



PIONEER ROAD LONG DAY CARE CENTRE

Transition to School Program

"Think and wonder. Wonder and think" Dr. Seuss

Our philosophy

At Pioneer Road Long Day Care Centre, we are passionate advocates for each child's right to a preschool experience that; inspires, creates thirst for exploration and discovery and kindles passion for learning. Our philosophy is based upon our belief that children are capable, resourceful and unique individuals who develop a strong sense of identity when they are offered experiences and environments that provide security, inspiration and engagement. Our work is inspired by children's endless capacity for learning, fun, exploration and play.

"So... be your name Busham or Bixby or Bray or Mordecai Ali Van Allen O'Shea, you're off to great places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting. So... get on your way... You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself in any direction you choose."

Dr Seuss, Oh the Places You'll Go. 1990

We endeavor to establish secure, respectful and reciprocal partnerships with the children, their families and the wider community. When this is achieved, we believe that children's confidence to explore, trust and learn is facilitated and that we can provide a learning journey that is meaningful to each child and family.

Our curriculum respects the multifaceted nature of development, we provide a learning program which caters to the whole child. One that; supports diverse styles of learning, includes equivalents of child-directed, educator-supported and educator-directed experiences and is based upon success. Paramount to our philosophy is our belief in supporting and developing a non-biased curriculum and environment, celebrating the benefits of diversity 'representing multiple cultural ways of knowing, seeing and living' (EYLF, 2009).

We believe that educators at our Centre bring their own history, learning and teaching styles to education. At Pioneer Road we work as a team, respecting and acknowledging each educator's strengths and ideas. We hope that when respect for each other and our histories is achieved we can provide a learning environment that truly caters for diversity and individuality, respecting each person as a powerful and important individual.

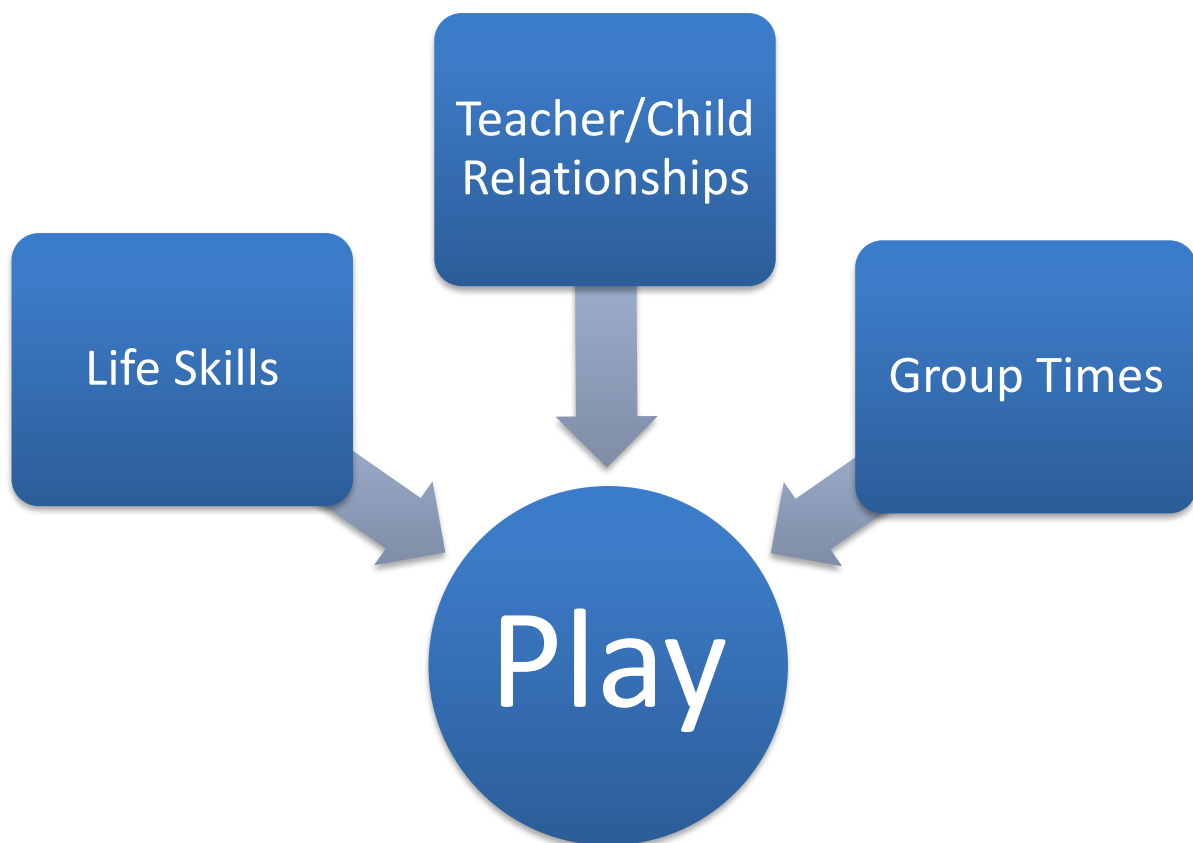
We are committed to be as sustainable as possible in all aspects of our Centre, encouraging children to respect the environment and participate in sustainable practices.

