



Dernancourt Kindergarten

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Thank you for considering Dernancourt Kindergarten, we hope your experience with us is enjoyable!

PHILOSOPHY

At Dernancourt Kindergarten we aim to provide a safe, nurturing and adventurous learning environment that fosters children's curiosity, wonder and awe. We partner with families and community as equals, recognising the wealth of expertise they bring to each child's learning and development.

Children

We believe children to be competent, curious and courageous learners from unique and diverse backgrounds. We value Aboriginal perspectives, and in partnership with the children, families, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people embed these throughout our program to deepen our own understanding of cultural connection to the land. We support children's right to express views and opinions freely and have these taken into account regarding any matter affecting them. We strive to meet the needs of the whole child by providing opportunities to develop physical, social, emotional, cognitive and language skills. We aim to foster the development of the whole child through a play-based program which is flexible, accessible, challenging, developmentally appropriate and which promotes high engagement, involvement and intellectual stretch. We value time spent in nature and use this as the conduit for deep learning across all curriculum areas. We provide children with opportunities for uninterrupted time in nature with passionate teachers facilitating inquiry-based learning.

Families and Communities

At Dernancourt Kindergarten we develop authentic, inclusive and respectful relationships with families and the local community. We provide families with the opportunity to work in partnership with educators, to participate in their child's learning and development, to share decision making and to contribute to and/or access resources to support family wellbeing. The kindergarten is managed by a family run voluntary Governing Council in conjunction with guidelines set by the Department for Education. We value the diverse strengths and interests of families/members of the community and invite them to teach/share any expert skills or experiences to complement and enrich our learning program. We aim to work alongside community groups, agencies and services to share resources, provide education and develop support networks. We value the connection Kurna people have with the land and seek to engage with members within the Aboriginal community.

Educational Staff

Educators prioritise working collaboratively to support and enhance children's learning, wellbeing and development. We do this with respect, honesty and through trusted relationships. We value the unique skills and contribution of each staff member, learning from, and with each other. Professional development is actively sought, engaged in, and supported to achieve best practice.

Dernancourt Kindergarten, a community of learners committed to working together in order to achieve best outcomes for children, families, and the wider community.

STAFF

Director: Natalie Stormonth

Teachers: Leanne Fleet and Carly Neilson

ECW's: Kerryanne Uglesic, Debra Edwards, Mosammat Mukta, and Jingshu Sun

Support Workers: Kerryanne Uglesic, Debra Edwards, Mosammat Mukta, and Jingshu Sun

Volunteer Support: Grace Caruso and Tracy Bland

Bilingual Support Workers: available on an as needed basis

KINDERGARTEN SESSIONS

Time to Commence Kindergarten

Children can commence Kindergarten either at the start or the middle of the year, depending on their birthdate. Children who turn four before the end of April are eligible to begin Kindergarten at the start of the year. Children turning four between May and the end of October can start at the mid-year intake.

In some cases, children may be eligible to access Kindergarten earlier for various reasons. For more information, please follow this link: [Preschool Enrolment](#).

Kindergarten Operating Times:

- Monday: 8:15 AM – 3:45 PM
- Tuesday: 8:15 AM – 3:45 PM
- Wednesday: 8:15 AM – 3:45 PM
- Thursday: 8:15 AM – 3:45 PM

Transition Visits

A 'Stay and Play' session is held the week before the kindergarten term begins. This is an informal and relaxed morning where families are invited to have a shared play experience while meeting all the staff. It is designed to help ease children into their start at kindergarten.

KINDY CARE

Kindy Care is an independently run after-hours care program available at the kindergarten site from 3:45 PM to 5:45 PM. This service will begin in 2025 and is offered by Gowrie, an external provider. Children must be enrolled in the Kindy Care program through Gowrie to access this service. The program is only available on your child's enrolled days and during term time. All enrolments and bookings must be made directly with Gowrie. As part of the trial, the program will be reviewed after six months to ensure its effectiveness and suitability for our families. For further details or to make bookings, please contact Gowrie directly.

PLAYGROUP

Playgroup is available Fridays, 9:30 – 11:30 AM, during odd weeks of the school term (weeks 1, 3, 5, 7, 9).

Playgroup children must be accompanied by an adult who is responsible for the supervision of their child or children in their care. Adults are also asked to assist with packing up at the end of the session.

