

2021



**PENONG & COORABIE
DISTRICTS SCHOOL
EARLY LEARNING CENTRE**

**PARENT
INFORMATION
BOOK**

'Learning Together'

We strive to ensure a quality learning environment where
all children are given every opportunity



Government of South Australia
Department for Education

Table of Contents

- 1: Welcome
 - Staff
- 2: Statement of Philosophy
- 3: Learning Environment and Curriculum
- 4: Fees
- 5: Communication
- 6: Assessment and Reporting
- 7: Session Times
- 8: What your child needs to bring each day.
 - Essentials
 - What to leave home
- 9: The Daily Routine
- 10: Bus Zone
- 11: Parental Involvement
- 12: Health and Safety
- 13: Behaviour management
- 14: Support Service
- 15: School Transition
- 16: Other Services
- 17: Far West Partnership

Policy attached to Handbook

- Skin protection policy
- Nutrition, food, beverage and Dietary
- Behaviour Guidance Code
- Parent Complaints

1. Welcome

Welcome to Penong early Learning Centre. We trust your time here will be a happy and rewarding one and we look forward to working with your child/children.

Your child will be encouraged to participate in a safe, caring learning environment that fosters wellbeing, success and a strong sense of worth.

- We invite you to work in partnership with our staff team to plan for, share and enjoy your child's time at Pre-School.
- We believe it is a vital part of your child's development to have open communication between home and Pre-School.
- We invite you to participate in activities in the centre helping us to meet the needs of your child, helping them gain the skills for life and learning in a happy, safe and secure environment.
- We welcome your comments, participation and involvement in the centre.
- We invite you to assist us with programming for your child by sharing with us their needs and interests, by attending parent interviews in your child's second and fourth term of Pre-school and by sharing with your child their individual Learning Logs.
- Parents are most welcome to spend time at the centre at any time on a regular or irregular basis. Free tea and coffee are available to all parents in the kitchen. Please feel free to help yourself.

Staff

Nominated Supervisor:
Karen Murray

Teacher/Certified Supervisor:
Tricia Shipard

Support Staff:
Rebecca Freeman

All educators work as a team to provide an integrated approach to education and care.

GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR CENTRE AND THE COMMUNITY OFFER CHILDREN A GREATER CHANCE OF SUCCESS

The Penong & Coorabie Districts School Early Learning Centre plays an integral part in the Penong Primary School environment.

Penong is a school in a small isolated location, students here are given every opportunity to overcome issues of isolation within our context.

2. Statement of Philosophy

Our values and vision make us who we are: A community of children, educators and families, learning with and from one another, having fun, connecting with the world and each other, facing challenges with purpose and persistence.



We believe that all children have the right to belong, learn and develop lifelong skills in a supportive, safe nurturing, respectful environment. We will best achieve this by working in partnership with families and other agencies and by providing a curriculum that is relevant, engaging and fun!

We believe:

- That every child is a unique individual.
- In fostering positive self-esteem for every child.
- Children should be accepted and valued as individuals.
- That the differing needs of every child should be recognised and programmed for.
- That children come from diverse backgrounds which may reflect different values and opinions.
- In catering for the social, emotional, creative, physical and intellectual development of young children.
- In children being actively involved in their own learning.
- Play is the medium through which children learn most effectively.
- Concrete experiences play the major role in children's learning.
- In involving parents in the kindergarten community.
- Children should be encouraged to become independent.
- The influences of home and kindergarten should be in harmony.
- The kindergarten experience should positively influence the development of children's self-concepts.
- That our effectiveness as teachers, our curriculum and the children's progress and development be continually evaluated.

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide high quality learning, teaching, care, employment and youth services within an integrated, responsive and supportive learning organisation, which strives for continuous improvement in service and performance.

