



Parent Handbook

MADGE SEXTON
KINDERGARTEN
McLaren Vale

Inspire - Create - Belong

Welcome to the Madge Sexton Kindergarten Family!

The Staff and Governing Council welcome you to Madge Sexton Kindergarten. We look forward to sharing your child's learning journey with you and are certain that our time spent together will be a happy and fulfilling experience for both you and your child.

The staff team at Madge Sexton Kindergarten are always available to answer any questions or respond to any concerns you may have during the initial orientation process and beyond. Please do not hesitate to approach any team member at any time.

Please take the time to read through this handbook, as it will help you to gain an insight into our philosophy, goals, curriculum and routines. It will also outline the policies and procedures to ensure you have a smooth transition into the Madge Sexton Kindergarten Community.

What we are about.....

At Madge Sexton Kindergarten we are committed to providing a high quality, flexible educational program that is inclusive, equitable and accessible for all children. The Early Years Framework for Australia, "Belonging, Being & Becoming" is our guiding curriculum and the outcomes we develop learning programmes around are: 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 learners; and children are effective communicators.

Staff at Madge Sexton Kindergarten are inspired by principles of the Reggio Emilia philosophy which we implement, interwoven with other good early childhood education practices.

Respect for the child is evident in the way we strive to create engaging learning experiences and beautiful learning environments for the children. We believe that every child has the right to beauty and our environment reflects this.

We recognise that every child is unique. We promote a strong self image of the child and view each child as strong, capable, competent, creative and curious. We encourage children to share their experiences, ideas, theories and curiosities, and explore their ideas and working theories with other children.

We value the children's "voice". The children know that they are valued as we listen to their individual needs, their interests, their prior knowledge and let their voices guide our learning journey(s). We recognise that the child has "one hundred languages" or more, and provide opportunities for each child to express themselves and learn through a myriad of experiences. We have set up an atelier (art studio) with atelierista's (art teachers) giving children wonderful opportunities to create and engage with interesting materials and unique experiences. We foster the whole child; their social, emotional, physical and

spiritual wellbeing and provide opportunities to maximise their potential while they are at Kindergarten.

We believe that children learn best through play and in a fun environment where children feel safe, secure and feel free to express themselves, take risks, challenge themselves, problem solve, explore and build resilience and persistence. We strive to find ways for children to connect to their natural environment and learn about sustainable practices. We have created a “homely” environment which fosters smoother transitions for children between home and Kindergarten.

We value relationships with children, families, staff and the wider community. We recognise parents as their child’s first educator and promote a nurturing, welcoming learning environment of trust and confidence where families feel comfortable to leave their children in our care. We value parent and community “voice” and strive to make connections and develop relationships. We aim to develop partnerships with parents, not just parent involvement.

We value staff diversity and recognise that all of our staff members are passionate, dynamic and professional early childhood educators. We work together to embed a culture of equity, collaboration, openness, honesty, innovation and cohesion with a shared workload towards shared goals and vision.

We foster a culture of learning, respect and growth for parents of young children and ourselves, and for ongoing dynamic and lifelong learning.

2016 Staffing (This may change in 2017)

Leanne Lovett	(Director – fulltime)
Jonette Thorsteinsen	(Teacher – fulltime)
Tennille Langeluddecke	(Teacher – Mon, Tues, Wed)
Jo Pritchard	(Early Childhood Worker/atelierista– Mon to Thurs)
Kalinda Glatter	(Early Childhood Worker/atelierista – Tues am, Thurs, Fri)
Emma Shaw	(Early Childhood Worker/atelierista– Mon to Fri)
Angela Ryan	(Early Childhood Worker –Tues, Fri)
Laura Reay	(Early Childhood Worker – Mon to Thurs)

2016 Kindergarten Session Times (This may change in 2017)

Children are allocated into one of the following two groups. Each child is entitled to 15 hours of Kindergarten each week under the Universal Access Funding (when funding is allocated by the Govt.) (Otherwise it drops back to 12.5 hours which will look the same as below without the Monday session.)

Group 1 – Monday (8:45am – 11:15am) , Tuesday (8:45am – 3:00pm), Friday (8:45am – 3:00pm)

Group 2 – Monday (12:30pm – 3:00pm), Wednesday (8:45am – 3:00pm), Thursday (8:45am – 3:00pm)

Fees

Public Kindergartens in South Australia are administered by the Department for Education and Childhood Development (DECD). Our Kindergarten receives some money from DECD to pay teaching salaries and to assist with some day to day running costs. We still rely heavily on fees and fundraising to cover the costs of consumables, new equipment, and to maintain a high quality learning environment for the children. Fees are set by the Governing Council and are invoiced at the beginning of each term via your child's pigeon hole. Term fees are:

**Sessional Kindergarten is \$450.00 per child per year
(Billed as 3 payments of \$150.00 in Terms 1, 2 & 3)
(15 hours of Kindy each week for 4 terms / 40 weeks allocation.)**

Fees can be paid into the locked "Payment box" located in the foyer, or via online banking. (BSB: 105071 Account No.: 280005440) A receipt will be issued to you. **Please note that children need to bring their own packed lunch and fruit time foods.**

"Madge's Minis Playgroup"

Madge Sexton Kindergarten has a playgroup that operates out of the McLaren Vale Primary School OSHC Room on Friday mornings 9am – 11am. A priority of access is in place for our playgroup due to a limited capacity. Ask staff for more information or alternatively consult our website and complete a Registration of Interest form for your child.

