



Darlington
Children's Centre
for Early Childhood
Development and Parenting

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Welcome to Darlington Children's Centre



Phone: 8296 2686



Government of South Australia
Department for Education

Staff Team

Director:	David Coulter
Teachers:	Jacqui Roberts Stacey Tyson
Occasional Care Coordinator:	Vicki Evans
Early Childhood Workers:	Beth Saunderson Suzanne Jackson Aza Oros
Bi-lingual Support Worker:	Fatin Andrawos
Family Services Coordinator:	Tanieka Pillen
Community Services Coordinator:	Deb Higgins
Speech Pathologist:	Lauren Lang
Occupational Therapist	Helen Chalklen
Administration:	Erica Stewart

Preschool Sessions

Children are eligible for up to 5 sessions or 15 hours of Preschool per week in the year before they attend school.

Children who turn 4 years of age on or before April 30 are eligible to start preschool at the beginning of that year.

http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/teachingandlearning/files/links/frequentlyaskedquestions_u.pdf

Session Days: Monday to Thursday, 8:45 to 11:45am, and 12 to 3pm. These can be accessed in a combination of full or half days.

Session times:

Morning:	8:45am to 11.45 am
Afternoon:	12noon to 3.00 pm
Full day session:	8:45am to 3.00 pm

Preschool (kindy) Fees

Kindy fees are approx. \$120 per term. Accounts will be distributed to families early in each term. The fees are approved by Governing Council. Fees are used to support the educational programs we provide for your child. An invoice will be put into your message pipe at the beginning of each term.

Message Pipe

Each child will have a message pipe, located near the front door (kindy) and sign in sheet. Please check regularly for newsletter and other information about “What’s On” at Darlington Children’s Centre.

Attendance at Preschool

All children are to be signed in and out each day by the parent or caregiver. The sign in/out sheets are located on the cupboard upon entering the Preschool. Please see a staff member if you require support.

Once preschool sessions have been allocated for your child (days/sessions) it is important that they attend regularly. We understand from time to time your child may be absent for specific illness or special family circumstances. We ask that you inform/ring the Preschool if your child will not be attending their normal session. *Thank you.*

All attendances and absences are recorded and used by DECD to allocate the number of staff to Darlington Children's Centre.

Early Entry to Preschool and Support Programs

Early entry to Preschool is available for children with additional needs, such as child with developmental delays, or for who English is a second language, difficulties with language, communication, behaviour etc. Please discuss your child’s needs with staff as early as possible.

OCCASIONAL CARE

Also known as “The Joey’s” this program is available for children until they are eligible to start preschool. It provides an occasional break from parenting and is not a regular child care service.

The program caters for up to eight children, aged 2 years and older, in each session and we have a session for up to four children, under 2 years of age (need to be walking), on a Friday morning.

Session Times:

Over 2 years:

Tuesday	8.45am - 11.30am
Wednesday	8.45am - 11.30am
Thursday am	8:45am - 11:30am
Thursday pm	12.15pm - 3.00pm
Friday	8:45am - 11:30am

Under 2 years

Friday	8:45am - 11:30am
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We encourage entire termly bookings for Occasional Care, therefore once your child is enrolled within the Occasional Care program they will hold a weekly booking time for the entire term. Cost is \$5 per session and \$1.50 for Concession Card Holders and a termly consumable fee of \$20 and \$15 for Concession Card Holders. Fees are to be paid by the end of week 2 of each term.

Enrolling for Occasional Care

- Child's name to be added to the Waiting List, please speak to a staff member.
- An enrolment form must be completed before the child attends, including all medical/health information, immunisation information and emergency contact numbers.
- We encourage pre visits for Occasional Care children.
- In the event of sickness on the day in which your child is booked to attend, we cannot arrange a refunds for non-attendance. Please advise the Centre if your child is not attending.
- Children must be signed in and out for every session – this is a legal requirement.

Priority of Access to the Occasional Care program

- Children in the term prior to commencing Preschool.
- Parents not in the paid workforce.
- Families on low incomes and children and families identified as being vulnerable.
- Children who are not using any other form of child care or early childhood service.