We Value

* Respect
(be kind)

* Responsibility
(step up)

* Caring
(be a friend)

* Honesty
(tell the truth)

* Courage
(be brave)

* Excellence
(be the best you can)

* Collaboration
(working together)

Our Principles

Our work is underpinned by our commitment to the following principles:

- A constant focus on quality, standards, continuous improvement and performance.
- equity and access
- accountability
- partnerships
- responsiveness, innovation and competitiveness
- local management

The Value of Play

Young children are active learners - they need to be involved in their learning and have concrete experiences.

Children gain these experiences through play. They construct, test and apply their developing knowledge. They can practice what they are learning.

Through play children come to understand and express their thoughts and feelings about the world and make sense of it.

Through play children learn to lead, follow, co-operate, take turns and wait.

Play is: - preparation for adulthood
- an avenue for appropriate release of stress and tension

An environment for play is:
- safe and nurturing
- challenging and stimulating with a range of resources
- flexible and creative for children to manipulate
- indoors and outdoors

Children at play:
- take control of their own learning
- have the freedom to manage their own time
- have the opportunity to interact with others
- have the time for uninterrupted and self-selected activities
- have opportunities to be active and curious, quiet and reflective



3. Learning Environment and Curriculum

The Penong Early Learning Centre use the Early Years Framework as a Curriculum framework to guide our program, planning and assessment of children's learning.

Pre-school curriculum is guided by the early years Learning framework and Literacy and numeracy Indicators.

We believe families are children's first and most influential educators. Therefore staff use the framework in partnership with families to develop learning programs responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities.

The Early Years 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 their family, community, culture and place.

Being is about living here and now. Childhood is a special time and children need time 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.

Curriculum Outcomes

- Children have a strong sense of identity.
- Children are connected and contribute to their world.
- Children are confident and informed learners.
- Children are effective communicators.
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.

Children have a strong sense of identity

Children learn about themselves and construct their own identity within the context of their family and wider communities. This includes relationships with people, places and things and the actions and responses of others. When children have positive experiences they develop an understanding of themselves as significant and respected, and feel a sense of belonging. 'Who I am', 'how I belong' and 'what is my influence?.'

Children are connected with and contribute to their world

Children broaden their experiences as participants in different relationships and communities. When children participate collaboratively in everyday routines, events and experiences and have opportunities to contribute to decisions, they learn to live interdependently. Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment.

Children are confident and involved learners

A sense of security and strong wellbeing gives children the confidence to explore and experiment and try out new ideas, thus developing their competence and being active and involved in their learning. Children use processes such as exploration, collaboration and problem solving across all aspects of the curriculum. Developing dispositions such as curiosity, persistence and creativity enables children to participate in and gain from learning.

Children are effective communicators

Literacy and numeracy capacities are important aspects of communication and are vital for successful learning across the curriculum. Children are intrinsically motivated to exchange ideas, thoughts, questions and feelings, and use a range of mediums like dance, drama and music to express themselves, connect with others and extend their learning. Children's use of their home language underpins their sense of identity and is respected

Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

This includes good physical health, feelings of happiness, satisfaction and successful social relationships. A strong sense of wellbeing provides children with confidence and optimism which maximises their learning potential. Learning about healthy lifestyles, including nutrition, personal hygiene, physical fitness, emotions and relationships is integral to wellbeing and confidence.

4. Fees

Term fees are set by the E.L.C Management Committee These enable us to resource our programmes. Current fees are \$40 per term for preschool and \$20 per term for pre-entry / early entry. Preschool fees should be paid to the school during the first 4 weeks of each term.

There is an option to pay for the whole year, please contact the school.

5. Communication

We believe good communication is vital in sharing information and supporting good relationships with families.

Confidentiality

Educators respect the confidentiality of all matters relating to your child and family, unless we have written or verbal consent.

Information Notice Board

Is on the parent board in our pre-school. This board has important and interesting information about the pre-school, other children's services and community events.

Newsletters

Families receive a newsletter regularly on-line and as a hard copy, informing them about pre-school activities, Governing Council decisions, forthcoming meetings, community events and the learning programme. Curriculum newsletters for pre-school families provide specific information about children's learning.