Special services

Madge Sexton Kindergarten has access to the following services: Speech Therapist; Psychologist; Social Worker; and Special Support Staff. If you think your child may require any of these services, please see the Director.

Once a term, CAFHS comes out to do 4 year old health checks, you will be notified of this date each term and able to make an appointment if you wish to.

Parent and child borrowing library

Parent books and Literacy Kits are available for families to borrow. Please see staff for more information.

Nature Play

As of 2014/2015 Madge Sexton Kindergarten became a "DECD Outdoor Learning Area Demonstration Site." We hold a very strong image of the child as being competent and capable, so from this belief, our yard focuses on providing our children with opportunities to explore risk and challenge themselves. In our environment, this looks like huge logs, tree stumps, boulders and ropes for climbing and balancing in many areas throughout the space. We are strong advocates of nature play as every day we see firsthand it's benefits: children are developing their learning dispositions of imagination, curiosity, confidence, persistence, resilience, concentration; as well as developing their skills in problem solving, self-regulation, resourcefulness, collaboration, ability to self-assess risks and gross motor development. You can read more about nature play on our website.

Daily routine

(Full day – approximate times)

8.45:	Doors open / Children arrive
9.15:	Large group mat time
9.30:	Smaller group times
9.45:	Fruit time
10.00:	Inside/outside activities
11.35:	Large group mat time
11.50:	Lunch & relaxation time
12.40:	Inside/outside activities
2.00/2.10:	Pack up inside/outside activities
2.20:	Fruit time
2.40:	Large group time
3.00:	Home time

Settling in....

Some children need a lot of reassurance to settle into kindergarten, while others throw themselves whole-heartedly into activities straight away. There is no right or wrong, every child is unique. We recognise that parents know their own child/children best, and staff will support you to develop a suitable system of separation that suits everyone.

We encourage children to be responsible for their own bags and belongings. It is important to let your child put their own bag in a locker at the beginning of their session so that they know where to find their fruit, drink bottle, etc.

It is important to keep staff informed of changes in contact details, telephone numbers and emergency contacts.

When dropping your child off to Kindy, it is paramount that parents/caregivers wait with their child, prior to the beginning of session times, as staff are involved in setting up the Kindergarten learning programme and cannot offer supervision for children if they arrive early. Doors will often not be opened until the official session beginning time.

Please make sure that you always say goodbye to your child when you leave, don't sneak off as it is vital that we work together to build trusting relationships.

What to do on arrival at Kindergarten

- Get your child to put his/her own lunch box in the crate on the verandah.
- Check for any notices on the whiteboard on the verandah as you enter.
- Sign in your child – sign in sheets are on the bench in the foyer.
- Get your child to put his/her own bag in a locker (with fruit time foods and drink bottle and hat inside bag).
- Check your child's pigeon hole for any notes or newsletters.
- Get your child to sign himself/herself in at the children's "sign in" desk – this promotes literacy and a strong sense of belonging for children.
- Help your child to settle into an activity and say goodbye.

Clothing

Please name ALL clothing your child brings to Kindy. Choose clothes that wash easily and are suitably comfortable for climbing, running, jumping and swinging, as well as clothes that can withstand a bit of wear and tear as your child will be working with paints, glues, sand etc. Please ensure clothing covers shoulders in the hotter weather and please ensure your child wears appropriate shoes, no thongs or crocs as these are inappropriate for climbing. We offer Madge Sexton Kindergarten T-Shirts (\$15) and hats (\$15) for sale as our “uniform”, please ask a staff member for further information. We are a “nature play” Kindergarten so children will be encouraged to get wet and muddy!

Medication

If your child suffers from a medical condition or allergy, the Kindergarten will require a medical plan from your child's doctor to ensure that staff can look after your child's health needs. Please see the Director for the appropriate forms or more information. Under no circumstances should any type of medication be left in children's bags. **Please note that these medical/health care plans MUST be given to the Director before your child is able to attend Kindergarten to ensure the safety and wellbeing of your child.**

What should your child bring to Kindy?

- *A named bag, preferably a backpack*
- *A piece of fruit/healthy snack (or 2 on your child's full day)* - kept in your child's bag.
- *A named Lunch Box (clearly named on the outside please) - to be placed in the Lunch Box crates on the verandah* (staff will then put them away in the store room for safe keeping and bring them out at Lunch time.)
- *An ice brick to keep food fresh.*
- *A named Drink Bottle* - We ask that children bring and be responsible for their own drink bottles. These are to be kept in children's bags.

Please note that we have strict nutritional policies that prevent families from bringing foods that contain nuts and nut products, eggs and some egg products, seafood and kiwi fruit due to allergies.

Muesli bars, chocolates, or sweetened drinks are also not appropriate foods for Kindy. If you forget, a note will be sent home with the item in question. Please see our Madge Sexton Kindergarten Food and Nutrition Policy for more information as well as our “Kindy friendly lunchbox guide” for ideas on what is appropriate to bring to Kindy.

- *A Hat - legionnaire style or broad brimmed* - Sun smart policies are also in place at the Kindergarten and children are required to wear a hat in Term 1 and Term 4 also, and comply with our Skin Protection policy.
- *A change of clothes*
- *Sunscreen applied in the hotter months.* Sunscreen will be readily available for children to re-apply throughout the day.

