

LORETO NEDLANDS EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

(as of 7.9.17)

At Loreto Nedlands we recognise that the skills and concepts formed in the early years help children make sense of, and apply, their knowledge and understanding. These are the foundations upon which the quality of later learning depends and this phase of education is not only regarded as a preparation for later learning: it is a very important stage in its own right.

Children will develop skills, attitudes and understanding at their own level, through a broad and balanced curriculum. Learning is based on a child centred, play based approach building on their achievements in working towards the early learning goals.

Each child at Loreto Nedlands is recognised and valued as an integral member of God's Family. Daily practice reflects the Christian values and provides children with opportunities to appreciate and reflect on the wonder and joy in our world.

The philosophy of Loreto Nedlands Early Childhood is based on developing the whole child in an environment that is exciting, challenging and emphasises learning through play. Play is a natural medium for children-allowing them to explore, discover, question, experience, create, hypothesise, construct, imagine, wonder, plan, organise, cooperate and solve problems.

Play based learning is a context for learning through which children organise and make sense of their social worlds, as they engage actively with people, objects and representations. Through play experiences children become actively involved and intrinsically motivated. They are able to take control of their own learning, make meaning of the world and explore real life situations, in an environment that is non-threatening and safe.

As stated in the Australian Curriculum, play is an activity that is positively valued by the player, self-guided, freely chosen, and engaging. Children actively involved in *play* may be engaged in a variety of activities, independently, with a partner or in a group. Play can occur indoors or outdoors. It is closely tied to the cognitive, socio-emotional, and motor development of young children, and is an important part of developmentally appropriate early years learning. Benefits of play can include persistence, negotiation, problem-solving, planning and cooperation.

Quality play-based pedagogies provide an engaging and effective context in which students develop dispositions and skills to become 'successful learners' who are 'creative, innovative and resourceful'. The Early Years Learning Framework and the Australian Curriculum have similar aims represented differently in structure and content emphases.

The early learning program provides opportunities for children to develop their knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that correspond to current curricular practices. Planning is central to developing each child spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually at their own rate and level of development. Planning in the Early Year is guided by the *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Framework for Australia* (EYLF), for PK to PP and the Australian Curriculum for PP to Year 2. These principles and guidelines encompass the outcomes and learning that will take place.

The adults in the environment will serve as facilitators of the children's learning. Families are recognised as the primary educators of their children at Loreto Nedlands and teachers work with them as partners in the education of their children.

The formative years of life are a significant and important period of growth and development. The foundations for children's learning takes place in the early years, and every experience and interaction forms a base for future learning. In providing supportive play-based experiences, all children are given opportunities to grow and flourish on their learning journey.

Play based learning in Years One and Two will include explicit instruction from teachers to help guide the play of the children. Teachers will encourage open ended tasks which are engaging to the children and invite play based learning. Examples of this learning include, using manipulatives such as LEGO in Mathematics, games for learning high frequency words, use of dress ups and puppets for imaginative play to promote oral language and use of wooden blocks and every day construction materials for Design and Technology.