Program and photo display of previous weeks learning

The pre-school program is on display for parents next to the sign in sheet on the desk.

Communication book for bus children (children must bring every day) shared daily with families.

Change of details

Please inform the pre-school if there are any changes in your contact details as current records are important in the event of an emergency.

Educational programs encompass children's needs, interests and developmental level. They provide opportunities for children to develop self-confidence, independence, social skills, problem solving, literacy and numeracy. Our aim is to build confident and involved learners and a strong foundation for further education.

Children's voice is actively engaged in the programme content.

Extra curricula activities are organised to enrich children's learning, which includes excursions, community members sharing their skills and visitors to the centre.

6. Assessment & Reporting

As part of our commitment to monitoring and assessing individual children's progress we use a range of strategies including:

- Observations.
- Samples of work/photos.
- Child interviews.
- Information from parents.
- Learning stories.

You will be informed about your child's progress through:

- Informal discussions / photos.
- 2 way interviews (2nd and 4th term of pre-school).
- Individual learning plans.
- Children's learning portfolios.
- Statement of learning when the child moves on to school.

7. Session Times

2021 – Four Year Old Programme:

- **Term 1**

Students will attend two days a week on **Tuesday** and **Thursday** except during **weeks 4 & 8**, when preschool will be **held only on Tuesday** during those weeks. (8:30am-3:00pm)

- **Term 2**

Same programme as Term I (8:30am-3:00pm)

- **Term 3**

Students will attend three days a week on **Monday, Tuesday and Thursday** with the exception being **weeks 4 & 8**, when there will be **no preschool held on Thursday** of those weeks. (8:30am-3:00pm)

- **Term 4**

In Term 4, Kindy will be held each week for 3 days to help us accommodate our school transition programme. (8:30am-3:00pm)

2021 Associated Programme:

In 2021 we will be running our Associated Programme (Students who are 3 years of age). These children will be entitled to attend preschool, starting the term following their third birthday. They can attend on **Tuesday** for Term **1 & 2** (8:30am-3:00pm).

Monday & fortnightly on Thursday during Terms **3 & 4** (8:30am-3:00pm).

Our Aboriginal Programme will also be run again this year with Aboriginal students turning 3, able to attend full time preschool, which is departmental policy.

Playgroup

Wednesday 10 am to 12 pm
All welcome with a Carer/Parent



Arrival at pre-school

Parents are requested to adhere to the session times.

Please accompany your child safely into the pre-school building and greet an educator.

Please sign your child in upon arriving and leaving each session, in the roll book on our front desk. Also encourage your child to sign themselves in. If you or your child are experiencing difficulty separating and are unsure or have concerns please talk to an educator.

Leaving Pre-school

Please inform educators if your child is being collected by someone other than yourself.

Should an emergency arise and you will be late, where possible telephone the pre-school so the educators can re-assure your child, as late collection can be stressful and upsetting for your child. If you arrive early you may like to help the educator clean up after the busy day.

Absences

Please inform educator why your child is to be absent, particularly in cases of infectious illness. It is important to send your child to pre-school regularly as this helps them develop good relationships with children and staff. It also helps us maintain our staff numbers.

How to deal with issues and concerns

From time to time issues may arise that need to addressing. If you feel you are unable to discuss them with us, guidelines are available in raising a concern or complaint policy.

8. What your child needs to bring each day

Please name all personal items clearly

- Wear practical clothing and shoes. Play is children's work and they need to be comfortable exploring the pre-school environment without the worry of keeping clothes clean etc.
- Sun hat (these are stored at the pre-school.)
- Water bottle (labelled.)
- Nutritious snack/lunch in re-useable containers (labelled.)
- Pre-school bag/backpack (named.)
- Change of clothes/nappy (where applicable).
- Sunscreen (applied before arriving.)

What to leave home

- Toys or special items unless they are related to the curriculum. Should your child need a security toy, please discuss with us.

