Yeerongpilly Early Childhood Development Program

Parent Information Handbook

Family-centred, play-based programs

Informed communication opportunities

Valuing spoken language and sign language

Achieving optimal outcomes for children and families
Table of Contents

PARENT INFORMATION BOOKLET ............................................................................................................. 3
MISSION STATEMENT ............................................................................................................................... 4
COMMUNICATION PHILOSOPHY ................................................................................................................ 4
OUR GOALS ................................................................................................................................................ 4
PLAY ....................................................................................................................................................... 4
HEAR FOR KIDS (HFK) ............................................................................................................................ 5
STAFF ..................................................................................................................................................... 5
OUR PROGRAM ........................................................................................................................................ 5
INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS .......................................................................................................................... 5
PLAYGROUP ............................................................................................................................................ 5

GROUP PROGRAMS ............................................................................................................................... 7
  WHAT YOUR CHILD NEEDS TO BRING TO THE GROUP PROGRAM ....................................................... 7
  MORNING TEA AND LUNCH .................................................................................................................. 8
ATTENDANCE AT LOCAL PRE PREP, KINDERGARTEN, CHILD CARE CENTRES ...................... 8
INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP) .................................................................................................... 8
HEARING DEVICES .................................................................................................................................. 9
PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES .................................................................................................................... 9
BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT .................................................................................................................... 9
PARENT EDUCATION ............................................................................................................................. 9

HEALTH & SAFETY ................................................................................................................................... 9
  INJURIES ................................................................................................................................................ 9
  ILLNESS ................................................................................................................................................ 9
  EXCLUSIONS RECOMMENDED BY HEALTH DEPARTMENT .............................................................. 10
  MEDICATION: ...................................................................................................................................... 10
  SKIN CARE: ....................................................................................................................................... 10
FUNDRAISING ............................................................................................................................................. 10
 VOLUNTARY FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION ........................................................................................... 10
HOLIDAYS ................................................................................................................................................ 10
Yeerongpilly Early Childhood Development Program (ECDP) is a Department of Education and Training (DET) facility for young children with a hearing loss from the age of diagnosis to pre-Prep.

We offer a range of programs with specialised staff to support children’s growth and development. These programs are based on research, current technology and the vast experience of staff. Communication and language development is fostered through a range of choices that are specific to the needs of the child and family preference.

The centre was established by a group of parents of young deaf children in 1953 and until the 1970’s was the only preschool facility for children with a hearing loss in Queensland. For more than 60 years the centre was situated in O’Loan Street, Yeerongpilly and was relocated to purpose-built buildings at Yeronga State School at the end of 2013. A unique collaboration has evolved between DET and Hear for Kids with the provision of therapists for the centre.

We welcome you to the Yeerongpilly community and hope that your time with us a will be enjoyable and informative. For further information feel free to contact the centre.

Sheridan Howell
Head of Special Education Services
Yeerongpilly Early Childhood Development Program (YECDP)

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MISSION STATEMENT

We foster the development of effective communication for children who are deaf or hard of hearing in a positive learning environment through our inclusive, family-centred and play-based programs. We guide and support each family in making informed communication choices to achieve optimal outcomes for their child.

COMMUNICATION PHILOSOPHY

Yeerongpilly's communication philosophy is responsive to child need and parent preference. This means that the language needs of individual children are assessed and catered for in discussion with parents. There are a number of communication options available. Families may move between options or change their choices depending on the situation or their child's stage of development.

The options include:
- Auditory-Oral
- Bilingual-Bicultural
- Spoken language in combination with Auslan (Australian Sign Language)
- All-Inclusive Communication

OUR GOALS

- To develop each child's communication skills
- To support the family and help create an environment that encourages each child as an active learner to develop to his/her full potential in all areas:
  - language
  - speech
  - listening
  - physical development
  - thinking skills
  - self-help skills
  - social and emotional skills
  - creative skills
- To provide intensive support targeting the goals in each child's individual program.
- To facilitate parent-child communication by modelling and providing information on useful strategies to support their child’s speech and language development.
- To provide information about hearing loss in general and its effects on development.

