

Our Philosophy

The philosophy is based on an image of children as creative, capable and intrinsically motivated to explore and discover their world. The educators harness the curiosity and imagination of the children and follow their interests embracing the magic of a child's wonder and awe about the world. Through active engagement in free and structured imaginative play children employ a range of complex networks of abilities, interests and symbolic languages. Engagement in diverse forms of play fosters the development of a spirit of curiosity experimentation and discovery with children being supported to develop their thinking and understandings, fine and gross motor skills, language, personal and social awareness, emotional well-being and creativity.

Little Possums Early Years is a not-for-profit centre that has been part of the Mundaring community for over thirty five years. We provide a unique home environment in a natural and environmentally friendly setting, which allows the children to learn to respect nature and develop knowledge of our world and its sustainability.

Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge Noongar elders past and present and their people (specifically the Whadjuk people who are from this area) who are the traditional custodians owners of this land.

The importance of the community and its cultural heritage, respectfully valuing diversity of backgrounds, contributions and perspectives are embedded in our ethos. We strive to provide a service that is fair and equitable to all members of our community.

Education/Curriculum

At Possums children develop their understandings of the world in which they live through the development of broadly-based knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable them to take the prerequisite steps in preparation for lifelong learning. Highly qualified educators design, implement and evaluate innovative and challenging programs that reflect the most contemporary early childhood theory and research and Australian Government curriculum guidelines including the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

Our program provides authentic holistic learning experiences that build upon the children's skills, knowledge and understanding and connect to the family and wider community.

We believe play provides opportunities to experiment, explore, problem solve and develop language skills through activities and experiences that are fun, engaging and relevant to the children's interests.

Child Relationships

Little Possums offers a unique setting where we provide holistic care from the moment a child enters to when they leave years later, with the same friendships of children and under the care of the same educators throughout. Families are able to grow and develop within this environment together as if they were playing in their own home. Strong relationships are built over many years, educators develop a picture of the whole child and grow together with them.

The child is the centre of our program where every child is valued, respected and is in control of their own learning journey. We guide, assist and facilitate the child's development through experiences that integrate the child's interest and diverse background. The child is pivotal in deciding what and how learning occurs and the creation of the learning environment.

Parent/Family Relationships

Partnerships between families, educators and the children we care for are promoted and provide the foundations for creating a respectful, positive, inclusive environments for the children who come to Little Possums.

Little Possums is managed by a committee composed of parents and Possums staff, the committee support the centre and have a direct and collaborative relationship with the educators and families. The parents bring a range of experience, skills and knowledge which enable to centre to provide an exceptional service.

We actively encourage family involvement in the children's learning and work to ensure open communication, collaboration and community participation in our program development to optimise learning outcomes.

Educators

When you enter Little Possums you will be greeted with warmth that makes you feel welcome, which flows through the centre. Along the way you will encounter dancing and singing, and amazing, creative learning environments set up for the day. Educators will be in the garden engaging with children sharing magical moments, tending, and caring for the natural environment including the vegetable patch and worm farm. The children will be taken on a journey through stories, rhyme and games during our day. We will share the stories and adventures of the fun the children have had at the end of the day with you which will enrich their memories of us.

You will be assured your day at Little Possums will be full of fun and learning with educators who respond nurture and strive to develop each child fullest potential in their care. Relief staff are familiarised with the philosophy and our expectation of striving for excellence and contribute to the program with this ethos in mind.

We acknowledge the diverse range of skills, interests and insight of our peers and work together to support each other in our professional development as a team and as individuals, drawing on each other's areas of expertise to maximise the effectiveness of our practice, in alignment with current Early Childhood Theory and Childcare Practice.

Community Relationships

We recognise that all children, their families and staff are part of a wider community. We place a value on building connections between a child's home, family and the centre. Supporting these connections helps children develop a sense of belonging and self-worth if they know that their educators and families have a shared interest in what's happening in their world.

We believe that community and connections within that community are essential both individually and collectively and help contribute towards a healthy personal development and a healthy society.

We endeavour not only to nurture and foster a healthy community within, but also to look outwards and to form connections with people and places outside the centre. We believe that it is important for children (and adults) to have an understanding of what it is to belong to a community. We endeavour to help children understand what it is to "belong" in a number of contexts. We believe that children are citizens in their own right and as such have the opportunity to participate, contribute and engage meaningfully within their various communities.

Community networking between other child care centres and educators broadens knowledge and ideas that are current and innovative in the education and care sector.

Little Possums Early years prides itself on providing not only quality childcare but as a wealth of resources for members of the local community by sharing information on health issues, local community events and organisations, child development, children's health and care information.

Transition to School

Social skills such as sharing, turn taking, group activities are promoted and are essential in assisting children's short and long term success at school. Responsive positive relationships between children and their carer's are also crucial in building children's self-esteem and resilience which further assists them to make smooth transitions from Early Childhood settings to school environments.

We support all areas of the curriculum through the educational, play-based programme. Foundations of literacy and numeracy and other pre academic skills are learnt both in the context of play, and through responsive and intentional teaching. In practice, this means that rather than "teach" the alphabet, or "practice" counting or implement off the shelf reading/phonics programmes, we instead look for opportunities to engage with children about text and meaning, language, rhyming, ordering, counting, matching, spatial awareness (for example) in a natural play based context. Our programme aims to equip children for a positive transition to school - and we pay attention to research that suggests that emotional and social preparedness are key drivers in terms of being ready for school. Further, we pay attention to the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia which reminds us to focus on a child's "being" as well as a child's "becoming". That is, a recognition of the here and now as well as future development and transitions