



Parafield Gardens
Children's Centre
for Early Childhood
Development and Parenting

Information Book



2025

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Website: www.parafieldgardenscc.sa.edu.au

Phone: 8258 3659



Welcome to Parafield Gardens Children’s Centre for Early Childhood Development and Parenting. The Centre works in partnership with families, community and agencies to support the education and development of young children. This community is diverse, and everyone is encouraged to participate.

Philosophy

The centre Philosophy is displayed in the foyer. This is updated annually through consultation with children, staff, parents and the community.

Staff

Director

The centre’s Director is Jenny Fox. The director is responsible for the leadership and management of the Centre. The director leads the curriculum and the development of the Preschool Quality Improvement Plan (PQIP) and oversees all community events programs. Yearly priorities are set, reviewed and adapted as needed in consultation with staff, community stakeholders and using centre and external data. A range of from parents and other stakeholders drives what we do. The director is engaged in administration and works with children at varying times.

Teachers

There are two full time teachers in the preschool- Gloria and Phoebe. Teachers are responsible for a group of children and there is a focus teacher for each group. All focus teachers who manage a group of children connect with the parents/carers of children in their specific group. Parents/carers will be provided with the name of their child’s focus teacher within the first six weeks of starting at preschool.

The director and teachers are available to talk to parents/carers about their child and will organise a parent-teacher interview during the year or at other times as needed. Parents are encouraged to let the focus teacher know as much about the child prior to starting at the centre. Staff examine the form *About Your Child* which parents/carers complete before enrolment and staff use this information for planning.

There are policies applying to children, educators, community groups and visitors. Centre policies are in the policy folder in the foyer, and some are on the Centre website. Additional policies that apply within the Centre can be accessed through the DfE website <http://www.education.sa.gov.au>. Please ask a staff member for assistance. In 2025 some policies will be updated after consultation.

Medication

If your child has a medical condition such as asthma, allergy (including risk of anaphylaxis) or other condition, there are a range of forms to complete *before your child can start preschool or occasional care*. Medication is not administered unless all forms have been completed and the medication is prescribed by a medical practitioner/pharmacy. If your child's medical needs change please notify staff immediately. This is important for your child's wellbeing and safety. Due to regulations around this, a child cannot attend the Centre without all requirements being met *Unauthorised medication cannot be brought into the centre*. Medication is always given to staff and staff will place it in a secure location, The requirements around this process mean it is not possible to suddenly bring in medication to give to a child. It can take up to two weeks for this process. Department for Education and Centre and Centre Medical Management Procedure are in the policies folder in the front foyer. The Centre uses (Staying Healthy Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood and care services (National Health and Medical Research Council) as a resource around medical conditions and infectious diseases. A copy of this is available for parents to read upon request.

Immunisations – No Jab, No Play

Children will not be able to be enrolled in or attend preschool or occasional care unless all immunisation requirements are met or unless there is an exemption or catch up schedule in place. Parents/carers must provide an up-to-date approved copy of your child's current immunisation history statement available through Medicare (or an immunisation exemption). It is the parent's/carer's responsibility to ensure immunisations are updated during the year as needed, to ensure continued enrolment.

Pupil Free Days

In 2025 there will be 4 closure days for preschool/occasional care. These days allow staff to be involved in professional development to benefit children's wellbeing and learning and on these days no services operate on site. These dates are advertised by the Centre through the usual communication channels.

Illness and Absences

If your child has symptoms of an acute infectious illness (e.g., measles, flu, COVID) or is unable to attend for another reason, it is important to notify the Centre on 8258 3659. If your child has any COVID symptoms (or other symptoms of illness), please keep the child home and follow SA Health requirements. Parents/carers are expected to collect children if a child has symptoms of illness. In some circumstances a medical certificate may be required before a child can attend the Centre.



Mobile phones

Anyone collecting a child or bringing a child should not be on a phone during this time in the foyer or learning spaces. It is unsafe and makes it difficult for the parent to supervise the child. It is also very noisy if a parent or carer is on the phone in the foyer. Staff cannot talk to the parent/carer if needed when on the phone. Please wait until you are out the front of the Centre to use the phone. For privacy reasons parents are not able to take photos in the Centre (except at the Graduation event).