Please ensure that ALL items are labelled clearly.

Child Care Children

If your child gets dropped off and picked up by a child care provider it is your responsibility to negotiate with the child care provider to check your child's pigeon hole for notes. Kindergarten staff cannot put notes etc. in your child's bag due to practicality/time/supervision constraints. Kindergarten staff work hard to communicate needs with child care providers, but ultimately it is up to parents to ensure that their child has adequate food packed in their child's Kindy bag. It may be useful to tell your child which food is for child care and which food is for Kindy. It may help child care staff if parents label their child's food this way too. Unfortunately the Kindy does not always have spare fruit for children resulting in some children having no fruit at all.

Collection of Children

No child will be released into the care of any persons not known to staff members. If someone different is picking up your child you must write this information in the Collection Book on the sign-in bench. Please note that anyone who is picking up your child **MUST** have authority to collect on your child's enrolment form. If team members do not know the person by appearance, the person may be asked to produce some form of photo identification to prove that they are an authorised, nominated person to collect the child. Should an emergency arise, and you are unable to collect your child, please phone us to let us know who will be collecting your child in your absence.

Birthdays

We love to celebrate birthdays and we make sure that the birthday children feel special by everyone singing Happy Birthday to them and receiving a birthday certificate and a sticker or balloon. This celebration will also include children who have their birthdays in school holidays, etc. Please do not send along any items for your child to give out to the other children including birthday cake, etc.

Absences

Please advise staff of any absences. To enable each child to gain maximum benefit from the Kindergarten programme, it is essential that children attend regularly. High attendance rates ensure the Kindergarten continuity in staffing as our funding for staffing is based on ATTENDANCE, not enrolment numbers. Any child who is running a temperature or showing any signs of being unwell must be kept home. Please keep children home for **24 hours after** the last episode of any vomiting or diarrhoea to aid your child's recovery and to prevent the spread of infection. We also ask for notification in the incidence of infectious or contagious diseases in the family. Please note that if you bring your child to Kindy with an infectious disease or before the end of the 24 hour period of vomiting/diarrhoea you will be asked to take your child home.

Carparking

Carparking is always an issue in every Kindergarten and School, so we just remind families to be very careful in our carpark for the safety of our children and users of our carpark. **Please do not park in any areas that are not designated car park spaces this includes the designated disabled park, child care bus park or in the no parking areas between the trees and along the kindy fence and school oval.**

Fire and Emergency Policy

Fire extinguishers are strategically located around the Kindergarten. All children in attendance are noted on an attendance sheet when they arrive at Kindergarten. This attendance sheet is used to identify all children in the event of a fire and/or an evacuation process. This is why it is important for you to remember to sign your child in and to notify us should your child not be attending Kindergarten for their nominated session. Evacuation and invacuation procedures are practised with the children and staff on a regular basis.

Facebook

Yes, we are on Facebook too! Look us up and "like" us: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Families. On this page you will find photos, reminders of events, interesting links, etc. We recommend that caregivers sign up for our page, even if they are not a facebook user as this is one of our main communication tools that we use to share the day to day learning that happens at Kindy.

Website

You can also visit our website. Here you will find lots of information about Madge Sexton Kindergarten. www.madgekgn.sa.edu.au

Behaviour Management

Children are encouraged to develop social skills that will allow them to resolve conflicts and meet their needs without the use of aggressive or destructive behaviours. We encourage children to respect themselves and others and staff members to guide children's behaviour and provide clear guidelines as to why a particular behaviour is unacceptable while they are at the Kindergarten.

Parent Grievances.....

Our staff are here to ensure you and your child enjoy a happy and healthy experience at Madge Sexton Kindergarten. Should a problem arise that you feel you need to resolve with our staff, then please let us know. Communication is the key, the first person to speak to is always the Educator. In almost all cases, parents together with the Educator will be able to resolve the issue. Should this not be the case and you find yourself unsatisfied with the outcome, please contact the Director, who can work with you and the Educator to resolve the problem.

All grievances will be taken seriously and our best efforts will always be forthcoming. Please see our "Parent guide to raising a concern or complaint" brochure located in the "Policies" folder in the foyer or on our website.

What about good things.....

Let us know! ☺ Don't be shy to tell us about the good things Madge Sexton Kindergarten staff do or say, if you don't tell us...we won't know!

Positive feedback reinforces the good things that are happening and lets staff know what is working. On this note, we are always happy to have constructive feedback or ideas for improvement. Madge Sexton Kindergarten staff are committed to provide quality educational programmes and services for children and families and are always looking for improvement ideas. There is a "suggestion box" located in the foyer at Kindergarten.

Canteen

The McLaren Vale Primary School Canteen offers a lunch order service to the Kindergarten children on their full days. Please ask staff for more information.

How you can help us....

There are lots of ways that you can help us including: bringing in materials and resources that are listed in our "We would love donations of..." handout; volunteer your time on Governing Council, an event, gardening, or a working bee; offering your services (trade, skill, interest) to improve our facilities or enrich our learning programme. Curriculum overviews go home at the beginning of each term informing you of some of the ideas, theories and provocations we will be exploring with the children, and asking for your input to keep our learning program relevant, engaging and current for the children. Please see staff for more information or to offer your services.