WHAT TO BRING TO PRESCHOOL AND OCCASIONAL CARE

- A named bag which your child recognizes and can open independently. A name tag with their photo attached to their bags is helpful for children._
- A named sun hat - we recommend a broad brimmed hat or legionnaire for maximum sun protection.
- If your child stays for a full day for preschool, please send 2 pieces of fruit or vegetables for snacks.
- Please pack your child a lunch in line with our Healthy Eating Policy. Which is displayed and available in this pack. We recommend using an insulating bag with a cold pack.
- Clothing that covers your child's shoulders (sun policy) and that they can manage when toileting.

Shoes suitable for climbing (no thong) - laced, velcro and sandals with a heel strap are fine.

What to bring to Preschool and Occasional Care continue.....

- Spare clothes in case of accidents through messy play or toileting, with your child's name written on them.
- On sunny days, please apply sunscreen to your child before coming to the Centre. We will make Sunscreen available for children to apply during the day.
- *Brand: Cancer Council—Ultra Sunscreen SPF 50+*
- For children in nappies, please bring disposable nappies.

Dropping Off and Picking Up

Preschool Children:

Please support your child to hang his/her bag up on a hook on the verandah. After signing in, please ensure that your child is acknowledged by a staff member before you leave. We end each day and session by coming together as a group for games, songs or a story. We will farewell each child at the end of this group.

Occasional Care Children:

Please support your child to by putting their bag in a drawer (in the Joey's Room) and their nappy bag in the change room at the top of the stairs. Once your child is signed in and acknowledged by Occasional Care Staff, your child is free to play in the Preschool. Joey's end each session by coming together as a group for songs or a story. Staff will farewell each child from this group.



Parking

Safety regulations and the number of available car park available do not allow parents to drive inside the school grounds for Preschool pick up or drop off. Please park outside the school grounds and walk inside. Please encourage your child to walk on the paths.

Sun Smart

We promote sun smart activities, checking the Bureau of Meteorology website daily as part of our weather discussions with children. Hats must always be worn on days of higher UV reading. No hat, no outside play on these days. Staff guide children not to play in direct sunshine on very hot days. Children have access to water at any time. We suggest that your child has their own water bottle in their bag (clearly named please). Children must wear shirts/ tops which cover their shoulders at all times.

Healthy Eating Policy

We are a NUT free Centre. Please do not send any nut products with your child. This includes Nutella and Peanut Butter.



We encourage children to eat fresh fruit or vegetables at fruit time. Salad vegetables, dried fruit, cheese, sandwiches with savoury fillings are all encouraged. Please don't send muesli bars, chips, cake or sweet biscuits for fruit time.

Lunches must adhere to our healthy food guidelines. We encourage you to pack wholesome sandwiches, crackers and fruit.

For more information:

<http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/theEasyGuidetoHealthyFood.pdf>



Staying Healthy in Child Care: provides educators and other staff working in education and care services with simple and effective methods for minimising the spread of disease. It contains more 'how to' advice on procedures and discussing exclusion periods with parents.

For more information

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/ch55>

Medication and Health Plans

Please try and avoid your child having to take medication at preschool (even if it is 3 times a day they can still have it before and after preschool and in the evening). If your child does require any medication at preschool you will need to complete the necessary forms with staff. A copy of the 'Authority to administer medication' form is provided to all families on enrolment or accessed at:

<http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced2/files/links/prescribingmedshp.pdf>

Please note that if you have indicated that your child has a medical condition requiring preventative medication or first aid procedures on your child's enrolment form you must ask the staff for the necessary forms which will require you to visit your local Doctor or Specialist to fill out a Health Plan. **Centre staff must have this documentation before your child is able to attend on their own.**

First Aid

Staff are trained and up to date with the mandatory First Aid Training for Early Childhood and regularly complete required updates.

If a child becomes ill or injured staff will,

- Administer basic first aid
- Call an ambulance if required
- Inform the parent of the accident/illness

Birthdays

We celebrate birthdays by lighting the candles on our shared preschool plaster of Paris cake. If you would like to send something special on the day, cheese and dry biscuits or a fruit platter to share is most welcome. Please don't send any cakes as they do not fit the "Healthy Food Guidelines".

Supporting children's behaviour

Maximising Positive Behaviours

The staff team will provide a safe, caring, play environment in which educators support children by:

- Focusing on positive, appropriate behaviors and use praise, encouragement, modeling and recognition of these appropriate behaviours.
- Using visual cues as well as spoken cues to reinforce instructions/ requests for appropriate behaviour
- Using 'teachable moments' plus explicit programming to develop children's communication, social development and protective behaviour skills that encourage self-awareness and self-discipline/ control.
- Helping children to develop an understanding of consequences and implication of negative behaviour on others and on themselves. This includes working with children to establish limits, rules, expectations of fair play and consequences of behaviour.