Access to rooms

For safety and child protection reasons, only staff can access the children's toilet area. The exception to this is if a staff member asks a parent to come into the bathroom for a specific reason such as helping their child. In this case there would be no other children in the bathroom. Parents/carers should not be in the kitchen area, staff areas or side rooms in the Centre except for a specific purpose organised by staff as a meeting or parent interview. We have spaces available where parents can take a break or chat to one another.



Please ask staff to assist you if you need to breastfeed your child. We have several private spaces available for breastfeeding.

Arrival and Departure Procedure for Preschool

- Parents are encouraged to come and collect children at least *5 minutes prior to closing time*.
- Those who bring children sign the child in on arrival and sign out on departure. In the event of a COVID outbreak the staff may do this (and when a person does not do it).
- When there are additional COVID requirements parents may not be able to enter the Centre.
- There is a doorbell if the front door is locked, as the office admin area does not always have a staff member on duty.

Last day of every term – on the last day of every term the Centre closes one hour earlier than the normal closing time.

Communication

At Parafield Gardens Children's Centre, we aim to regularly communicate with families in a variety of ways. Including:

- * Face to face;
- * Phone calls;
- * Text messages;
- * Emails;
- * Newsletters;
- * Website;
- * Facebook;
- * Instagram;
- * Class Dojo (preschool).

If you have any concerns, complaints or queries, please speak to your child's focus teacher in the first instance. It is best to make a time for this if it requires a lengthy conversation. The director is also available to talk with any parents/carers.

Collection of Children

- Children can only be collected by a person authorised on the enrolment form or a parent/legal guardian.
- If the child attends family day care or some other outside arrangement upon collection from preschool or occasional care, the *actual person* collecting must be noted on the written authorisation (not 'Family Day Care staff').
- If there is an *emergency* where usual contacts cannot collect a child, the parent will need to contact the Centre by phone and email and arrange for the child's collection. The staff will need to sight/copy proof of identity for anyone who is not authorised on the enrolment form to collect a child. A parent should add the person to the collection authority as this is a one-time emergency event.
- Staff are not authorised to release a child unless there is clear evidence a parent/legal guardian has given permission. Please note that being late due to shopping, parking issues or an appointment going longer than expected etc. is *not* an emergency and it is best to plan around events they are aware of, to ensure each child is collected by an authorised person on time. The best way to do this is to have sufficient emergency contacts on the enrolment form.
- It is advisable to have people the child is familiar with to collect in an emergency as it can be distressing for the child otherwise.
- On enrolment parents supply a photo of all emergency contacts on the enrolment form.
- Please do not send young children (e.g., young siblings) to collect a child.
- If a child is not collected on time an additional care fee is charged and payable by the parent/carer on the day. The Centre may need to call SAPOL and/or the Department of Child Protection if a child is not collected by a certain time; when a child is left at the Centre and staff are unable to contact a parent or emergency contact and/or if a parent/carer organises emergency collection but no-one comes to collect the child by the time specified.

Parent/Carer Supervision

The safety of children is a priority at the Centre. The staff are responsible for supervision of your child once the child is signed in and handed over to a staff member and until the child is signed out and handed over to the person collecting. Children should not be taken inside the main classroom and left without ensuring the child is handed over to the teacher. It is important the child is not collected without informing the teacher the child is leaving.

If using the front outdoors area it is important children are supervised. Following these procedures helps to keep your child safe. This includes siblings/older children who come with a parent from a local school.

Children's Learning

The Centre has a strong focus on children learning through nature and child-led exploration and interest in the world around them. We also aim to extend their interests and experiences. There is a

large outdoors area and several indoors areas and children are divided into groups each day to ensure maximum support for their learning and wellbeing. Children from different groups play together at times.

The Early Years Learning Framework is the foundation of all planning and programming. The child's voice and parent voice are valued at the Centre and part of planning. There is a strong focus on open-ended learning and intentional teaching in a play based environment.

Documentation of Learning

Our documentation of children's learning takes many forms and staff share with parents how they collect information on children during the year. For preschool enrolments, the Centre uses Class Dojo to connect with parents and demonstrate learning progress. This has replaced hard copy learning journals. Occasional care will start Class Dojo in 2025. Documentation on children's learning is used in the planning of the learning environment.

Other information about children's learning

There is a strong focus on literacy, language, numeracy and wellbeing in the Centre. Through documentation of each child's needs, interests and strengths staff can ensure that each child is challenged in the learning journey. The focus is on learner growth for each child and the Centre follows a cycle of planning. Each child's cultural background is a valuable part of planning.