For more details, please contact our coordinator, Grace Caruso, at 8264 6652.

OCCASIONAL CARE

Currently, Occasional Care is unavailable due to our high enrolment levels and building capacity. However, families are welcome to access Occasional Care services at other kindergartens while still registering their interest at our centre for full-time Kindergarten. We are happy to assist you in finding a suitable Occasional Care service.

FEES AND PAYMENTS

Kindergarten Fees

\$120.00 per term (there are no additional lunch care costs as this is included in our program). You will receive a fee invoice at the beginning of each term. Fees can be paid by cash or Direct Debit. Direct Debit details will appear on your invoice.

Playgroup: \$2.50 per week per child (for children over 12 months).

Early Entry: Fees may vary depending on your child's attendance.

PAYMENTS

When making cash payments for fees, excursions, fundraisers, etc., please ensure the correct amount is provided, placed in an envelope marked with your child's name, the amount, and what the payment is

for. This envelope should then be placed in the payment box just inside the entrance door and will be passed on to the treasurer. Please do not ask staff for change, as we do not hold much cash at the Kindergarten.

Payments can also be made by Bank Transfer using the following details:

BSB: 065 145

Account: 00900256

Reference: "Your child's name"

MORNING ROUTINE

When you arrive at kindergarten, please support your child in signing in, selecting a locker for the day, and unpacking their bag. A staff member will be there to welcome and greet your child upon arrival. Be sure to check the notice board (whiteboard along the path) each day for any new information.

The gate will be unlocked at 8:15 AM, marking the start of the kindergarten session. Please do not come to kindergarten before the start time, as staff require this time to prepare for the day.

Health

Please keep children at home if they are unwell. This should be an adult decision. If your child has a contagious illness, we would appreciate a call to let us know.

WHAT TO BRING

Morning Tea

Please pack a healthy snack such as fruit, cheese, savory biscuits, or dried fruit. Morning tea should be packed separately from your child's lunch and kept in their bag. This allows them to access their snack when they're hungry while keeping their lunch for later.

Lunch

Please place your child's lunch in a named container with an ice brick and leave it in their bag in their locker.

Afternoon Tea

A piece of fruit or vegetable for afternoon tea can be placed in the basket at the entry table.

Please refrain from packing chocolates, lollies, cakes, buns, and sweet biscuits. We follow the Department for Education's healthy eating guidelines and actively promote healthy food choices. A copy of our Healthy Food Policy is attached.

Drink Bottle

Children need to bring a named drink bottle filled with water each day. Water is available for refills if needed. Children are encouraged to drink plenty of water, especially during hot weather. Please do not send fruit juices or cordial.

Toys from Home

Children are generally asked not to bring toys from home, as they may get lost or broken. However, we acknowledge that for some children, a familiar toy can provide comfort. We recognise the important role this can play in helping a child feel safe and supporting a successful transition to kindergarten. If your child needs to bring a familiar toy for comfort, please let us know, and we'll work together to ensure its managed appropriately.

ALLERGIES

At our Kindergarten, we often have children with severe allergies. To ensure everyone's safety, we have an Allergy Awareness policy in place. Please do not send nuts or nut products with your child. We kindly ask that you read the attached policy to familiarise yourself with other foods that are not suitable for kindergarten.

At times, we may become aware of additional allergens related to children enrolled. Please note that restricted foods may vary from time to time based on the safety needs of the children currently enrolled.

When enrolling your child, please inform staff of any allergies or medication needs. We also require health support forms to be completed.

SPECIAL OCCASIONS/BIRTHDAY GUIDELINES

At times, there may be a desire to include foods outside the Centre's general policy, such as for special events or fundraisers. These occasions will be discussed and approved during Governing Council meetings.

For birthdays, we celebrate by singing a birthday song and presenting the child with a certificate. Please do not send any items to share. We recognize that not all families celebrate birthdays, and if this applies to your family, we will work together to support your family's wishes. This guideline also applies to end-of-term graduations to ensure inclusivity and adherence to Centre policies.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in making our celebrations meaningful and safe for all children.