At the heart of our philosophy is, our confidence in the principles of Early Childhood Education as specified within the Belonging, Being and Becoming curriculum, our respect for each child as an individual and our belief in every child's ability to succeed. As Dr Seuss stated, *"A person's a person no matter how small."*

Sources: Belonging, Being and Becoming (2009); Dr Seuss (1990) Oh the Places You'll Go

Our School Readiness Philosophy

Here at Pioneer Road Long day care, school readiness is a multi-faceted one. We believe the most important aspects for a child's school readiness are their emotional and social maturity. Children with a strong sense of themselves, with good self-esteem and confidence, do best in the transition to school and throughout life (Benevolent Society 2015). Our program is inspired by three points of focus; life skills, groups times and positive interactions. Underpinning these areas is the motor that drives all development and learning... play!



Let's break that down a little...

Life Skills: In this we are referring to the critical self-help, emotional and social skills that helps us navigate the everyday routines of life. 'The transition process is not just to school, but from home, childcare, preschool etc. It is a transition not just from early education and care environment, but often from small-scale to large scale interactions, from highly personalized to less personalized relationships. It is also from a learning environment with a limited range of ages to a learning environment with children of many ages. Holistically, it is a transition to a different learning and care paradigm' (Centre for Community Health, The Royal Children's Hospital. 2008).

In our approach to life skills we encourage children to be independent and autonomous; in a small-scale, secure environment we hope to help children build self-help skills, communication and language skills as well as social and emotional skills. This includes self-regulation and confidence. It is our hope that as children begin to feel powerful and capable, that they will be better able to cope with the large-scale environment of school, and the challenges and changes this presents. At Pioneer Road Long Day Care, we encourage life skills within all aspects of our curriculum including:

- Planned learning experiences
- Intentional resources provided within free play
- Group times
- Within our daily routine and transitions

Group Times: At Pioneer Road Long Day Care, group time is a special time when educators and children come together as a community of learners for planned or spontaneous learning experiences. During this period children are encouraged to share thoughts and ideas as well as to listen and respond to peers and educators. Educators use these periods to build on children's knowledge and current interests and extend emerging skills, concepts and emerging interests. During this time, we aim to encourage participation by through active participation. We hope to achieve this by planning the experiences according to their interests and strengths ensuring each individual child has an opportunity to participate in discussion and hands-on activities that might include music, art and craft, literacy and drama.



When planning for group time, we also understand that children have different needs at different ages and stages of their development. This is also a factor that is taken into consideration when planning group time.



In addition, we also make use of Yarning Circles. This is creative, respectful and collaborative way of communicating among participants. It is also a great way to encourage group sharing and communication while also respecting the culture of our traditional custodians.



Teacher Child Interactions:

At Pioneer Road Long Day Care, we believe that positive interactions between Educators and children plays an important role in children's lifelong learning. *Positive Interactions between Staff and children have many benefits, such as opportunities for Educators to observe children's learning and growth and for the creation of positive Adult-child relationships (Colbert, 2004)*



Some additional things that we do include...

Munch and Move:

Munch and Move is a NSW Health Initiative that encourages children to develop healthy lifestyle habits. It is also another way of teaching children fundamental skills as well as life skills that will help prepare them for big school. By incorporating Munch & Move into our daily curriculum, we are helping children to:



- Develop essential fundamental movement skills
- Participate in physical activity daily
- Learn about healthy food choices and the difference between healthy and sometimes food.
- Learn about the importance of drinking water each day, especially after meals to encourage good oral health.