9. The daily routine

8:30am: On arrival children are encouraged to sign in, unpack their bags lunch boxes to be placed in the fridge, drink bottles, snacks and hats into their lockers. Parents are encouraged to join an activity with their child.

A guide for our Daily Routine

- Inside activities/play
- Group time (literacy focus)
- Fruit time
- Fine motor skills
- Snack
- Outdoor play
- Group time (numeracy focus)
- Lunch
- Outdoor play
- Brush teeth
- Rest and relaxation
- Gross motor skills outdoor play activity
- Pack up
- Puzzles

10. Bus Zone

A bus zone is located in the School yard where children enter and leave the bus.

11. Parental Involvement

There are many ways to be involved in your child's pre-school.

- Reading stories or cooking with small groups.
- Sharing a special skill to enrich the children's learning program.
- Assisting with administration tasks eg computer, covering books etc.
- Attending parent information sessions.
- Becoming a member of the Management Committee.
- Caring for our garden.
- Be involved in term cleaning.
- Participating in fundraising and social functions.
- Responding to questionnaires / giving feedback on specific/general matters.

Management Committee

The Early Learning Centre has a management committee elected annually at the Annual General Meeting.

The Committee consists of:

Chairperson

Secretary / assistant

Treasurer

Governing Council Representative

Other Committee Members



The management group meets once a term and reports to the Governing Council via their nominated Council Representative.

12. Health and Safety

Please refer to- www.decd.sa.gov.au/policiesreg168 for all Department of Education required policies and procedures (Reg 168) and the policy folder located at Pre-school for site specific policies.

Sun Protection

Children are asked to wear hats when playing outside all year round. We ask that you apply sunscreen to your child prior to coming to Pre-school. Sunscreen is available for children to apply. Our Sun Protection policy is attached.

Water Play

Children are encouraged to play with water at the educator's discretion. Water activities will be available all year. Please pack spare clothes in case your child gets wet during play.

Toileting

Children are encouraged to manage their toileting needs independently at Pre-school. Staff will provide support as they learn the skills to be independent. It may help if they wear clothes that enable independence such as shorts with elastic, shirts or Velcro fasteners. If your child has specific toileting requirements due to any special needs please discuss these with staff prior to starting Pre-school.

Allergy Aware

As some children have severe allergies to nuts, we are a nut aware Pre-school and endeavour to be nut free.

Nutrition

We encourage the children to eat nutrition food and to drink water. We ask that children do not bring foods such as muesli bars, fruit bars, sweet biscuits, potato chips etc. please send food in re-useable containers.

The morning snack is fruit or vegetables.

Our healthy food supply and nutrition policy is attached.

Illness and Injury

If your child is unwell prior to coming to Pre-school it is in the best interest of the other children to keep them home until they are well.

Please inform the centre when your child has an infectious disease so the spreading of disease can be minimised.

Head Lice

Please notify the Pre-school if you have needed to treat your child for head lice. If live nits are found at pre-school, parents will be contacted to carry out necessary treatments. Notices are sent out to all families when a case of head lice has been detected.

Control and prevention of the spread of head lice and other public health pests is a community responsibility, check and treatment for head lice is by law, a parent's responsibility.

As there has been head lice found in child's hair at pre-school, it is recommended that you do regular checks of all members of your family. Head lice are passed from person to person by direct contact or on shared objects such as towels, combs and hats. Anyone, adult or child can get head lice.

What to look for:

- Small light or dark brown insects without wings.
- Tiny white eggs (nits) on the hair shafts (near the ears and nape of neck)
- An intense itching on the head and neck.

A number of contagious illnesses require children to be exempt from attending.

Pre-school. Please contact educators if unsure.

See: more information about infectious diseases available in our handbook.

Minor injury's will be treated by educators, recorded and reported to parents.

Emergency Procedure

In the event of your child becoming ill or having an accident at pre-school, we will contact you or your emergency contact person. In an emergency, educators will call an ambulance or take the most appropriate action.

Medication

Educators must be notified of any allergies your child has. A health support plan must be completed and signed by the doctor before educator can administer any medication.