Taking photos at Kindy

Please note that you are very welcome to take photos of your own child at Kindergarten but please ask a staff member for permission **BEFORE** you take any photographs of any other Kindergarten children. Some children's families have not given permission for their child to be photographed at Kindergarten by other families. Please **do not** publish other children's photographs on Facebook or any other social media unless you have gained permission from their parents.

Priority of Access

Currently Madge Sexton Kindergarten is experiencing extremely high numbers of enrolments. The Governing Council and the staff have worked together collaboratively to produce a "Priority of Access" procedure that prioritises access to our Kindergarten when enrolments are high. Priority of access will be given according to children falling into the following categories:

Priority 1: Families with children who currently reside in the local suburb, 5171 – McLaren Vale/McLaren Flat. This is our preferred enrolment zone and caters for children that live closer to our Kindergarten than any other accessible Kindergarten.

Priority 2: Children with older siblings who attend the main DECD feeder schools within our local area. Our main feeder schools are currently McLaren Vale Primary School and McLaren Flat Primary School.

Priority 3: Children who are cared for within the local community by child care centres, family day care providers or family members, i.e. grandparents etc.

Priority 4: Children with siblings who currently attend the centre or siblings who have previously attended the centre.

Please see our Madge Sexton Kindergarten Enrolment and Orientation Policy for more information.

PLEASE NOTE: In times of extreme enrolment pressures, enrolments will be offered in conjunction with the Priority Access order and the date the child is placed on the waiting list.

For your information about our Enrolment process please see our "Enrolment and Orientation" policy located on our website or in the "Policies" folder in the foyer.

Parental Partnerships

At Madge Sexton Kindergarten, we believe that developing positive relationships with the children, families and Kindergarten community are essential. A vital part of this is ensuring we are communicating effectively and providing lots of opportunities for dialogue about your child's learning and development, as well as the Kindergarten's programs and environment.

Throughout your child's time at Kindergarten we will communicate information about his/her learning and the Kindergarten's programs in a variety of ways. Below is a list of some of the processes that you should expect to see!

- A meeting with staff to give new parents information about our Kindergarten and to fill out enrolment forms. (In the term before your child starts Kindergarten.)
- A child questionnaire. (At the beginning of your child's time at Kindergarten.)
- An interview to discuss your child's Individual Learning Plan looking at strengths, needs & interests. (In your child's first term of Kindergarten and these can also be arranged at other times on request if there are any extra concerns.)
- A summative written report. (In your child's fourth and final term of Kindergarten.)
- Individual Learning Folders. – You are welcome to look through your child's at anytime and we encourage children and families to add stories of learning, trips, etc. to the folders and to share with the Kindy group!
- Display boards and Folders which have detailed documentation about children's learning, events and projects.
- Newsletters
- An informative website.
- Photographic slide shows on our large television in the foyer and the digital photo frame in our atelier.
- Curriculum term overviews sent home and on display.
- Informal chats – we are never too busy to have a chat, even if we look like we are!
- Additional meetings if your child has special rights i.e. speech, hearing, etc.

We value your input and knowledge about how your child learns and will endeavour to provide opportunities for parental partnerships, input, dialogue and collaborative decision making through:

- Kindergarten staff always being friendly, caring and approachable.
- Informal and formal conversations.
- A child questionnaire at the commencement of Kindergarten.
- Governing Council Committee
- Opportunities to participate in excursions and incursions.
- Open Kindergarten sessions and events to encourage family members and staff to work together to develop children's learning.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE MORE THAT YOU PARTICIPATE IN YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING PROGRAM AT KINDERGARTEN, THE MORE BOTH THE CHILD AND FAMILY BENEFIT!

Working together.....

Success in early childhood is a goal that we as educators share with parents for their children. Learning capabilities improve when the parents are involved with their children's education.

So what can you do at home?

- Encouraging a positive attitude towards learning is one of the most beneficial things a parent can do for their child.
- Helping your child to understand that learning is important and actively showing an interest in what your child is learning and what is happening at the Kindy is essential.

- We ask that you read the information on the entrance whiteboard, as well as the newsletters and information sheets in your child's pigeon hole and take note of any important dates on the term planners sent home. If your child attends Childcare, you may need to ask the Childcare centre staff to collect any information from your pigeon hole.
- Please let the Kindergarten Director or one of the staff know, should there be a situation at home which might affect the child's interest in participation. A seriously ill relative, the arrival of a new baby or general changes in the home situation can be upsetting to the child.
- Educators are better able to provide positive learning outcomes for the children if they are informed of things that affect the child in the home setting.

Your input to the program is very important so please let us know should you have any ideas. You can become involved by joining the Governing Council, fundraising committee or by volunteering to assist in the Kindergarten, you may have some special skills you want to share with the children, be it singing, gardening, cooking, language etc! (Please see Madge Sexton Kindergarten Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy).

Our goal is not just to aim for parental involvement, but for parental partnerships, there is a big difference – this is YOUR kindergarten, we hear YOUR voice.

The Governing Council

What is Governing Council?

The Madge Sexton Kindergarten Governing Council is a wonderful opportunity for parents to become involved in the Kindergarten community by strengthening the partnership between families and staff. The Governing Council aims to provide a supportive network of interested parents who can provide suggestions, advice and feedback to the Director and staff about how the Kindergarten is run and where any improvements can be made in meeting the needs of the children. The Council is also the base from which fundraising ideas are developed and organised – a vital and important aspect of the Kindergarten community.

