

Madge Sexton Kindergarten



HANDBOOK



Welcome to Madge Sexton Kindergarten

The Staff and Governing Council welcome you to Madge Sexton Kindergarten. We look forward to working in partnership with you during your child's learning journey.

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.

Our Statement of Philosophy

At Madge Sexton Kindergarten we value partnerships with families and recognise them as their child's first educator. We strive to ensure all children and families feel a sense of belonging at kindy through open and honest communication.

Educators at Madge Sexton Kindergarten are inspired by the principles of the Reggio Emilia philosophy. We believe that children develop a sense of agency when encouraged to co-research and express themselves through their 100+ languages. Children develop an understanding that they are valued, as their voices guide their day to day learning journeys.

We believe that children's positive dispositions for learning will be enhanced through the language we use as we interact with them. These learning dispositions include; confidence, curiosity, independence, creativity, assessing and taking risks, collaboration, kindness, resilience and persistence.

We believe the role of the educator is to foster a love of learning in children. Educators hold and promote a strong image of the child, viewing each child as a unique individual, knowing that each of them are competent to lead their own learning in our purposeful environment. By sharing their ideas, problem solving together and hands on exploration, children engage in the social construction of knowledge through a strengths based curriculum, where the child is at the center of every decision made

We value community history and connections, ensuring our children are visible within their local community as a citizen with rights. We acknowledge and value our indigenous heritage and the history of Madge Sexton.

We value research and engage in critical reflection in our practice as educators. We work together to embed a culture of equity, collaboration, openness, honesty, innovation and cohesion with a shared workload, as we foster a culture of lifelong learning for all.

We believe that a philosophy statement evolves as new learning is gained and practice is reflected upon.



Kindergarten session times

Children are allocated into one of the following groups.
Each child is entitled to 600 hours of Kindergarten.

Group 1 attends:

Mondays 8.45-3.00 in weeks 2, 4, 6, 8 of each term

Tuesdays 8.45 – 3.00

Wednesdays 8.45 – 3.00

Group 2 attends:

Mondays 8.45-3.00 in weeks 1, 3, 5, 7 of each term

Thursdays 8.45 – 3.00

Fridays 8.45 – 3.00



Fees

Public Kindergartens in South Australia are administered by the Department for Education. Our Kindergarten receives some money from the Department 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. Excursions and incursions will be at an additional cost.

Sessional Kindergarten is \$125.00 per child per term.

Fees, excursion costs etc, are all paid via online banking; BSB: 105071 Account No: 280005440.

A receipt will be issued to you. Payment installment agreements can be made, please see a staff member.

Additional services

Madge Sexton Kindergarten has access to the following Department for Education services: Speech Pathologist; Psychologist; Behaviour Support Educator; and Inclusive Educator. If you think your child may require any of these services, please see the Director.

A child and Family Health Service nurse attends the kindergarten to complete 4 year old health checks, you will be notified of available dates each term and then able to make an appointment if you wish.

Nature play

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)

- 8.30: Gates open
- 8.45: Session time begins (you can farewell your child)
- 9.15: Group mat time
- 9.45: Fruit
- 10.00: Inside/outside learning
- 11.40: Group mat time
- 12.00: Lunch & relaxation time
- 1.00: Inside/outside learning
- 2.00: Optional fruit/finishing off lunch
- 2.30: Group mat time
- 2.50: Dismissal of children begins
- 3.00: End of session



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. Please encourage your child to walk in and to be independent as much as possible.

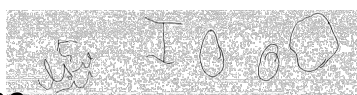
It is important to keep staff informed of changes in contact details, telephone numbers and emergency contacts.

When dropping your child off in the mornings you must remain on kindy grounds to supervise them until the doors are opened at 8.45am. At this time please support them to place their bag in a locker before you say goodbye. Please make sure that you always say goodbye to your child when you leave, don't sneak off as it is important that we work together to build trusting relationships.