PLAY

Child's play is child's work and children learn best when they are actively involved and interested. Playing helps children to develop physically, socially and mentally. Through play children:

- relax
- have fun
- learn
- test ideas
- ask questions
- come up with answers
- discover
- experiment
- make decisions
- problem solve
- develop language
- make friends
- share
- co-operate
- negotiate
Yeerongpilly ECDP benefits from a unique partnership with Hear for Kids (HfK). This organisation provides vital therapies to support children’s development. They provide our centre with access to speech pathologists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists to support a child’s communication goals, development and school readiness. HfK is also a registered Better Start provider who can provide additional services to eligible families during the early years and beyond.

STAFF
The staff of Yeerongpilly is made up of a team of DET and HfK staff which includes:

- Teachers of the Deaf
- Speech-language pathologists
- Physiotherapist
- Occupational therapists
- Teacher aides
- Auslan Language Models (ALMs)
- Educational Interpreter (EI)
- Administration Officer
- Guidance Officer
- Advisory Visiting Teacher (AVT-HI) (based on-site but servicing other schools)
- Cleaners/Groundskeepers (through Yeronga State School)

OUR PROGRAM
Our program consists of one or a combination of the following:

- **Individual sessions**
  - for all children up to 3 years of age
  - for children over 3 not attending our group program
  - with a Teacher of the Deaf and/or Speech Therapist
  - with support from a Physiotherapist and/or Occupational Therapist as needed
  - with an Auslan Language Model if required
  - fortnightly or monthly

- **Playgroup**
  - fortnightly session coordinated by a Teacher of the Deaf with support from an Auslan Language Model and Educational Interpreter
  - therapists available for consultation
  - for children in individual sessions

- **Group program**
  - for children over 3 years of age to school entry
  - with a Teacher of the Deaf, Teacher Aides, Auslan Language Models and an Educational Interpreter
  - children have access to speech therapy
  - children have access to physiotherapy and occupational therapy
  - two days a week
INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS
Individual sessions are offered on a fortnightly or monthly basis in conjunction with playgroup. The child attends with either one or both parents/carer/grandparent etc. These sessions allow the child to develop listening and language skills in the best possible environment. Goals are identified through ongoing consultation with all those involved with the child. At times any one of the team may
- work directly with the child
- discuss and identify new goals
- identify and demonstrate the best strategies to achieve specific skills in language and speech development
- find ways to incorporate these skills into everyday life
- share observations

Individual sessions may include, but are not limited to
- programs to develop the child’s speech, language and communication
- developmental auditory program ie. listening program for children with hearing aids and habilitation program for cochlear implant recipients
- parent education and support
- assessments to monitor progress
- access to Auslan support with a native Auslan user

Due to the high level of teacher time and resources that these sessions require, a high level of participation and commitment from each child’s family ensures the best results for your child and the best use of our resources.

If you will be absent from your session please contact staff at Yeerongpilly so that we can plan appropriately.

PLAYGROUP
Goals
- To provide opportunities for children to develop their social, physical, cognitive and language skills in a safe environment.
- To offer a variety of activities that encourage children to explore, experiment and interact with children and adults.
- To provide opportunities for parents to socialise, develop networks and establish friendships.
- To provide parents with a relaxed environment to meet and chat with families and staff. Special talks are also organised occasionally on topics requested by parents or staff, for example language development, behaviour management, child care and schooling options etc.

Guidelines
- Playgroup is a service offered in conjunction with individual sessions to families with babies and toddlers from birth to three years of age who are registered at our centre.
- Children of Deaf Adults (CODA) families may attend upon request, depending on numbers.
- Both spoken English and Auslan are used to communicate with families and children at playgroup.
- Playgroup is organised by staff from Yeerongpilly ECDP including a Teacher of the Deaf with support from an ALM, EI and/or Teacher Aide. Other specialist staff also visit the playgroup including Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, Speech Therapist, Guidance Officer and an Audiologist from Australian Hearing.
- Parents and staff share the responsibility for the safety and supervision of the children.
- Parents provide morning tea for their children. All children are encouraged to sit down together to eat their morning tea.
- Morning tea is provided for the parents.
GROUP PROGRAMS

Group programs support the communication and developmental needs of individual children within the context of a quality early childhood program that is focused on the development of the whole child. We adhere to the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia and the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline. These are used as a guide for planning, interacting, monitoring and assessing as well as reflecting on the children’s learning and development phases: becoming aware, exploring, making connections and their abilities to apply themselves.