Health and Nutrition

Children bring a **nutritional** lunch and **separate** healthy fruit snack for snack time. Food that is not nutritious such as chips, lollies, jam spreads, cakes, muffins, biscuits, muesli/other bars, Pringles, popcorn and burgers have a huge impact on children's ability to concentrate. Healthy eating promotes life-long health. Healthy food from different cultures is encouraged such as rice dishes, sushi, cold rolls, pasta etc. If there are health needs around nutrition the parent will work with a professional to obtain an *Oral Eating and Drinking Plan* prior to starting at the Centre. Occasional care children bring a fruit snack and for younger children staff will work with parents/carers around what to bring. There are no nut products permitted at the Centre and sometimes parents may be asked to avoid bringing another type of food if a child at the Centre has an allergy to the food. PGCC is a Nut Aware Centre.

Food Packaging - A Nude Food Centre

Please **do not** send packaged foods to the Centre. Nude food only. Food is brought in sealed containers that can be sent home and reused. During summer food needs to be sent in a cooler bag and with an ice brick in it. Food is not heated at the Centre. Some food is best consumed at home only and not preschool unless it can be kept cool for the day. If it is essential food go in a fridge please inform staff.



Clothing

Please support your child to be able to participate in the full learning program. It is best to send your child in clothing and footwear that allows running, climbing, crawling, and playing in the sandpit, mud and water. Although smocks are provided for painting and other crafts, clothing may still get dirty. Please ensure clothing is comfortable and allows your child to participate in messy learning. It is important to **label clothing and bags with your child's name**.

Clothing: Other Information

- Gumboots AND shoes (wet weather) are encouraged in cool weather.
- Wet play gear is encouraged in wet weather.
- Sun Smart hat (no caps) – bucket hat is preferable and can be kept at the Centre.
- Sun Smart comfortable clothes – no singlet tops.
- Appropriate shoes – no thongs or slippers or sandals without a back strap.
- Sunscreen – parents ensure sunscreen is on your child **before arrival** and then staff reapply later in the day. If you require a specific sunscreen for your child, please see staff as you will need to fill out additional forms. The Centre applies sunscreen to children and ensures hats are on when the UV rating is 3 and over.

Wet Play Gear

It is advisable to pack wet play clothing each day in wet weather. It allows children to be actively involved in learning, including messy play and nature play while protecting their clothing. It allows children to connect with nature and play with: sand - soil - water - puddles – mud and to play in light rain at times.



Pull-ups and Nappies

For children who are not toilet trained in *preschool* – *please supply pull ups only (occasional care see the note below)*. Please ensure that you have filled out a Continence Care Plan with a health practitioner (signed and stamped by the health practitioner/parent) and provide this to the Centre prior to starting. Staff cannot change any child without the plan in place.

Occasional care –discuss with the staff when your child should transition to pull ups at the Centre. A Continence Care plan is filled out in OC when it is developmentally appropriate for the child.

Centre Hours of Operation

The Centre is open Monday -Friday 8:45-2:45 in term time. The **office hours** are displayed at the front of the building and sometimes vary. The Centre is closed on public holidays, closure days and usually in school holidays. Please check the term events brochure on the front notice board and on Facebook. Parent events and groups do not run during the holidays.

Term dates in 2025 are:

- Term 1 – 28 January to 11 April
- Term 2 – 28 April to 4 July
- Term 3 – 21 July to 26 September
- Term 4 – 13 October to 12 December

Preschool Enrolment Days (2025)

Children in their eligible year of preschool – entitled to 15 hours per week.

Times: Full days from 8:45-2:45: Half days from 8:45-11:45 or 11:45-2:45.

Days: Blue Group: Monday, Tuesday full days (and Thursday half days morning or afternoon depending on vacancies). Please arrive at least 5 minutes *before* the end of each session.

Days: Green Group: Thursday, Friday full days (and Monday half days morning or afternoon depending on vacancies). Please arrive at least 5 minutes *before* the end of each session.

Special considerations

Some children need a transition program to preschool and to gradually build up preschool time or may not cope with a full day despite being in the eligible year of preschool. In these situations, arrangements are made to support the child to ensure success. In these situations, the usual enrolment pattern may vary through negotiation with the parent. The child may do more half days than full days or have a gradual transition to preschool from the first day of preschool.

Children in occasional care may need a gradual increase in time over a few weeks in order to support the child to feel safe and developed a sense of belonging.