Who can join the Governing Council?

All parents and care providers of children at Madge Sexton Kindergarten are invited to join. At the Annual General Meeting in Term 1 the Council elects a committee of Office Bearers and various small roles are shared between Council members. You do not have to have been involved in a committee at all before to be a member of the Council, as a parent or caregiver of a child at the Kindergarten your opinions and ideas are highly valued – all we ask is that you bring a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards strengthening the Kindergarten community partnerships.

How much time is involved in being on the Governing Council?

Just two meetings per term! Meetings are a great opportunity for parents to have real input into the financial management of the Kindergarten, term planning and fundraising activities. Outside of meetings you may be asked by the Director to provide your opinion or suggestions on various matters via email or in person – what a great opportunity to have input and get to know the inner workings of the Kindergarten environment!

Will I enjoy being on the Governing Council?

Yes! The Council is a great way to get to know other parents and the Director and Staff. The Council fosters a team environment where parents work together with staff to make Governing the Kindergarten a fun and enjoyable experience for all involved.

What do current Governing Council members have to say?

"We had only recently moved to McLaren Vale from interstate when our daughter started at Madge Sexton Kindergarten. With the hustle and bustle of drop off and pick up I was finding it hard to meet other parents and actually have conversations and get to know the families of my daughter's friends. I saw the Governing Council as a great way to have more time to build relationships and it has been a wonderful experience. Through the people I have met on Council our family has now made many strong bonds to the McLaren Vale community. Personally I have found the year on Council to be very rewarding and have thoroughly enjoyed every aspect of getting involved in the Kindergarten family." **Pam Oddie, Governing Council Member 2012**

Our guiding curriculum: Early Years Learning Framework.....

The Early Years Learning Framework has been developed to ensure your child receives quality education programs in their early childhood setting. This is a vital time for them to learn and develop. The Framework's vision is for all children to experience play based learning that engages and builds success for life.

The Framework has been set up as a guide for Early Childhood Educators who work with children from birth to five years of age, and is used in partnership with the families, (children's first and most influential educators), to develop learning programs responsive to children's ideas, interest, strengths and abilities. The Early Years Learning Framework describes childhood as a time of belonging, being and becoming.

Belonging – is the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel they belong because of the relationships they have with family, community, culture and place.

Being – is about living in the here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need to just “be” – time to play, try new things and have fun.

Becoming – is about the learning and development that young children experience. Children start to form their sense of identity from an early age, which shapes the type of adult they will become.

OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY

- Children feel safe, secure, and supported
- Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency
- Children develop knowledgeable and confident self identities
- Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect

OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE CONNECTED WITH AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR WORLD

- Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation.
- Children respond to diversity with respect
- Children become aware of fairness
- Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

OUTCOME 3: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF WELLBEING

- Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing
- Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

OUTCOME 4: CHILDREN ARE CONFIDENT AND INVOLVED LEARNERS

- Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity
- Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, enquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating
- Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another
- Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials

OUTCOME 5: CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS

- Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes
- Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts
- Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media
- Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work
- Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking

Who is Madge Sexton?

Madge Sexton was born Helen Madge King in 1924. She lived on an 800 acre farm in Allendale North, (7kms north of Kapunda in the Barossa Valley). As a young child, she had followed her brothers to school from such an early age that they allowed her to attend school from the age of four. As she grew older, she would ride her horse the 7kms to school every day and back. She attended secondary school at the Kapunda Convent and gained her leaving certificate, with excellent results. (Believe it or not, she can still quote poetry she learnt at school 75 years ago). The nuns also taught her to play the piano, a skill which she maintained her whole life. She also studied at the Adelaide School of Arts, and returned to painting, with great success, when she was in her fifties. For a short while, she worked in Adelaide in a secretarial capacity, and also worked at the Cheer Up Hut during the Second World War, before marrying Tom, whose father was the local station master at Kapunda. Tom served in WW2 in New Guinea and upon his return trained as a winemaker, alongside Max Schubert (of Grange Hermitage fame – in fact Max and Tom were best mates at Nuriootpa High School.) Tom was posted down to Penfolds at McLaren Vale in 1946, the year Madge and he were married and from there she raised her five boys (and a girl, Angela, who sadly died of influenza in 1958 aged only 8 months old). Sadly, Madge passed away on January 7th, 2013.

Why it all began.....

Madge had young pre-school boys on her hands who were quite a handful, and she needed a break! Her husband, (Thomas Leonard Sexton – he was widely known as Len but he later preferred Tom) was manager and chief winemaker at Penfolds Winery in the main street at McLaren Vale (which later became Southern Vales Co-Op). Madge and Tom's young sons needed help through the pre-school ages as they lived next door to the winery and the open tanks were a great lure to the boys when they were young. Some of Madge's friends who lived in the area were also worried about the 'holes in the ground' at the winery where their husbands worked. But this was only one of the reasons – the main one being that the mums had their hands full (remembering that this was an era when fathers weren't very 'hands-on', and the mums did a huge amount of the child rearing). There was a lady in the area who minded little ones, but not more than once a week, and at a cost. Madge had two or three other friends with kindergarten-aged children as well, so there was some demand for a service.