Communication development (including very early skills such as eye contact, body language and gesture as well as spoken English, Auslan and listening skills) occurs within a supportive framework of early childhood practice, which values and respects:
- the individual child
- partnerships with the family and other professionals
- cultural diversity
- play as being the way a child learns
- individualized programs that support, challenge and extend the child, including those with additional needs

Social skills are modelled and supported through interactions with peers and staff.

Speech-pathology, occupational therapy and physiotherapy may be offered to the children and families to support programs and individual goals.

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed for each child after consultation between staff and parents, usually in the first term. Parents play an important and valued role in the early childhood years and are an integral part of the child’s progress.

Group programs commence at 9.00 am and conclude at 2.00 pm two days a week on a Thursday and Friday.

If your child will be absent please contact Yeerongpilly ECDP to advise staff so we can plan for our day appropriately

Routines are very important in assisting children to settle in and to develop their communication and language skills.

Example of Daily Routine (This may vary depending on the day and group of children)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9am</td>
<td>Settling in activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group welcoming session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30</td>
<td>Outside play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30</td>
<td>Morning tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>Whole group language session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Group activities, fine motor activities, structured play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>Structured/unstructured activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00</td>
<td>Farewell group session</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children may also be involved in whole class or individual therapy sessions.

**WHAT YOUR CHILD NEEDS TO BRING TO THE GROUP PROGRAM**

Children should bring the following items to school clearly labelled. Your child’s teacher may request additional items from time to time.

- A named lunch bag or box containing lunch and morning tea. All lunches will be placed in the refrigerator
- A named water bottle
- A named hat for outside play
- Spare clothes (shirts, pants, underwear, socks) – we enjoy lots of messy play at school
- An exercise book (for easy communication between home and school particularly useful if your child is collected by others)
- A scrap book (for speech/listening/language games and activities from your child’s speech therapist that can be continued at home)
- Nappies, pull-ups, wipes and spare underwear as required
- Your child should wear clothing that is suited to climbing, painting, playing and exploring when they come to school
MORNING TEA AND LUNCH
Children need to bring morning tea and lunch. At Yeerongpilly we encourage healthy eating, while acknowledging the dietary requirements of individual children. Children are closely supervised while eating at all times. We request that you do not send items containing nuts to school due to severe nut allergies in some children (this includes peanut butter and Nutella).

Eating together helps to encourage:
- good eating habits
- social skills
- communication / language skills
- feeding skills (some children may require support to develop swallowing and chewing skills)

Recommended Foods
- sandwiches
- cold meats
- dairy products
- fruit
- vegetables
- dried fruits
- boiled eggs
- homemade muffins

Foods NOT Recommended
- muesli bars
- fruit strips
- biscuits
- cakes
- lollies
- chocolate (or derivatives)
- any soft drinks

Cold water is available at all times.

Staff are unable to heat food due to safety issues (for example uneven heating which can cause scalding). Please do not send food that requires heating.

ATTENDANCE AT LOCAL PRE PREP, KINDERGARTEN, CHILD CARE CENTRES
Children’s attendance at their local early childhood centre can be supported through Yeerongpilly. We are able to liaise with and offer information to the staff of these centres.

The local AVT-HI, (Advisory visiting teacher for hearing impairment), will be the main support person in your child’s Prep year. Teachers from Yeerongpilly will also liaise with the AVT-HI.

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)
IEP stands for Individualised Education Plan and is a plan that can be developed specifically for each child over the age of three. Each child's IEP consists of developmentally appropriate prioritised targets that are set down in specific areas of language, speech, or audition.

The IEP is the outcome from discussion with the parent, teacher/s and therapists. It allows for a shared responsibility and understanding regarding the needs of the child and is an important process for parents to be involved in. These plans can be reviewed at any time on the request of a parent or staff working with the child.

A copy of the IEP is provided for you and anyone else involved in your child’s education (child care centres, kindergartens and therapy services).

HEARING DEVICES
In order to maximize children’s listening potential, children are expected to wear personal hearing aids and/or cochlear implant processors consistently throughout the day.

Yeerongpilly has a visiting Australian Hearing (AH) Audiologist who is able to take new moulds, collect hearing aids for repair and set up FM systems. Parents should also access their local Australian Hearing Centre or Cochlear Implant Clinic for repairs and replacement parts.

