder community and are encouraged to attend more than one if possible.
- **Social Events** – Organised by the Social Officer and Class Reps (picnics, playdates, coffee mornings, dinners). Great opportunities to connect and make new friends within your local community.

## Emergency Management

The safety and wellbeing of children, families, and staff is our highest priority. Hurlingham Preschool has a comprehensive **Emergency Management Plan (EMP)**, as required for all funded kindergartens in Victoria.

**Our EMP includes:**

- Identifying potential risks (fire, medical emergencies, extreme weather, intruders, and other hazards).
- Clear procedures for **evacuation and lockdown**.
- Assigned staff roles and responsibilities to ensure children are safe.
- Risk assessments and **individual support plans** for children or staff with additional needs.
- Emergency drills are practised **once per term** with each group.
- Educators explain drills in **age-appropriate ways** to reduce anxiety.
- Families are notified before drills take place.
- Evacuation maps are displayed near all kinder doors.
- The full EMP and Risk Assessments are available to view in the kinder room.
- **In an Emergency** Staff will follow EMP procedures to ensure every child is accounted for.
- Families will be contacted as soon as it is safe to do so. By practising regularly and working together, we build children's confidence and keep our community safe and prepared.

### Accidents and First Aid

While children are always closely supervised, accidents may occasionally occur.

- All incidents are **recorded**, and parents are notified and asked to sign the report.
- In an emergency, **medical help (including ambulance)** will be called, and families contacted.
- Families are responsible for any medical costs.
- All staff and educators hold current **First Aid, Asthma, and Anaphylaxis qualifications**.

### Allergies and Medical Conditions

- Allergies are displayed on our **medical wall** and in the office.
- Families must provide current **medical action plans and medication**.
- Hot drinks are only allowed in **safety cups with lids** (no disposable cups in learning areas/no almond milk).

### Health and Absence

- Please **do not send unwell children** to kindergarten.
- If your child is absent for more than **two sessions in a row**, please contact the Preschool.
- Refer to the **Victorian School Exclusion Table** for guidance on how long children must stay home after specific illnesses. https://www.health.vic.gov.au/infectious-diseases/school-exclusion-table
- If your child becomes unwell while at kinder, staff will follow our **Infectious Illness Policy** and contact you immediately.
- Families must notify the Preschool if their child is diagnosed with an infectious illness.
- Hurlingham is legally required to report outbreaks of **gastroenteritis or respiratory illness**.

### Immunisation

In line with the **No Jab, No Play** legislation, every child must provide an **Immunisation History Statement (IHS)** from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) before enrolment. This must show that the child is:

- Up to date with vaccinations, **or**
- On a recognised catch-up schedule (no vaccines more than 2 months overdue), **or**
- Has a documented medical exemption.

**Reportable Conduct Scheme**
Hurlingham Preschool is required by law to comply with the Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme, which:

- Requires organisations working with children to report, investigate, and respond to allegations of reportable conduct made against employees, contractors, volunteers, or office holders.
- Protects children by ensuring all allegations are addressed appropriately, whether they occur inside or outside the preschool environment.
- Is overseen by the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP), which monitors investigations and outcomes.

If parents or carers have any concerns about child safety, they are encouraged to speak with the Nominated Supervisor/Director or the President of the Committee of Management. All concerns will be taken seriously, treated with sensitivity, and managed in line with our Child Safe Policy and legal obligations.

## Working With Children Check (WWCC)

All persons working or volunteering at Hurlingham Preschool — including for parent duty, excursions, or incursions — must hold a current Working With Children Check (WWCC). It's free for volunteers

🔗 Apply here : https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/individuals/applicants/how-to-apply

**Security Door and Safety**
To ensure the safety of all children, staff and families:

- The front door has a code lock, provided to parents (and changed regularly).
- Always close the kinder room door, foyer door, and gate behind you.
- Never prop open the front door , it must remain closed at all times.