For more information about the Munch and Move, please visit:

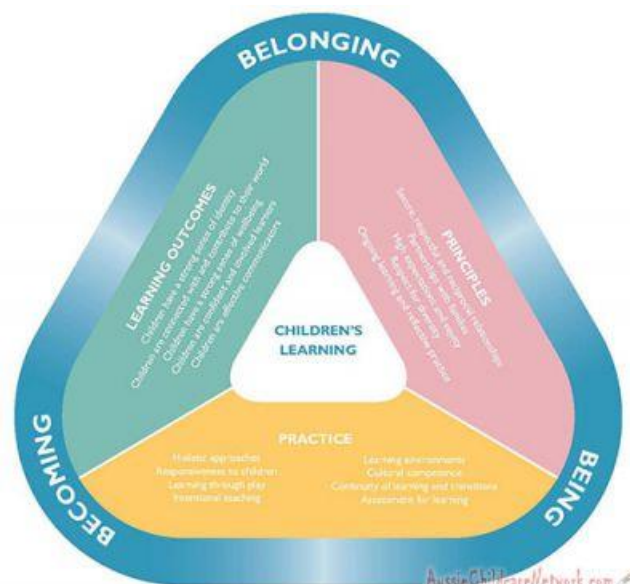
<https://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/parents-carers.aspx>

The Early Years Learning Framework:

At Pioneer Road Early Learning Centre, we follow the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). This a Nationally recognized Curriculum Framework specifically designed for children in the early years (birth to six years). The EYLF provides us as Educators the principles and practices that guide us in all areas of planning from including:

- Intentionally planned learning experiences (including group time)
- The daily routine
- School readiness
- Life skills
- Transitions (including within the service and beyond)

The EYLF also guides us with providing desired outcomes which we hope the children will achieve throughout different stages of their development. We are also supported by the EYLF Milestones, which helps us as Educators the children are on track with their learning and development according to their age and stage of development.



For more information on the Early Learning Years Framework and EYLF Milestones, please visit:

<https://www.education.gov.au/families>

https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2015/developmental-milestones.pdf

Excursions to East Corrimal Public School:

Each year, the Preschool children go on regular excursions to East Corrimal Public School to participate in their Smart Start program. This is open to all who are transitioning to School the following year. This provides the children to become familiar with the 'Big School' environment, which may help to alleviate some anxiety about this big life change ahead.

PLAY, PLAY, PLAY, PLAY

Play can often be considered as time away from serious learning (Rogers, F). Here at Pioneer Road Long Day Care, play is the motor that drives the core of children's learning. Play is powerful and play is sacred. So, what is in the power of play and, why do we use play for learning? Following are just a few great reasons that highlight the value of learning through play...

1. **It's the Business Children's Learning!** Play-based learning is a technical way of describing the way children, especially young children, explore and make sense of their world. Children who are encouraged to learn and grow in this way, learn to use their brains in different ways to understand and solve problems. Through play-based learning, children develop an understanding of the social and physical conditions that define their world and the language and symbols that are used to describe it.
2. **It helps children make sense of their world!** It doesn't matter whether children play on their own, with another child, or independently, they are experiencing an intense period of learning using all their senses. It's nearly impossible for us, who are so used to the sounds, sights, smells and tastes of the world, to imagine what it must be like to be making sense of a world where nearly everything is unknown and untested.
3. **It gives them the best start to life-long learning!** Children who have been given plenty of opportunities for play-based learning will have a great start in life. Among other things, it is believed they will develop self-confidence, a positive self-image, social and language skills, curiosity, persistence and concentration.



Examples of Basic skills and Concepts Being Delivered

So, what does all of this mean?

In a practical sense, the integrated use of our service philosophy, along with our philosophy of play, incorporation of Munch and Move and with the Guidance of the Early Learning Years Framework, following are some examples of practical ways in which we encourage your children to develop the skills and dispositions to prepare them for life at big school:

Language and Literacy Skills

- * Recognizing and learning to write our names.
- * Following directions
- * Understanding the function of books
- * Understanding the function of text through a print rich environment.
- * Encouraging questions, expression of ideas and curiosity
- * Encouraging re-telling stories and sequencing events

Motor Skills

- * Building hand and finger strength
- * Using writing tools, encouraging technique and building skill.
- * Putting puzzle pieces together
- * Cutting with scissors
- * Participating in physical activity
- * Munch and Move activities

Cognitive Skills:

- * Encouraging concentration and extending attention span
- * Encouraging task completion
- * Problem solving experiences
- * Understanding basic concepts including colours, size, shape, directions, sequence, characteristics, emotions, time, locations, positions etc.)

