



# Early Years Education and Care Provider Strategic Plan 2020 - 2024

## Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten

Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten is located in Fairfield, in the City of Darebin. It is a community-based, not for profit kindergarten managed by a volunteer parent committee. The kindergarten offers a sessional kindergarten program for the year before school (four year old) and also a three year kindergarten program, in line with community need. The kindergarten has recently introduced bush kinder into its four year old offering.

This Strategic Plan covers the period from 2020 to 2024. The Committee has set objectives and strategies beyond our year of office in 2020, but expect subsequent committees will edit and update this plan in June each year to reflect the needs and priorities of our kindergarten.

### **Vision**

Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten aims to continue its provision of high quality, sustainable, parent-run early childhood education in line with the needs of the community in Fairfield and surrounding suburbs.

### **Mission**

Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten provides a stimulating and caring environment that promotes a love of learning and encourages each child to realise their full potential. The kindergarten aims to be a natural extension of a child's family and community life.

## Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis

### Strengths

#### Quality program

- Exceeding ACECQA rating.
- High quality education program successfully delivered by experienced and cohesive team teachers and qualified educators.
- Excellent resources - supporting the defined curriculum, replenished frequently
- Natural setting – focus on indoor/outdoor play
- Session times are meeting the family's needs
- Reputation of the kindergarten within the community
- Delivery of two long day four year old sessions, in line with parent preference and providing a choice of session times.
- Provision of a long day 3 year old program, in line with parent preferences.
- Integrated bush kinder program for four year olds.

#### Staffing and Management

- Received exceeding for QA1 due to ongoing focus to maintain Exceeding rating by review of self-assessments, QIP and policies.
- A reflective culture amongst staff – all staff meet at least once per term and have additional planning time. Each group has time for reflection and discussion of future plans.
- Good teaching facility, open to having students, encouraging further education of current staff related to the kindergarten
- Experienced, high quality staff - all education staff are qualified, minimum qualification is a certificate III
- Specific administration support employed to support the Director and Committee's administrative responsibilities
- Staff conduct first aid training as required and identify training opportunities throughout the year
- Passionate staff – high retention/minimal staff turnover, appraisals confirm passion for their job.
- Well defined, current role descriptions for each staff member – these are reviewed annually
- Professional development is discussed with staff annually and encouraged by committee – includes one professional development day together per year
- Staff appraisals are done mid-year annually

#### Community participation and parent engagement

- Active parent participation and volunteering within the session as well as general jobs around the kinder.
- Connections with nearby schools
- High parental engagement via an active volunteer Committee of Management
- Building stronger connections with the Darebin Parklands Association via the bush kinder program.

#### Governance

- Well-documented policies and procedures - policies regularly reviewed and updated if required. These are available on the website.

- All teaching staff are encouraged to attend committee meetings on rotation (with their time paid to attend)
- Kindergarten community is enthusiastic and has a broad range of skills that results in a professional, active and committed Committee of Management.
- Annual committee handover meeting is held in December each year to support a smooth and informed transition to the new committee. The existence of three and four year old programs means some committee members stay on for more than a year and there is always a cross-over of old and new committee members.
- Competitive fees - still affordable and competitive within the area
- Strong budget position including retained earnings and cash reserves

### **Weaknesses**

- Home kinder is located on a busy road, insufficient traffic controls or safe school crossings, often difficult to find a close car park
- Differences between municipalities and timing around when kinder places are offered. City of Darebin Central Enrolment processes can impact on the timeliness of kindergarten places being offered
- Extended care not available
- Role descriptions for committee members are currently not updated frequently enough – these need to be reviewed annually before committee changeover.
- Frequency of committee turnover leads to loss of knowledge and experience and risk of inconsistent management.
- Reliance on parent volunteering for Committee of Management roles can mean insufficient committee support or specific committee members overburdened leading to unsustainable governance.
- Limited capacity to offer additional session times and currently no session time choice for three year old parents.
- Connection with nearby schools and maternal health nurses needs to be re-established/strengthened
- Financial limitations limit administrative support.
- DET funding structure means lag in funding change when year to year enrolment numbers change despite staffing costs changing in time with start of year enrolment numbers
- Computer systems are not integrated or paperless - leading to inefficiencies with administrative processes
- Limited staff amenities - small office space and no tea room