SUN SAFETY

We prioritize sun protection to keep children safe from harmful UV exposure:

- Sunscreen: Apply SPF 50+ sunscreen to your child before arriving. We reapply sunscreen at 10:00 am and 1:00 pm for children outdoors. Families with sensitive skin can provide their own sunscreen.
- Hats: Broad-brimmed, legionnaire, or bucket hats are required; baseball caps are not allowed. Please label all hats.
- Clothing: Children must wear sun-protective clothing, such as tops with collars and sleeves. Singlets and midriff tops are not permitted.
- Sun protection is enforced during Terms 1, 3, and 4, and whenever the UV Index is 3 or higher.
- Shade: Activities are planned to reduce peak UV exposure, and children without appropriate hats or clothing will play in shaded areas or indoors.

CLOTHING

At kindergarten, children engage in a range of creative and active play activities, including messy ones! To ensure their comfort and safety:

- Clothing: Please send your child in old, practical clothing that allows for messy play.
- Footwear: Thongs are not permitted, and we recommend avoiding long skirts or dresses, as they can pose a risk during climbing activities.
- Spare Clothes: Pack a spare set of clothes in your child's bag, including underwear.
- Labelling: Label all clothing and footwear to help us avoid mix-ups.

Uniform Items for Purchase

We offer the following kindergarten-branded items:

- Short Sleeve Polo Shirts (various colours): \$28.00 each
- Dark Blue Bucket Hats (with your child's name painted on the brim): \$15.00 each

These items are optional but are great for creating a sense of belonging and are designed for comfort and durability during play.

COLLECTING YOUR CHILD

For the safety of all children, kindergarten children must be collected by an adult listed on your enrolment form.

If someone new will be regularly collecting your child, please introduce them to the staff. For occasional or special arrangements, inform staff in advance and write the collector's name and phone number on the sign-in sheet located near the main door.

These measures are in place to ensure the safety and well-being of every child in our care. Thank you for your cooperation.

CHILDREN'S LIBRARY AND LITERACY KITS

Children are encouraged to regularly borrow library books and literacy kits to foster a love of reading and learning. Upon starting kindergarten, each child will receive a library bag for use while attending.

Library Borrowing

Library borrowing can occur on any day and as frequently as you like. Parents are welcome to volunteer to assist with this process, which involves helping children select a book, ensuring they have their library bag, and recording the borrowing details on library cards. Volunteering for library borrowing is a wonderful way to meet your child's friends and be part of their kindergarten experience. Please let us know if you're interested in helping.

Literacy Kits

Literacy kits are available daily for families to borrow. These kits are designed to enhance children's literacy skills through engaging activities. We recommend keeping the kits at home for up to a week. To ensure availability for all families, please return books and literacy kits before borrowing again.

Thank you for supporting our library program and helping to create a community of enthusiastic readers!

CURRICULUM

Please see the attached curriculum statement detailing the kindergarten's educational program and reporting process.

Volunteering:

We greatly value family involvement and offer a variety of ways for you to contribute to the running of our kindergarten. These include:

- Curriculum Support – Share your family's significant events, cultural festivities, or traditions to enrich our learning experiences.
- Administration Roles – Assist staff with essential "behind-the-scenes" tasks.
- Library Borrowing – Help manage our library system (see details above).

- Laundry Washing – Take home a bag of items such as tea towels and smocks to wash and return.
- Yard Maintenance – Support the upkeep of our beautiful grounds.
- Governing Council – Play an active role in shaping the future of our kindergarten (see details below).
- Fundraising – Help us raise vital funds to support our programs and resources (see details below).

Governing Council and Fundraising

The Governing Council is elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), held at the start of each year. Families joining mid-year also have an opportunity to get involved.

The council is made up of dedicated volunteers who contribute to:

- Supporting the curriculum and enhancing outcomes for children.
- Developing and maintaining the kindergarten's grounds and buildings.
- Organising and managing fundraising activities to support the kindergarten site.

The Governing Council works closely with staff to create a positive and rewarding experience for everyone involved.

Meetings

Governing Council meetings are held twice per term at the kindergarten, scheduled at a time that suits the majority of members. All families are welcome to attend any meeting.

If you're interested in joining or would like more information, please speak with a staff member.

Fundraising

While fees and government subsidies contribute to the running of our kindergarten, they do not cover all costs. Fundraising is essential to help meet operating expenses and acquire new resources.

Our goal is to provide the very best for all children, including maintaining and updating equipment and resources to support their learning and development. Your support is vital to achieving this.

We encourage families to get involved and share creative ideas for raising funds. Together, we can make a big difference in enhancing the experiences of all children at the kindergarten.