How it all began.....

Madge called a meeting and invited women of the town who had 3-5 year-olds to see if they wanted to start a kindergarten. That meeting occurred in July 1952 and it was decided that they would hold a series of fundraisers to get the idea off the ground. Initially the women invited friends and relatives to help fill cake stalls in the street every Saturday morning, which raised considerable money over time. Then Madge suggested their biggest fundraiser of all, which was a Debutante Ball. They invited the local Mayor to receive the beautiful girls of the town and district and it was a success which beat all others. The Hall was crowded and the money rolled in as the girl who raised the most money had attracted lots of help. And so they had enough funds to buy some toys and basic equipment, and to put towards a building fund.

TO READ MORE ABOUT THE HISTORY OF MADGE SEXTON KINDERGARTEN SEE OUR WEBSITE.

The Reggio Emilia Philosophy

The Reggio Emilia Approach derives its name from its place of origin, Reggio Emilia, a city located in Emilia Romagna in Northern Italy. Shortly after the Second World War, Loris Malaguzzi, a young teacher and the founder of this educational approach, joined forces with the parents of this region to provide care for young children. They felt that it is in the early years of development that children form who they are as individuals. This led to creation of a program that was based on: the principles of respect, responsibility, and community; the value of exploration and discovery; a supportive and enriching environment; and the interests of the children through a self-guided curriculum. Originally inspired by the need of women to return to the workforce, over the last 50 years, this educational philosophy has caught the attention of early childhood educators worldwide.

The principles of the Reggio Emilia approach that we work with at Madge Sexton Kindergarten fit beautifully within our curriculum, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia – Belonging, Being, Becoming. The Reggio Emilia philosophy is simply -excellent early childhood practice. We believe that by implementing learning programs and experiences through the lens of the Reggio Emilia principles we are able to create rich, engaging and exciting learning experiences for children in a beautiful, respectful environment that fosters strong relationships and a strong sense of identity and belonging for children and families. Outlined below are some of the principles of the Reggio Emilia philosophy that we foster.

Relationships

Relationships and learning through relationships underpin everything that we do. Madge Sexton Kindergarten staff are committed to making connections with every child and building "real" relationships. We provide experiences for children to connect with each other and develop a sense of belonging to our Kindergarten community. We also value relationships with families and the wider community and strive to create opportunities and experiences to connect with them. We aim for "partnerships" with parents, not just superficial parental involvement, we strive to develop a culture where staff and parents respect childhood as a time for children to explore, create and be joyful.

Image of the child

Madge Sexton Kindergarten staff see the children as strong, competent, creative and curious, and capable of building their own theories, not as empty vessels that require filling up with facts. Children are seen as unique individuals within a group. Children are encouraged to share their experiences, ideas, theories and curiosities. A strong sense of identity in children is promoted, children's images are projected everywhere: in photographs; in reflections of mirrors; in celebrations of learning; and in the child directed learning projects and journeys. Children are respected and valued for their unique individual personalities and identities.

Listening – "child's voice"

Madge Sexton Kindergarten staff are genuinely interested in, and listen deeply to what the children have to say/are communicating. We believe that children bring valuable experiences, theories, knowledge, skills and questions to Madge Sexton Kindergarten with them. Educators value skill acquisition but not in isolation, or at the expense of the exploration of knowledge, concepts, theories, questions and collaboration. A loose "guiding curriculum" is planned at the beginning of each term, and the children's interests, knowledge, needs and wonderings determine the direction that the learning journey takes.

Environment as the “third teacher”

The Madge Sexton Kindergarten learning environment reflects that children are highly valued and respected. The physical environment is a beautiful, calming and welcoming space. Educators take much time to set up engaging and enticing experiences to engage children in learning and provide a myriad of spaces for children to “be” alone and with others. The layout of the physical space encourages encounters, communication and relationships. The arrangement of structures, objects and activities encourages choices, problem solving, and discoveries in the process of learning.

100 Languages

A core principle that we believe in is that children possess a hundred languages, a hundred ways of thinking, of expressing themselves, of understanding and encountering others, with a way of thinking that creates connections between the various dimensions of experience rather than separating them. At Madge Sexton Kindergarten, we provide opportunities for children to express themselves and learn through many mediums and experiences. The role of the atelier plays a large role within this. Our atelieristas work collaboratively with educators to ensure that children are provided with opportunities to express themselves through their “100 languages.”

Projects

Madge Sexton Kindergarten staff are committed to research within the Kindergarten and community. Children are given time to explore ideas and theories and develop skills and this is not dependent on strict timetable restrictions. Children are encouraged to ask questions at any time and to be “researchers”. Many “projects” unfold within the Kindergarten learning programs, some long term over weeks, a term, or more; and others more short term and happen within a day or week at Kindergarten. Projects may derive from both children’s and teacher’s ideas and interests, thoughts and theories in things worth knowing about.

Documentation

Recording, reporting on and interpreting children’s learning is a vital part of an educator’s work. Group and individual learning stories are documented and used to celebrate and share learning, as well as inform future learning possibilities. Documentation serves many purposes, but most of all it is used as a research tool for studying children’s learning processes. Documentation is about what children are doing, learning and grasping, and the product of documentation is a reflection of interactions between teachers and children and among children. Documenting children’s daily experiences and ongoing projects gives meaning and identity to all that the children do. It is through documentation that educators are able to gain insight into the thoughts of the children, determine further investigation for working on topics, creating a history of the work and generate further interest.