### **Opportunities**

- Growth of the bush kinder program
- Improve the induction and probation period review for new staff.
- Formalise processes following completion of staff probation.
- Networking with other not for profit local early childhood learning centres
- Increased profile of our service within the community

- Sessional Kindergarten is cheaper than integrated kindergarten (particularly for families that do not receive a child care rebate from the federal government).
- Community engagement with Darebin Parklands Association

### **Threats**

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- Ongoing funding for 4YO not a certainty after 2022, and for 3YO after 2029
- Enrolment demand uncertain from year to year and financial viability will be affected if enrolment numbers drop in the medium term
- Many new private childcare centres in the local area and high uptake in kindergarten that is integrated into childcare due to many parents working.
- High reliance on President and Director for administrative tasks and compliance requirements – albeit improved position now that a specific administrative support staff member is employe
- Introduction of funding for three year old kinder may negatively impact 4 year old enrolments if we are unable to offer more session times for three year old groups. Restructuring of sessions may be required to match 3YO and 4YO numbers (i.e. more 3YOs attending and fewer 4YOs)
- Continued uncertainty surrounding the ongoing COVID-19 situation, particularly the impact of lockdowns/local outbreaks on our ability to offer a high quality program

## Key Objectives: 2020-2024

### Ongoing and Long Term

- **OVERALL EXCELLENCE:** To maintain the rating of 'exceeding' the National Quality Standard (NQS)
- **STRONG FINANCIAL POSITION:** To ensure long term financial viability and sound financial practice.
- **STRONG GOVERNANCE:** Continue to maintain strong, sustainable governance arrangements, which relies on securing skilled, committed parents to run the committee year on year
- **QUALITY STAFF AND PROGRAM:** To retain quality and experienced staff who align with the kindergarten's philosophy and run a quality program.
- **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:** Continue our strong community involvement with ongoing connections to local schools, family services, community organisations, Darebin Parklands, Darebin Council networks, past students and families
- **BUILDING AND GROUNDS:** Maintain and enhance the kindergarten's building and grounds to ensure a highly functional and play-based learning environment

### Immediate Priorities – 2021-2022

- **STAFF:**
  - (i) Update and formalise processes for professional staff recruitment, induction and management practices;
  - (ii) Support positive, inclusive and trusting staff culture, fostering strong communication and collaboration.
- **ENHANCE BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS:** Improve and maximise benefit of existing space and infrastructure, including:
  - (i) extension of office and creation of a adjunct meeting/staff breaks room;
  - (ii) plan for replacement of existing front wall mural to make it more culturally inclusive and reflective of the kindergarten's philosophy;
  - (iii) re-assess yard layout and potential improvements;
  - (iv) refurbish the foyer with a focus on becoming more child-centric, inviting and inclusive; and assess any other potential strategic improvements required.
- **TIMETABLING/PROGRAM STRUCTURE:**
  - (i) Extend bush kinder program to one full day in the 4 year old funded program;
  - (ii) Extend the 3 year old program to one full day in 2022, which can be supported in part financially due to 5 hours of funded kindergarten commencing 2022;
  - (iii) Plan for 2023 model, given 3 year old kinder will be funded up to 15 hours / week.
- **ADMINISTRATION:**
  - (i) Review of administration processes and IT systems to support efficient practices.

# Strategies

## Ongoing and Longer Term Priorities

**Objective: To maintain ‘exceeding’ rating in regards to the National Quality Framework (NQF)**

Quality Area ALL	Who	Priority	Status/Timing
To regularly review and update policies, Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)	NQF Committee representative	High	Ongoing
Lobby Government for financial support to cover the time required by staff and Committee to meet the policy requirements	President, NQF Committee representative and Director	Medium	Ongoing