Arrival and Parents sign in process

- Children to put their own lunch box in the crate on the verandah.
- Parents check for any notices on the whiteboard on the verandah.
- Sign in your child – sign in sheets are on the bench on the verandah.
- Children to put their own bag in a locker inside (with fruit and drink bottle and hat inside bag)
- Help your child to settle into an activity and say goodbye.

It is important for you to sign your child in and out each day. Evacuation and invacuation procedures are practiced with the children and staff on a regular basis and this sign-in sheet is used to identify all children during these times.



Children's sign in process

Paper and pencils are provided for children to sign themselves in at one of the children's "sign in" desks. Within the first few weeks of starting kindy all children will have a name card and photo that can be used to support them. Please avoid overcrowding the sign in areas and encourage your child to have a go independently. Children are at different stages, some children's writing may look like lines or circles, others may be writing the first letter, others can write their whole name. Children are celebrated for doing 3/4/5 year old writing and are supported to understand that their writing doesn't look like adult or computer writing. Once they understand this, their confidence will flourish and you will begin to see progress throughout the year.

Clothing

Please name ALL clothing your child brings to Kindy.

Choose clothes that are suitably comfortable for climbing, running, jumping and swinging, as well as clothes that are suitable for independent toileting (eg no belts, or overalls). Please keep in mind children will be working with paints, mud, glues, sand and therefore please do not send them in clothes that they need to keep clean. Please ensure clothing covers shoulders and that your child is wearing appropriate shoes for running and climbing. We offer Madge Sexton Kindergarten tops, jumpers and hats for sale, these are not compulsory.

Medication

If your child has 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 an educator 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 kindy before your child is able to attend Kindergarten to ensure the safety and wellbeing of your child.

What should your child bring to Kindy?

Named backpack.

1-2 pieces of fresh fruit or vegetable – kept in your child's bag.

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 to keep cool.

Ice brick if needed to keep food fresh.

Named non-spill drink bottle filled with water – Kept in your child's bag. Please note that at lunch times children drink from water from the water jugs with glasses at their tables.

Hat – legionnaire style or broad brimmed with no chin strap- Sun smart policies are in place at the Kindergarten and children are required to wear a hat when the UV is over 3 to comply with our Skin Protection policy.

Named change of clothes.

Sunscreen applied in the hotter months. Kindergarten sunscreen will be available for children to re-apply at lunch time.

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 educators do not know the person by appearance, the person will be asked to produce 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, a sticker and balloon. This celebration will also include children who have their birthdays in school holidays.

Please do not send along any items for your child to give out to the other children including birthday cake, etc. Please place any birthday invitations in pigeon holes rather than give to children directly. Please see staff if you require assistance.

Seesaw

Seesaw is a digital portfolio where educators can add photos and videos to share learning with families and also send reminders. You will receive an invitation with a QR code to join in your child's first few weeks of kindy



Absences

Please advise of absences via text message on 0419 521 736 (you will not receive a reply), please note that this is a text only number. Any child who has 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. Should your child become unwell, you will be contacted to collect them.

Parent grievances

Our staff are here to ensure you and your child enjoy a happy experience at Madge Sexton Kindergarten, should a problem arise then please let us know. In most cases, parents together with the Educator will be able to resolve issues. Should you find yourself unsatisfied with the outcome, please contact the Director, who can work with you and the Educator to resolve the problem.

Constructive feedback

Let us know! Please tell us about the good things Madge Sexton Kindergarten staff do or say as positive feedback supports us to continue providing a quality program. We are always happy to have constructive feedback or ideas for improvement and there is a "suggestion box" located on the verandah for this purpose.

Canteen

The McLaren Vale Primary School Canteen offers a lunch order service to the Kindergarten children. You can order via the Qkr! App.

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.



Parental partnerships / Communication processes

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 can expect to see.

- An orientation evening with staff to give new parents information about our Kindergarten and for children to have a play.
- A child questionnaire (at the beginning of your child's time at Kindergarten).
- A conversation to collaboratively formulate your child's goals for their 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 Statement of Learning (in your child's fourth and final term of Kindergarten).
- Individual Learning Folders – You are welcome to look through your child's at anytime. These will also be sent home for sharing at different times throughout the year.
- Display boards and Folders which have detailed documentation about children's learning, events and projects.
- Newsletters and notes will be distributed through email and/or pigeon holes.
- An informative website.
- A Seesaw app is used as an effective communication tool.
- Photographic slide shows on our large television above the lockers.
- 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.