Professional Development

Madge Sexton Kindergarten staff are committed to lifelong learning and engage in ongoing professional development outside of the Kindergarten environment, but also within the Kindergarten environment and local community, sharing and supporting one another and learning together. Madge Sexton Kindergarten is a member of the Reggio Emilia Australia Information Exchange and are committed to learning from and sharing with others.

Kindergarten Policies

The following Kindergarten policies are available to view in our Policies Folder located in the foyer or on our website.

NATIONAL QUALITY AREA 2: HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Policy 1: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Healthy Food Supply & Nutrition
- Policy 2: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Sun Protection
- Policy 3: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Water Safety
- Policy 4: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Administration of First Aid
- Policy 5: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Incident, injury, trauma and illness
- Policy 6: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Dealing with infectious diseases
- Policy 7: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Dealing with medical conditions
- Policy 8: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Emergency and evacuation
- Policy 9: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Delivery and collection of children
- Policy 10: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Excursions
- Policy 11: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Child Safe Environment
- Policy 22: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Toileting Policy

NATIONAL QUALITY AREA 4: STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

- Policy 12: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Staff Code of Conduct
- Policy 13: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Determining the responsible present
- Policy 14: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Participation of volunteers and students

NATIONAL QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

- Policy 15: Interactions with children

NATIONAL QUALITY AREA 7: SERVICE MANAGEMENT

- Policy 16: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Enrolment and Orientation
- Policy 17: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Governance and management of the service
- Policy 18: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations
- Policy 19: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Payment of Fees
- Policy 20: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Dealing with Complaints
- Policy 21: Madge Sexton Kindergarten Bullying and Harassment Policy

Term Dates

2016

Term 1: 1 February – 15 April
Term 2: 2 May – 8 July
Term 3: 25 July – 30 September
Term 4: 17 October – 16 December

2017

Term 1: 30 January – 13 April
Term 2: 1 May – 7 July
Term 3: 24 July – 29 September
Term 4: 16 October – 15 December



Madge Sexton Kindergarten Surprise Flamingo Flocking!

At Madge Sexton Kindergarten we are "Surprise Flamingo Flocking" to raise some much needed funds to improve our outdoor environment for the children. We have huge plans to create an engaging and beautiful yard filled with many spaces for children to explore, play and learn and many artistic, interactive installations built around the yard including one dedicated to our founder, the late Helen Madge Sexton. Flamingo Flocking is lots of fun..... so get involved!

WHAT IS FLAMINGO FLOCKING?

Under the cover of darkness, Madge Sexton Kindergarten's trained professional team of "Flockers" will visit a Madge Sexton Kindergarten Community member who has been nominated (and agreed to by selecting yes on the "to be flocked or not to be flocked" tear off slip below) and set free a flock of around 20 plastic flamingos to roost in their front yard.

Imagine the surprise the following morning when they look out their window to find they have been "Flocked". The flocking "victim" then pays a de-flocking fee to have the offending birds safely removed. A "Flamingo Flocking Ransom Note" will be attached to one of the flock with instructions on how to arrange removal and pay your donation. The flock will be left to roost at the home for up to 2 days or can be picked up earlier by contacting the number on the ransom note. (See below for pricing recommendations) Once the donation is paid, the victim is offered the chance to decide who might be the next suitable candidate from our "Possible Flockee List" for the birds to visit or nominate someone else to be put on the flocking list.

WHAT IF I DON'T WANT TO BE THE VICTIM OF FLAMINGO FLOCKING?

To keep yourself off the flocking list you can take out "Flamingo Flocking Insurance." This will cover you against the perils of pink flamingos. Select "Save Me" to purchase Flocking Insurance on the tear off slip below and return to Kindy with your donation (see below for price recommendations) and your garden will remain safe from these pink pests. A certificate of Insurance will be forwarded to you.

CAN I FLOCK A FRIEND?

If you are interested in having a friend get "flocked," as you would take delight in seeing your friends afflicted by a visitation of the pink pests, you may wish to fill in and pay for a "Flamingo Flocking Work Order" form (attached). If you decide to go ahead with this, please make sure that you choose someone who would ensure our flock are kept safe and not turned into Flamingo Pie! (See below for pricing recommendations). Please note that due to the safety of our flock we are only available to flock in the McLaren Vale, Tatachilla, McLaren Flat and Willunga areas. We will let you know when they are being flocked so you can visit them or come and help.

THAT SOUNDS LIKE FUN! HOW DO I BECOME PART OF THE MADGE SEXTON KINDERGARTEN FLOCKERS?

If you think it sounds like fun to dress in dark clothes and sneak around the suburbs planting plastic flamingos in people's yards without getting caught, then we want you!! We are always looking for Madge Sexton family members to help us to do our flocking. You can choose to do some or all of the flocking.

Pricing recommendations:

Remain un-flocked by purchasing "Flocking Insurance"—donations \$10.00 and above appreciated
"Flock a Friend" using the "Flamingo Flocking Work Order"—donations \$10.00 & above appreciated
"De-Flocking"—donations \$10.00 and above appreciated

We ask that you keep in mind that these costs are a guide only and are a donation to the Kindergarten, any additional generosity is always welcomed. The minimum costs have been put in place to cover the flocking procedures, training to safely de-flock, lessons in stealth undercover work, helicopter licences, night vision goggles, commando training courses, balaclavas, ninja skills training & minor plastic surgery to protect our anonymity.

