

# GOLDEN SQUARE KINDERGARTEN INC.

Incorporation No. A0028630C

45 PANTON ST. GOLDEN SQUARE

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## PHILOSOPHY

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land our kindergarten is situated on as being Dja Dja Wurrung country. We pay our respect to elders past and present by fostering learning and understanding of the Jaara Jaara peoples' culture and traditions within our daily program.

At Golden Square Kindergarten we believe that a high quality early childhood program should provide a safe and nurturing environment that promotes:-

**“BELONGING-is** about knowing where and with whom we belong. A sense of belonging is integral to human existence. Children belong first to a family, within a cultural group, within a neighbourhood and a wider community. Belonging acknowledges interdependence with others and the primacy of relationships in defining identities. In early childhood, relationships are critical to a sense of belonging. Belonging is central to being and becoming in that it shapes who children are and who they can be.

**“BEING-recognises** the significances of the here and now in children's lives. It is about the present and them knowing themselves. Building and maintaining relationships with others. Engaging with life's joys and complexities and meeting challenges in everyday life. The early childhood years are not solely preparation for the future but also about the present.” (BBB,EYLF)

**“BECOMING-recognises** children's identities, knowledge, understandings, capacities, skills and relationships change during childhood. They are shaped by many different events and circumstances. Becoming reflects this process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years as young children learn and grow. It emphasises learning to participate fully and actively in society” (BBB,EYLF).

(Extract from Belonging, Being and Becoming: an Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, February 2009).

### CHILDREN

We believe children are individuals, competent, resourceful and inquisitive. We believe each child's unique family culture will have considerable influence on their learning outcomes.

We believe children learn best through play. Play is defined as being constructive, cooperative, creative and functional. It should be interactive, engaging and enjoyable. Natural resources, including the use of our outdoor learning environment, are essential to supporting active learners. We recognise and plan for each child's individual skills, abilities and learning dispositions.

We believe as educators we need to be sensitive to and give weight to each child's ideas, emotions, interests and needs, including the special needs of children with disabilities, children from non-English speaking backgrounds, Aboriginal or Torres Straight Island Culture and we acknowledge children's different talents. We will ensure an anti bias curriculum and will celebrate diversity.

We believe in providing a Child Safe Environment which protects vulnerable children and adheres to the child safety standards. We have zero tolerance of child abuse and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.

We are mandated to report to the relevant authorities when we believe that a child's safety is compromised or at risk.

We will promote inclusion for all children and families.

We will support:

- Cultural safety for Aboriginal children. We will work in partnership with Aboriginal peoples and Aboriginal community controlled organisations.
- Cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Safety for all children with additional needs.

## **PROGRAM**

We believe that children learn best through stimulating and challenging play which enhances their autonomy, initiative and self worth. We will listen to and respect children's ideas. We will support risk taking and learning – building upon children's sense of wellbeing.

We value the work of Erik Erikson in providing opportunities for children to show initiative within the curriculum to develop innate skills of inquiry and problem solving.

We believe that healthy habits formed during childhood can last a lifetime. We are committed to teaching children about a range of healthy lifestyle choices including food, exercise, dental care and personal hygiene.

As educators we believe there has never been a more important time than now to act for conservation and sustainability of the planet for the survival and protection of its precious species, resources and ecosystems.

With small steps towards reducing our ecological footprint and social handprint we can contribute in positive ways to sustainability in the curriculum we use to teach our children. We believe in a transformative education that encourages children to be problem seekers and problem solvers and to take action in their own environment.

We believe in empowering children to be active in their own learning, we will be quick to respond to their interest and be a co-constructor of knowledge. We will encourage a learning community (Involving Children, Educators, Families and the outside community).

We will use both the National and Victorian Early Years Framework to plan and document learning. We believe in open ended and lengthy periods of free play allowing children to have choice of indoors or outdoors. We will also include group and individual learning opportunities.

Educators will provide a developmentally appropriate environment in which a child will progress from one developmental stage (Piaget) to the next, at the child's own pace. We will use the learning outcomes as stated in the National and Victorian Early Years Learning Framework as a basis for our programming.

We believe in providing children and families with strategies and language which can develop social and emotional intelligence.