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.
- Please let the Kindergarten know should there be a situation at home which might affect the child's interest in participation. 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 into the program is important so please let us know should you have any ideas. You can become involved by joining the Governing Council; sharing information about your occupation for example, nurse, police, gardener; or about your families culture for example, teaching us some words in your first language.

The Governing Council

The Madge Sexton Kindergarten Governing Council is an opportunity for parents to become involved in the Kindergarten. The Governing Council aims to provide a supportive network of 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. The Council is also the base from which fundraising ideas are developed and organised. Two meetings per term are held in the evenings at MSK. 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.

Who can join the Governing Council?

All parents and caregivers of children at Madge Sexton Kindergarten are invited to join. At the Annual General Meeting, the Council elects a committee of Office Bearers and various small roles are shared between Council members.



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

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

OUTCOME 3: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF WELLBEING

OUTCOME 4: CHILDREN ARE CONFIDENT, INVOLVED LEARNERS

OUTCOME 5: CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS

Indicators of Preschool Numeracy and Literacy

The indicators of preschool numeracy and literacy connect with the general capabilities from the Australian Curriculum (school curriculum). The indicators recognise that all children come to kindy with literacy and numeracy capabilities which they demonstrate in their own unique way.



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).

Madge had young pre-school boys on her hands who were quite a handful, and she needed a break! 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.

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. Madge Sexton officially opened in September 1955.

Sadly, Madge passed away on January 7th, 2013.

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

Madge Sexton Kindergarten today: 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 within a SA context, 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. On the following page 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 “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.



Staffing

Madge Sexton Kindergarten has 4 permanent educators and a Director, as well as other contract staff that change from year to year. The permanent staff at MKS are as follows:

Tennille Langeluddecke	Director
Emily Kitto (<i>on leave</i>)	Teacher
Kalinda Glatter	Early Childhood Worker
Emma Shaw	Early Childhood Worker
Laura Reay	Early Childhood Worker



Tennille Langeluddecke

Tennille is a highly experienced and effective teacher and Director 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 educators, children and families. Tennille is passionate about nature play and was a key designer of our outdoor learning area, supporting children to assess risk for themselves and to accept challenges in order to build important learning dispositions including resilience, persistence, confidence and problem solving.



Emily Kitto

Emily holds a Bachelor degree in Early Childhood Education, graduating from Flinders University in 2018. She has experience in both kindergarten and the early years of primary school. Emily is passionate about fostering learning dispositions in children and supporting the unique learning journey of each child. She enjoys having the freedom in teaching to follow the interests of children and use it as a guide for further planning. Emily has an interest in special education and the range of ways learning can be adapted to suit every child. She is passionate about advocating for children as competent and capable and is confident to challenge expectations of what young children can do. Emily enjoys interactive learning and collaboration with children in discussions and projects.





Kalinda Glatter

Kalinda has a Certificate 3 in Children's Services and has been an Early Childhood Educator since 2011, 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.



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 is also our Work Health Safety representative.



Laura Reay

Laura is a highly experienced early childhood educator, initially working in the UK and since 2013 has been an Early Childhood Worker in Australia, holding a certificate 3 in Children's Services. Laura works exceptionally in Preschool Support working with children with varying needs, her bubbly personality allows her to build strong connections to support her to build on children's existing skills and understandings. Laura also works as an atelierista, using the children's current thinking to authentically provide next steps to provoke further discussions and thinking through a hands on program.

Each Year the kindergarten has a number of contract staff in addition to the above mentioned permanent staff.

Details for these staff can be viewed on our website.



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Email: dl.3647.leaders@schools.sa.edu.au

Website: www.madgekgn.sa.edu.au

Facebook: 'Madge Sexton Kindergarten Families'

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.