We will work together in partnership with families to support positive learning outcomes. Parents can also seek advice and support from our Family Services Coordinator who can provide access to a range outside agencies.

Partnerships with Parents

There is a variety of ways we can work together to support your child. You are welcome at any time and are welcome to stay as long as you need to help your child.

The Children's Centre staff team has a range of family support services and programs available. Please chat to the Community Development Coordinator or the Family Services Coordinator.

Partnerships with Parents

The Staff Team appreciates all parent involvement: there are always stories to be read, drawings to be shared and puzzles to be enjoyed.

Parents also are invited to join the Governing Council. This group of parents and staff are responsible for making decisions: planning and monitoring the budget, developing policies and ensuring that the centre complies with all Government regulations. Meetings are held twice a term.

To ensure that the staff team can take the best possible care of your child, we ask that you help by:

- Always ensure that your child is greeted by a member of staff and is aware of you leaving.
- Making sure that your contact details: contact people + contact telephone numbers are current. Please give written details of any changes.
- Making sure that all information about custody issues or health issues are current and that photocopies of all documentation are given to the Director. This is your responsibility.

- If you are unable to collect your child, please telephone us and give details of the person who will be collecting your child. Staff will ask this person to provide some identification and will take a copy for our records.

Information Sharing

Nothing replaces the greeting and everyday conversations which take place between staff and yourselves. These are valuable for everyone in building relationships of trust and security.

On enrolling, your family will be allocated a message pipe, found next to the front door of the preschool. Please check it regularly as newsletters, fee accounts, fee receipts and lost hats will be put here. There is also the white board near the front door and this has the weekly occurrences on it.

The displays of children's art and photographs are also another way in which we share the learning that is occurring. We keep records of each child's progress and an individual education plan is devised from these records. You are welcome to view these at any time. Regular feedback on achievements, interests and concerns will be provided both informally and formally.

Raising Concerns

We are committed to working together in partnership with families and aim to provide an environment that encourages open communication. You are invited to approach any member of staff if you have any questions, queries or concerns.

Steps:

1. Approach, phone, or write to the appropriate staff member and arrange a mutually convenient time to discuss your concern. Provide a brief explanation of the concern to give them a chance to think about it before you meet.
2. At the meeting please explain what is worrying you, why you consider it to be an issue and the effect it is having on you and your child. We will work towards a resolution that is satisfactory to all parties.
3. If it is not possible to find a satisfactory solution arrange a time to speak to the Director.
4. If the problem is still unresolved, a further meeting will be arranged between parents/ caregivers & the Director and the staff member involved.
5. Finally, if parents/ caregivers are still dissatisfied contact the Education Office 82073700.
6. If the problem is still unresolved contact the Parent Complaint Unit 1800 677 435

Any issues or concerns are kept confidential

Curriculum is based on the National Early Years Curriculum Framework 'Belonging, Being and Becoming'.

We believe that each child is an individual, with their own unique family life and culture. We aim to help each child to develop to their potential, working in partnership with their family. We will

report to families on their child's development and learning using the National Early Years Curriculum and the DECD's Early Years Curriculum resource, 'Reflect, Respect, Relate. These essential components support the National Quality Standards for Early Childhood.

<http://education.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework>

Early childhood is the foundation for all future learning.

The program is based on:

- Professional knowledge of children's growth and development.
- The understanding that children learn best through play and active involvement
- Knowledge of learning as a process (the doing of a painting is just as important as the finished work). Many important learning experiences do not produce an end product that can be taken home.
- (The understanding that learning is facilitated by continuity between the home and preschool environment. Our curriculum aims to reflect the diverse nature of our Preschool community.
- All children are uniquely individual. Staff guide and extend children's thinking by responding thoughtfully to the needs and ideas of each child.

The curriculum is based on the "National Early Years Learning Framework"

- Development in children's learning is described through 5 Learning Outcomes:
- Children have a strong sense of identity.
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world.
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.
- Children are confident and involved learner
- Children are effective communicators.



**Baby chicks and eggs;
children watching and
observing living eggs**



Darlington Children's Centre Services

The community centre is built alongside the existing preschool with a range of staff including a Community Development Coordinator, Family Services Coordinator, Speech Pathologist and Occupational Therapist.