- For children wearing Cochlear Implants, please ensure that the remote and all replacement parts (coil, cords, earhook, microphone protector and spare batteries) are sent to school each day.
- If a child uses an FM system, the FM system is issued to the parents. The care and maintenance of the FM system is the responsibility of the parents with the support of staff.
PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES
Parents play a vital role in the education and ongoing development of their child. Parent participation is paramount on a variety of levels.
It is the parents' responsibility to

- let us know changes in recorded information – contact details, health issues, changes in childcare/kindergarten settings.
- read all information pertaining to Yeerongpilly ECDP.
- use discretion as to whether a child is well enough to attend individual sessions or group program due to illness.
- comply with health and hygiene policies of DET.
- contact Yeerongpilly to advise staff if your child will be absent due to illness or appointments.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT
Yeerongpilly uses a range of developmentally appropriate management techniques.
Support is offered to help with issues arising for individual children through

- teacher/therapist support
- guidance officer support
- referral to outside services such as Triple P Parenting Program and MYCP (Managing Young Children Program)

PARENT EDUCATION
This is made available to parents through formal and informal means including discussions on an individual basis, home communication books, speech/language scrapbooks, newsletters, playgroup, regular parent information sessions and other correspondence sent home as required.
Information is offered in, but not limited to, the following areas:

- audiological management (hearing aids, cochlear implants, FM systems).
- information about the development of speech, language and listening skills.
- hearing loss and its impact on the child and their family.
- general child development information.
- information and support related to additional needs that children may have.
- transitioning to school/Prep.

HEALTH & SAFETY
The Centre is a NON SMOKING CENTRE. No smoking should occur within sight of the children in attendance (i.e. not in the building or in the car park).

INJURIES
- Parents of an injured child will be contacted immediately. A record is made of the incident and stored on the DET MyHR Workplace Health & Safety database. The physical safety of the children is one of the important responsibilities of our Centre.

ILLNESS
- For minor ailments, parents should use their own judgement. Usually if a parent is in doubt as to whether their child is well enough to attend then it is best to keep them at home.
- It is important to advise us of any illness your child has, in case it is contagious.
- Certain contagious diseases are notifiable and exclusion from the Centre may be necessary.
- Children suffering from an infectious complaint e.g. measles, mumps, head lice, chicken pox MUST NOT ATTEND the centre.
- If your child becomes ill during the day you will be notified so he/she can be taken home as soon as possible.
EXCLUSIONS RECOMMENDED BY QUEENSLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ILLNESS</th>
<th>MINIMUM TIME OF EXCLUSION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measles</td>
<td>Exclude for 4 days after the onset of the rash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mumps</td>
<td>Exclude for 9 days after the onset of the swelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubella (German measles)</td>
<td>Exclude until fully recovered or for at least 4 days after the onset of the rash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken Pox</td>
<td>Exclude until all blisters have dried. (At least 5 days after the rash first appeared)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ringworm</td>
<td>Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School sores</td>
<td>Exclude until the child has received appropriate antibiotics for at least 24 hours. Sores are not contagious if covered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head lice</td>
<td>Exclude until effective treatment has commenced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


If you are unsure please contact the office.

MEDICATION:
If your child requires medication to be administered at school please note the following DET policies.
- All medication, including over the counter medication, must be in the original pharmacy labelled container. The label must include the student’s name, dosage and time to be taken.
- Parents must provide a letter authorising administration of medication. A Request to Administer Medication at School form is available from your child’s teacher for you to sign requesting staff to administer medication.

SKIN CARE:
The Centre requires that both children and adults wear hats outdoors. Parents are encouraged to apply sunscreen and repellent to their child at the beginning of the day. All care is taken to ensure that the children are sun-safe and play in shaded areas.

FUNDRAISING
Fundraising occurs at times throughout the year to help raise funds for prioritised projects.

If any parents are able to assist us with these activities, please let us know.

VOLUNTARY FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION
We are a State Government facility resourced to provide a core educational service with no cost to families. To enhance our programs parents may choose to make a voluntary financial contribution towards the costs of arts and crafts supplies and cooking materials.

A suggested guideline for the contribution is $10 per term for families accessing individual sessions and playgroup, and $20 per term for families accessing the group program.

HOLIDAYS
Yeerongpilly is a State Government ECDP and as such normal school vacations and pupil-free days are observed.

For school holidays and term dates please view the webpage below
Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or require further information.

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