Preschool Fee Contributions

Fees: \$540 per year (\$135 per term) plus \$20 excursions and incursions (up to 4 per year). Fees are revised half yearly. There are no refunds for excursions. Additional costs: Late collection (additional care is \$1 per minute) plus costs for nappies/pull-ups, underwear/socks needing to be provided and meals/snacks needing to be provided. One month's notice is required in writing when a child will be leaving the Centre or when going on holidays).

Preschool fee contributions can be paid in full per term, per year or can be paid fortnightly by direct debit on an ongoing basis starting on the child's first day and continuing through. Centrepay will be available in 2025.

Current payment options include:

- EFTPOS available at the Centre. There are no cash payments available.



- Electronic payment (internet banking).

Commonwealth Bank Account name: Parafield Gardens Children's Centre

BSB number: 065175

Account number: 10380412. Please enter your child's name in the transaction description.

Occasional Care (2025)

Occasional care and preschool integrate most of the time except at times for under 2's. This means the children play together much of the time. Occasional care is for children who have *no other care* in place and are not old enough for preschool. Sessions are during school terms, and it is a maximum of once per week and this depends on numbers of children enrolled. Parents book in advance and pay in advance. Fees are payable at the time of booking and based on a booking, so payable regardless of attendance.

Children can only attend *one* Department of Education occasional care program. Parents may not be able to access the service weekly and there is a priority of access. Sessions in 2025 will be:

Children 2 years of age and older: Monday: 8:45-11:30 or 12:00-2:45; Tuesday 8:45-11:30; Friday 8:45-11:30.

Children under 2 years of age: Friday: 8:45-11:30.

Fee: \$5.00 per session (full fee); \$1.50 with a Health/Concession Card. A discount applies for siblings attending.

Payment method for occasional care: Card only payments- no cash. Family rates 50% of fees from the second child upwards. If you already have an occasional care booking, staff will let you know when you can book again.

As occasional care fees are payable on a bookings basis not attendance basis, the fee is payable regardless of any absence.

Additional costs for Services

Late collection (\$1 per minute for the additional care), nappies/pull-ups if not provided (\$1.00 each), underwear/socks needing to be provided (\$5.00 each), meals (\$5:00) or snacks (\$1:50) if food needs to be provided. These are payable on the day.

Community/Additional Programs

There are programs families can access such as playgroups, parenting groups and baby play time activities. The term flyer displays these, and the flyer is advertised on Facebook and on our Website. Each year we consult with families in regard to what services/parents groups they would like. Please check with staff for more information on what we offer.

A Breakfast program supported by the Food Bank will be available in 2025 for all children on certain days. The staff aim to source supports for families when needed. If you have a particular need such as financial, a risk of homelessness, a low food supply, a family emergency, difficulty accessing supports for your child such as speech pathology or occupational therapy or NDIS please speak with the director or a teacher to see where we can support you. We are here to help.

Concerns or Complaints

If a parent has any concerns about the Centre, your child at preschool/occasional care or parenting groups etc. early communication is essential. It is best to firstly speak with your child's focus teacher (occasional care coordinator in occasional care) if the matter relates to your child. For any other matter it is best to speak with the director or authorised person if the director is absent. The authorised person who is responsible on the day is noted in the foyer in the staff photo section. We value parent feedback and aim to resolve any issues speedily. We aim to work in partnership with parents. We are however required to follow policies.

Mid-Year Intake

There will be a mid-year intake of children for preschool in term 3 2025. At this time there will be an increase in children and staff.

This mid-year intake means:

- one group of children will start preschool in term 1 and go to school one year later in term 1
- one group of children will start preschool in term 3 and go to school one year later in term 3 (unless a child starts late and turns 6 in the following year).

The Centre can assist parents with ages that children is able to start preschool. Children are entitled to one year of preschool (maximum) and 15 hours per week.

Other Communication

It is important that anyone collecting or dropping off a child is aware of procedures such as signing in and out and other important information in this handbook. It is the parents'/carers' responsibility to communicate to those who are dropping off or collecting a child and ensure they are aware of all requirements. It is also the responsibility of the parent/carer to have a communication system in place, so that any information passed on when the child is collected is passed on to the parent/carer.

Support for Families

A Children's Centre offers a range of supports for families and works with other Government Departments, organisations and agencies to work together to support children and families. Please reach out to staff for any needs you have. We are in contact with a range of support services and will do our best to assist you.