**Objective: Remain financially viable with strong enrolments and sound financial practices**

Quality Area 7	Who	Priority	Status
Ensure documented financial controls and financial delegations are annual reviewed	Treasurer, Director and Committee	High	Ongoing
Encourage all Committee members to understand the Kindergarten’s financial reporting. Continue sound financial planning, and risk-averse financial governance and ensure monthly financials are reviewed/tracked against budget.	Treasurer, Director and Committee	Medium	Ongoing
Ensure the individual taking on the treasurer role each year has sufficient understanding of the role and has support of a sufficiently experienced person if not personally experienced	Treasurer, President and Committee	High	Ongoing
Continue documentation of Long Service Leave, unpaid leave and personal leave for current and past staff	President and Payroll Officer	High	Ongoing

**Objective: Maintaining strong, sustainable governance arrangements, which relies on securing skilled, committed parents to run the committee year on year**

Quality Area 7	Who	Priority	Status
Initiate succession planning for the parent led committee for the next year in term 3 of current year	President and Committee	High	Ongoing
Ensure Committee role descriptions are updated annually and remain relevant/accurate.	President and Committee	High	Ongoing
Explore additional supports or structures the Committee can utilise to assist with workload.	President and Committee	High	Not started
Review roles and responsibilities of Director, President and the Committee	Director and Committee	High	Not started

**Objective: Continue our strong community involvement by being an active within our local community**

Quality Area 6	Who	Priority	Status
Liaise with schools – excursion to local schools and incursions of foundation children coming back to ANMK	President and Director	High	In progress
Continue to engage positively with Darebin Centralised Waitlist to build a strong working relationship to support our current and prospective families.	Director and Committee	Low	Ongoing
Identify and understand the role of key contacts in the local community including those in childcare, allied health, schools, council, community organisations, local businesses to continue and grow these relationships	President and Director	Medium	Not Started

**Objective: To retain quality and experienced staff who align with the kindergarten’s philosophy and run a quality program.**

Quality Area 4 and 6	Who	Priority	Status
Ensure a Teacher as well as Director attend committee meetings to maintain link between committee and teaching program	President and Director	High	Ongoing
Continued commitment to professionalism in recruiting, managing and supporting staff – Refer to more immediate priorities	President, Staffing Subcommittee and Director	High	Ongoing

**Objective: Maintain/Improve the kindergarten’s building and grounds**

Quality Area 3	Who	Priority	Status
Ensure building and grounds are maintained and safe via parent working bees and constant liaison with council. Refer also to more immediate priorities.	Director and Committee	High	Ongoing
Ensure safe travel for families to and from the kindergarten, specifically regarding the pedestrian crossing outside the kindergarten.	Director and Committee	Medium	Ongoing

## Immediate Priorities – 2021-2022

**Objective: Formalise professional staff recruitment, review and management practices to ensure recruitment and retention of high quality staff.**

Quality Area 4	Who	Priority	Status / Timing
Ensure accessible and documented staff recruitment and review procedures	Director, President and Staffing Subcommittee	High	In progress - to be completed by Dec 2021
Create and formalise staff induction materials and process and information sheet for relievers	Director, President and Staffing Subcommittee	High	In progress - to be completed by Dec 2021
Support positive, inclusive and trusting staff culture, fostering strong communication and collaboration	Staffing Subcommittee and all staff	High	Ongoing

**Objective: Enhance Building and Grounds**

Quality Area 3	Who	Priority	Status/Timing
Extension of office and creation of a adjunct meeting and tea room	Director, Projects Subcommittee and President	High	In progress – builder has been engaged, awaiting confirmation of commencement

Plan for replacement of existing front wall mural to make it more culturally inclusive and reflective of the kindergarten's philosophy	Staff and Committee	Medium to High	Not Started - to be explored after building extension completed
Refurbish the foyer with a focus to becoming more child-centric, inviting and inclusive	Staff and Committee	Medium	In progress
Assess yard layout and potential improvements	Director and Projects Subcommittee	Medium	In progress - some subcontractors have been engaged, impacted by lockdown

**Objective: Review of timetable and structure**

Quality Area ALL	Who	Priority	Status/Timing
Assess and plan for 4YO and 3YO model in 2023	Director and President	High	Commenced

**Objective: Review of administration processes**

Quality Area ALL	Who	Priority	Status/Timing
Engage an IT consultant to review IT systems	Director and President	High	Not started
Review admin processes and documentation procedures	Administration Assistant, Director and President	High	In progress