Any asthma and severe allergy medications are to be given to an educator on arrival.

Immunisations

At the time of enrolling at Pre-school, parents or guardians are required to provide evidence of their child's immunisation status.

Children with a non-immunised status are not able to attend pre-school.

13. Behaviour Management

At Penong Early Learning Centre we:

- Believe everyone has the right to be safe.
- Teach children to gain self-control.
- Provide a safe and supportive environment.
- Promote positive relationships
- Practice protective behaviour strategies.
- Provide strategies for managing challenging behaviour.

Our behaviour guidance policy attached.

14. Support Services

The following support services are available through the Department of Education.

- Bi-lingual support
- Speech and language
- Special Education
- Psychology
- Social work

Child and Family Health services (CAFHS)

CAFHS conduct medical and developmental checks on children from the age of 4.3 months at the centre when required. Included are height, weight, and hearing and eyesight tests. If you wish to seek advice about your child's health and development contact CAFHS on 1300 733 606.

Dental Care

Children clean their teeth after lunch every day.

15. School Transition

The transition policy at Penong ELC is very flexible and addresses the needs of individual or groups of children at any one time.

Formal transitions are held during term 4.

The Pre-school join on special days and events with the School, this is another transition strategy.

Children are familiar with their surroundings.

Educators liaise with school educators to ensure they have an understanding of the individual needs of each child.

A statement of learning is written about your child's learning journey while at pre-school identifying knowledge and interests, strengths and areas needing support. These will be shared with you for your comments, and with permission passed on to the school.

16. Other Services

Playgroup

Playgroup is held at the centre on Wednesday from 10am -12pm. All families of children 5 years and under are welcome to attend Playgroups. Playgroup is coordinated by parent volunteers. Families are asked to bring a piece of fruit to share and a hat.

Playgroup fees are \$10.00 a term.

Bus Service

A bus service is currently provided for children who live 5km out of town to the west. Pre-school children are able to access this service if the bus is not full with school students.

17. Far West Partnership

The Penong Early Learning Centre is part of the Far West Partnership which consist of other Department of Education sites who work together to improve services and learning for children and families within our region. The Far West Partnership constitutes the following sites:

Karcultaby Area School and Pre-school, Miltaburra Area School and Pre-school, Streaky Bay Area School, Streaky Bay Child's Centre, Ngura Yadurirn Child and family Centre, Ceduna Area School, Penong Primary School and Pre-school, Koonibba Aboriginal School and Pre-school. The leaders of these site meet twice termly and shared training and development occurs on a regular basis.

18. Policies and Procedures

Penong Pre-school is required to comply with the Education and Care Services act and regulations and operate in accordance with the following policies and procedures.

- Nutrition food and beverages, dietary requirement
- Sun protection
- Water safety, including safety during any water-based activities
- The administration of first aid
- Sleep and rest for children
- Incident, injury, trauma and illness procedures complying with reg.85
- Dealing with infectious diseases, including procedures complying with reg.88
- Dealing with medical conditions in children, including matters set out in reg.90

Regulation 90- Medical condition policy

- Health support agreement HSP120 – HSA
- Safety and risk management plan HSP121 – S&RMP
- Emergency and evacuation, including the matters set out in reg.97
- Delivery of children to, and collection of children from, the education and care service premises, including procedures complying with regs.99
- Excursions, including procedures complying with regs.100 to 102
- Providing children a safe environment
- A code of conduct for staff members
- Determining the responsible person present at the service
- The participation of volunteers and students on practicum placements
- Interactions with children, including matters set put in reg. 155 and 156
- Enrolments and orientation
- Governance and management of the service, including confidentiality of records
- Acceptance and refusal of authorisations
- Payment of fees and provisions of a statement of fees charged by the education and care service
- Dealing with complaints

Copies of these policies and procedures are available at the Pre-school. If parents require a copy of these policies together with a copy of the Education and Care Services Act and Regulations, please contact the school.