Darlington Children's Centre provides services and programs to a range of groups within the community of Darlington and surrounds.

Community services are tailored to the needs of the community. These include supported playgroups for babies and toddlers, multicultural women's groups, coffee and chat times, Aboriginal playgroup and Circle of Security groups.

These community services support and complement the provision of sessional preschool and occasional care programs.

Outside providers run specific groups for the community and include Anglicare, SA Health, TAFE SA, Relationships Australia and CAFHS. Other programs are being developed through DECD include 'Starting out right' project

Family Service Coordinator

Works alongside other Children's Centre staff to support parents to develop and maintain safe, caring, connected and resilient relationships.

The Family Service Coordinator is available to get to know families in the Darlington and broader Southern community with a view to supporting the family's engagement with the Children's Centre as well as with other community services. The Family Service Coordinator can support families to work with other agencies in the community.

Family Service Coordinators also work with families to build on current parenting skills, knowledge of early childhood development and the importance of relationships for children. Family Support Coordinators complement other programs within the Children's Centre by offering individual support to families through:

- Short-term counselling to help with personal issues, feelings and behaviours
- Parenting programs such as Circle of Security and Bringing Up Great Kids. These programs aim to enhance child-parent attachment relationships by increasing caregivers' ability to think about children's relationship needs. Programs are free and are offered on an ongoing basis. They usually run for between 6 and 8 weeks and can be tailored to particular family needs.

Referrals may be received from other agencies and education staff. Families are also welcome to contact the Family Services Coordinator directly and arrange a time to come in for a confidential chat.

Community Development

Children's Centres strengthen the capacity of the community to provide more supportive environments for children and families, by working in partnership together and with other agencies to offer a range of programs and services.

The Community Development Co-ordinator can help to

- Support families to link up with other families and be involved in community programs and activities eg; family fun events, cultural events, celebrations, parenting groups and playgroups.
- Support families to increase their knowledge and skills about parenting and childhood development.
- Support families to develop personally and build their leadership skills

Speech Pathologist

The role of the Speech Pathologist includes working with local families with children from birth to when they start school both in the general community and also those in Preschool and Occasional Care at the Centre. The Speech Pathologist role does not include full assessment and therapy but does help with development of children's:

- Talking or language expression
- Understanding
- Socialising or getting on with others
- Preparing for reading
- Eating and drinking

Speech Pathologist spending time around the Centre and participates in groups to provide:

- A drop in service for parents
- Information about ways for parents and educators to build strategies into everyday activities to help children learn to talk, understands, socialise and prepare for reading.
- Assistance with identifying children who may have difficulties with their development.
- Help with making referrals and linking up with services that provide assessment and therapy
- Some simple strategies for parents and educators to help their children develop particular aspects of their communication.
- Assistance to educators in including therapy strategies into the program for those children needing speech and language therapy.

If you are interested or concerned about your child's communication or eating or drinking development you are more than welcome to call the Centre to arrange to catch up.

Occupational Therapist

Occupational Therapists support children's optimal participation in everyday activities. They help children with the development of

- Play skills, especially pretend play
- Social skills
- Sensory processing and emotional regulation
- Concentration and attention
- Fine motor skills for writing
- Independence in self-care skills including toilet training, meal times and getting ready for the day.

The Occupational Therapist is available for parents to discuss concerns they may have about their child's development, behaviour or social skills. She is also able to support children's engagement in the Pre-school program and will be involved in groups for young children (0-4 years) at the centre.

The Occupational Therapist will work closely with the Speech Pathologist as well as other children's centre staff to support all children's development.



Working with Darlington Primary School

(for school enrolment please contact the school on 82963318)

We enjoy a close working relationship with Darlington Primary School. This relationship is built on a range of activities:

- Buddy classes visit the Preschool, enabling the establishment and maintaining relationships with older children.
- A formal transition program takes place in term 4.
- Visiting the school to use the gym equipment and the playground equipment allows children to become familiar with the school environment.
- Informal visits from the school leadership team: Principal, Deputy Principal and School Counselor.
- Preschool Staff share training and professional development activities with the School Staff.
- We also have working relationships with our other local DECD & independent schools.



What's On Community Programs

Community Supported Playgroup

Baby and Early Walkers Playgroup

Yarmin Time

Multicultural Women's Group

Coffee and Chat

*Saturday Play Time
(two per term)*

Circle of Security