Numeracy Skills:

- * Recognizing numerals
- * Counting (one to one correspondence)
- * Understanding concepts including size, shape, quantity, weight, length

IS MY CHILD READY FOR SCHOOL?

Is your child ready to start school? It's the perennial question many parents agonize over. Age-wise your child may be able to start school in the next intake, but are they ready to embark on 13+ years of education?



In preschool car parks around the country families are discussing whether they'll send their kids to school early, on time, or hold them back. For those parents whose child falls into a grey area because of when their birth date is, what year to send them to school can be one of the most difficult decisions to make. Do you start your child at four and a half years, or do you wait until they're going on six? Will they be bored with another year shared between home and preschool or will they struggle if sent to school too early? Are they emotionally mature enough? Will they be able to keep up academically? (Kidspot2015).

At Pioneer Road Long Day Care, we are here to support you in making this decision. At any time, please feel welcome to talk to us and we can inform you of how your child is going within our learning environment. We can also put you in touch with services that can help you make an informed decision and we collaborate with local schools and services and other resources that will help guide you in making your decision.

One of the most important areas to consider when making this decision is your child's social and emotional readiness to handle to large-scale school environment. Remembering as mentioned earlier, the transition to 'big school' is a move to a very different large-scale environment. Collaboration with teachers across the community as well as research tells us that one of the most important skills to consider for your child's successful transition to school is their social and emotional skills.

Following is some information to consider when deciding whether your child is ready for school. This information comes from: <http://kids-first.com.au/free-school->

Here is a breakdown of some areas to consider when sending your child to school:

Language Skills

Schools are very verbal environments and your child will need to be able to follow instructions and understand what teachers are saying, as well as being able to communicate what they know, want and need to teachers and peers.

Social Maturity and Independence

There will be times when your child will have minimum adult supervision at school. This includes going to the toilet by themselves, dressing, and being able to follow a structured classroom routine. Your child will need to be able to deal with challenges like not always being the winner and complying with what a teacher asks of them, even if they do not want to.

Concentration and emotional maturity

At school, your child will need to be able to socialize, follow the rules of a game and play cooperatively with classmates. Children will need to be prepared for the more structured nature of a classroom environment and be able to focus on tasks, follow directions from teachers and be able to transition from one activity to another.

Motor co-ordination and skills

With upwards of 20 children in a classroom, it's unlikely that your child's teacher will be able to provide the one to one help that your child is used to at home. Your child will need well-developed co-ordination to dress and undress, unwrap lunch, use tools including pencils and scissors, and participate confidently in learning activities that require hand-eye and motor co-ordination.



Who can help?

There is an army of people ready to help you. Your family GP can be a great source of information and guide to services available to support your child and family. Your family doctor can put you in contact with speech pathologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, psychologists as well as many other community services.

Your local school is another source of information and support, speak to us at the Centre or the school you intend to send your child to. We can all support you and inform you of the people and services to facilitate your child's transition to school.

Following are some helpful resources:

<http://www.transitiontoschool.com.au>

The Illawarra Transition to School Project helps children starting school to make a smooth transition by connecting parents, schools and services with current research and practical support. Our networks and community events focus on the Wollongong, Shellharbour and Kiama areas, as well as transition to school for Aboriginal children.

<http://www.families.nsw.gov.au>

Families NSW is the NSW Government's overarching strategy to enhance the health and wellbeing of children up to 8 years and their families.

Families NSW does this by:

- ¥ helping parents to build their skills and confidence in parenting
- ¥ supporting families so they can respond to problems early
- ¥ building communities that support children and families improving the way agencies work together to make sure families get the services they need.

<http://www.schoolatoz.nsw.edu.au/about/about-us>

School A to Z has been produced by the NSW Department of Education and Communities. They have created an online community with comprehensive homework and 'school life' support for parents that is easy to use, relevant and engaging.