We will use intentional and explicit teaching strategies including participation to build upon resilience and confidence. We will include sections of the "You can do it" program which promotes getting along,

being confident, persevering and resilience. We will also help children develop a Group charter and use the “Ruler” approach to ensure every child’s right to be happy and safe.

## **FAMILY**

We recognise the importance of families as a child’s primary influence and we actively engage families in their child’s learning and development. Our Centre believes in fostering the relationship between Educators and families so that they can support each other in their complimentary roles and encourages parents to become involved to the extent with which they are comfortable.

We acknowledge that families set a high priority in their children developing the necessary skills for a successful transition into their school community. We develop inclusive communication techniques which cater to all families.

## **COMMUNITY**

We believe that we all belong to the community and will work together to build partnerships and embrace opportunities to share knowledge and participation. We are an inclusive centre and we will endeavour to meet the needs of all children and their families.

We believe in equal access for all children to participate in a preschool education and will advocate and support families to access resources including funding and specialist agencies.

We believe that an element of childhood development is promoting an awareness and appreciation of the broader community in which they live. Therefore we will endeavor to foster relationships with different community groups and organisations providing maximum opportunities for community interactions.

As an early childhood education provider we are working towards developing children who are global citizens who take responsibility for global issues. A global citizen is someone who identifies with being part of an emerging world community and whose actions contribute to building this community's values and practices.

Our natural environment is paramount to a healthy life for this generation and the generations to come. We will intentionally teach children about the relationship between humanity and the environment. Children will learn about sustainability through explicit teaching and also by the pedagogical example of the kindergarten. Golden Square Kindergarten is committed to providing childhood education whilst being environmentally conscious and using sustainable practice.

As a community of learners, we value the work of Lev Vygotsky, we therefore take a socio-cultural perspective in developing curriculum- using intentional and explicit teaching strategies to scaffold children’s emerging skills.

We believe that our philosophy is a living document which needs to be revisited and reflected upon by all members of our Kindergarten community to ensure that it meets our ever changing needs, values, expectations and beliefs.

References:

ACECQA. (2011). Guide to the education a law and national regulations. Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. Retrieved from [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au).

DET. (2016). The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework. Retrieved from <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/edcare/Pages/veyladf.aspx?Redirect=1>

EYLF. (2009). The early years learning framework. Belonging being and becoming. Canberra ACT: Department of education and training. Retrieved from <http://education.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework>.

A number of theorists are referred to as influences in the philosophy, here are some suggested resources if you like to explore them further:

[Lev Vygotsky](#) a Russian Socio-cultural theorist:

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Harvard University Press: Cambridge.

[Jean Piaget](#) a Swiss Cognitive theorist:

Duchesne, S., & McMaugh, A. (2015). Education psychology for learning and teaching. South Melbourne, Vic.: Cengage Learning

[Erik Erikson](#) a German born America Psychosocial theorist:

Duchesne, S., & McMaugh, A. (2015). Education psychology for learning and teaching. South Melbourne, Vic.: Cengage Learning

[You Can Do It Program](#)-*You Can Do It! Education's* core purpose is the development of **young people's social and emotional capabilities**, including the five foundations: **confidence** (academic, social), **persistence**, **organisation**, **getting along**, and **emotional resilience**.

Related Definitions:

**Socio-cultural theory:** Is a combination of the work of many theorists such as, Bronfenbrenner, Rogoff and Vygotsky, their work reminds us that children belong to a social context through their families, the community and through other interactions and relationships in which they engage and in a socio-cultural framework these influences are considered and included when educating children in order to relate well to their individual contexts and ways of being.

**Pedagogical:** relates to the professional thinking and practices engaged in by educators to promote learning. (EYLF 2009 p. 24).

**Child Safe Environment:** The National Quality Framework services to provide safe environments for children, this has been further enhanced as a result to the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry and services are expected to include the Child Safety Standards to their policies and procedures, read more here: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/childsafestandards.aspx>

**Philosophy:** Is a set of beliefs and value that provides a framework to inform, develop and design programs for children in early childhood settings. The Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 section 115 states that a statement of philosophy must be included in the Quality Improvement Plan.

**Global Citizen:** A global citizen refers to the development of a sense of belonging to the global community, read more here [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global\\_citizenship](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_citizenship)

Ruler Approach Program information available here from Yale University <http://ei.yale.edu/ruler/>