Staff Profiles

Leanne Lovett



Leanne has been working in Education since 1996 with children aged from Kindergarten to Year 10. She has worked in many settings including various communities on the Pitjantjatjara Lands, Townsville, McLaren Flat Primary School, Chandlers Hill Kindergarten and Coromandel Valley Kindergarten. Leanne has exceptional skills in developing and implementing effective learning programmes for children due to her experiences of working in various roles including Kindergarten Director, Literacy Coordinator, Numeracy Coordinator, Special Education Teacher and Teacher (Reception – Year 7). She holds a Bachelor of Teaching in Junior Primary/Primary Education and her strengths lie heavily in developing effective literacy programs for children and supporting children with additional needs. Leanne's passion lies in exploring principles of the Reggio Emilia philosophy. Leanne's trip to Reggio Emilia, Italy in 2012 to attend an international study tour consolidated her understanding and passion of the Reggio principles and furthered the work with the Madge Sexton Kindergarten team around the Reggio Emilia philosophy. Leanne enjoys working with early years children and their families, fostering a love of learning in others, and developing strong connections with the community.

Tennille Langeluddecke



Tennille is a highly experienced and effective teacher having worked in various Early Childhood settings since 1996. Her experience extends from Preschools, Schools, Out of Hours Care, Vacation Care and Long Day Care, both as a Teacher and a Director. Her qualifications include a Bachelor of Early Childhood Education and a Diploma in Community Services. Tennille is highly skilled in designing interesting and engaging learning environments and providing fun, creative and innovative small and large group experiences. Tennille's effective communication and relationship skills allow her to develop strong connections with the children and extend their learning. In 2014, Tennille was selected out of hundreds of applicants to be a part of the DECD Highly Accomplished Teacher trial due to her excellence in teaching. Tennille is passionate about nature play and was a key designer of our outdoor learning area.

Jonette Thorsteinson



Jonette has over 30 years experience working as a Pre-school Teacher in various kindergartens in southern Adelaide. She holds a Diploma of Teaching in Early Childhood Education, a Graduate Diploma in Community and School Relations and a Bachelor of Special Education and is currently completing a BA focusing on the history of women and children in South Australia. Jonette enjoys sharing her learning with the children, and is committed to developing positive relationships with children and their families, and working together as part of the children's educational journey. Jonette has a strong interest in teaching children about science and loves to bring her pet critters into Kindy to share with the children to their delight.

Kalinda Glatter



Kalinda has a Certificate 3 in Office/Administration as well as a Diploma in Interior Design and a Certificate 3 in Children's Services. Kalinda has been an Early Childhood Educator for over 5 years working initially as our finance officer, then taking on an additional role as an Atelierista (Art Teacher). Kalinda works closely with the teachers to ensure the atelier program runs alongside the emerging curriculum, guided by the children's voice. Kalinda builds strong relationships with the children who use her as a facilitator for their imaginations. Often an idea is difficult to turn into something concrete so Kalinda's role in the atelier is to supply the tools for the idea, however the "thinking and doing" process remains the children's. Kalinda enjoys creating a harmonious and beautiful learning environment for the children to thrive in.

Emma Shaw



Emma has extensive skills in working with preschool children including supporting children with additional needs and working with all preschool aged children to extend and build on their interests. Emma has a Certificate 3 in Children's Services. One of Emma's passions is setting up amazing socio-dramatic play environments for children. Her effective communication skills and caring nature provide Emma with a solid connection with both children and families within the kindergarten. Emma facilitates our "Madge's Minis playgroup on a Friday morning, engaging pre-kindergarten aged children and their parents in creative based learning experiences. Emma is also our "Queen Flocker", training and working with our parent Flocking Team to bring joy and a sense of fun to our local community. Emma is nervously excited out working in her new role as an atelierista in 2016 with support from Kalinda, our experienced atelierista.

Angela Ryan



Angela joins the Madge Sexton Kindergarten Team after previous careers supporting the elderly and emergency services. Her qualifications include a Certificate 3 in Children's Services and she is passionate about providing a positive, nurturing, encouraging, respectful and fun learning environment for the children of Madge Sexton Kindergarten. Angela enjoys fostering lasting relationships with the local children and their families. Angela loves cooking and shares her expertise with the children where possible, creating engaging learning experiences in the kitchen and encouraging the love of healthy sustainable food from the kitchen to the table.

Laura Reay



Laura comes to Madge Sexton Kindergarten with over 16 years' experience as an early childhood educator. Initially working in the UK and more recently in Australia as an Early Childhood Worker specialising in Preschool Support for children with additional needs. Laura holds a certificate 3 in Children's Services and is currently working towards her Diploma in Children's Services. Laura has worked in supporting roles for children with additional needs in many local kindergartens and continues to support and build on the needs of all children. Laura's passion lies in transient art, where she encourages the use of loose parts in children's learning experience.



The Madge Sexton Kindergarten Logo encompasses all that is nurturing; it depicts growth, fusion and harmony amongst our Kindergarten family; deep roots to the community; and a thriving balance of strength and support.

Inspire - Create - Belong

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