



TOGETHER IN ISOLATION

# Kimberley School of the Air

## KINDERGARTEN HANDBOOK

[WWW.KSOTA.COM.AU](http://WWW.KSOTA.COM.AU)



## KIMBERLEY SCHOOL OF THE AIR KINDERGARTEN INFORMATION

Welcome to Kimberley School of the Air Kindergarten. We are so excited to be partnering with you as your child begins their educational journey with us. Kindergarten is your child's first learning experience of school: the wonder and excitement of learning, discovery and exploration. Kindergarten establishes a strong foundation for their future schooling.

Our kindy program aims to:

- *Enable children to become confident learners in a safe, stimulating and supported environment*
- *Encourage individuality, responsibility, independence and the development of cognitive, social, emotional, creative, and physical skills*
- *Provide life skills and opportunities to be successful in early learning*
- *Provide experiences for children to grow and develop through play and interaction*
- *Expand children's knowledge and connection of themselves, family, culture, their environment and the broader community*
- *Promote open communication between families and staff by encouraging interest and participation in the kindy program*

### **National Quality Framework and Standards**

The National Quality Framework (NQF) provides a national approach to regulation, assessment and quality improvement for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services across Australia. The National Quality Standard (NQS) sets a high national benchmark for early childhood education.

There are seven Quality Areas:

1. *Educational program and practice*
2. *Children's health and safety*
3. *Physical environment*
4. *Staffing arrangements*
5. *Relationships with children*
6. *Collaborative partnerships with families and communities*
7. *Governance and leadership*



### **Early Years Learning Framework**

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) is the first national framework for early childhood educators. It was developed to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to five years and through their transition to school. The following three characteristics underpin children's learning and development.

- **Belonging** - recognises the crucial importance of positive relationships and connections with family and community. Belonging is central to the building of identity and is pivotal in children's understanding of who they are now and what they might become.
- **Being** - recognises the importance of the here and now in children's lives. Early childhood is a time of significant growth and development, challenges and joys as children try to make sense of their world.
- **Becoming** - describes the swift and significant change in children's identities, knowledge, capacities and skills that are shaped across childhood as children grow and learn.



The five learning outcomes of the **EYLF** are:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners and thinkers
- Children are effective communicators

Children in the early years learn through a balance of intentional teaching, or explicit instruction, and purposeful, structured play.

### **Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI)**

Explicit Direct Instruction, or EDI, is a research-based teaching approach which promotes student engagement, academic language, and deep learning. EDI is effective because students spend more time actively involved in learning through techniques such as reading with the teacher, partner talk and using individual whiteboards to respond. EDI lessons follow a consistent structure which includes reviewing previous learning, clearly explaining new concepts, asking higher level questions to extend students, and skill development through guided and independent practice. This approach is engaging for young children and aligns with practices outlined in the Early Years Learning Framework.

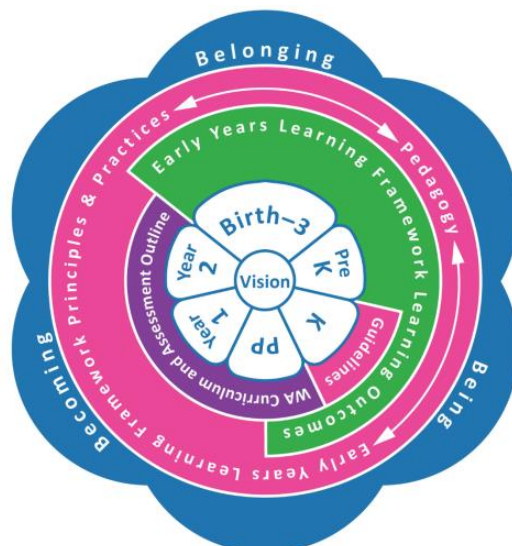
### **Purposeful Play**

Play is a powerful context for learning and is naturally motivating for young children. In a school context, we use purposeful play to support students to learn and apply new concepts. Purposeful play activities are designed with a clear learning intention which is communicated to students before they begin. This helps to focus students and present them with stimulating extension challenges.

### **Kindergarten Curriculum**

The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) is responsible for curriculum, policy advice and guidelines for all Western Australian schools from Kindergarten to Year 12.

The Kindergarten Curriculum draws on the Early Years Learning Framework to focus learning in Kindy. Early childhood educators take into consideration contextual factors when designing and implementing quality curriculum. We take a holistic approach to integrating learning across all curriculum areas, wherever possible, to develop children's physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and creative knowledge, skills and understanding.





## **Physical Development**

Motor skills incorporate coordination, body control and movements. Motor skills are generally broken down into two categories; gross motor, or big body movements such as walking, jumping, and climbing; and fine motor, or small hand movements such as writing, drawing, painting, and cutting. We incorporate the teaching of Fundamental Movement Skills, or FMS, into the daily program. This involves targeted teaching of movement and object control skills, followed by practice through games and obstacle courses.

Fine motor skill development is a key component of our Kindy program. Students will regularly use a variety of tools such as tweezers, pencils, paint brushes and scissors to develop their coordination and muscle strength. We use the **Peggy Lego Handwriting** program to assist the development of fine motor skills. This program focuses on six core shapes or movements which, when written, are used to form the letters of the alphabet. Each shape has a name, picture and a verbal prompt which are taught and practised extensively in Kindy.

Well-developed motor skills are important for successful learning because they allow students to sit comfortably on the mat or at a desk and write for extended periods. Some children may require additional help to develop their motor skills, if your child's teacher has concerns they may speak to you about a referral to an Occupational Therapist or OT.

## **Cognitive Development**

We use research-informed effective practices across our early years to ensure our students have a quality first learning program. These are described below:

### **Phonological Awareness**

Phonological awareness is an ability to hear, explain, and manipulate the sounds in spoken language. Some of the key skills include breaking words into syllables, or beats, recognising and producing rhyme, and segmenting words into individual sounds. These skills are critical for successful reading and spelling because they create a foundation for identifying and manipulating the sounds in words. We use the **Let's Decode** program, to build a strong foundation for reading and spelling.

### **Phonics**

We use a synthetic phonics approach to teaching reading and writing. Students are taught to decode (read) and encode (write) through learning the simple sound for each letter or groups of letters first. Phonics teaching begins in Kindy with children learning to recognise and say simple sounds for letters of the alphabet. Students are encouraged to refer to letters by their most common sound, /s/ as in snake or /a/ as in apple, rather than the letter name as this helps children learn to blend the sounds to read. We teach phonics using the **Let's Decode** program.

### **Reading**

Reading aloud to your child is very important in helping them build a range of pre-reading skills such as story structure: beginning, middle, ending; book title, author, and illustrator, making predictions and connections to characters and events in stories, learning new vocabulary, and saying what they liked or did not like about a story. We use picture books and targeted questions to support students to build their understanding of stories.

When children have learned a few key sounds and can blend them together to read words, they are ready for decodable books. These are books that only contain words using sounds the children have learned. This gives children a real sense of themselves as readers, and success builds success!



## Hands-on Mathematics

Learning early concepts in mathematics is best supported using hands-on materials such as blocks, counters, straws, popsticks etc. in a play-based, problem-solving environment. The maths program in kindy is focused on children developing a sound understanding of number, principles of counting, measuring, and shapes. Learning the particular vocabulary of maths and talking about what they know and understand is vitally important.

## Social and Emotional Development

Kindy is where children learn how to interact and play with others. Taking turns, sharing, including others, being kind and respectful are a focus of the health and wellbeing program. Children learn to recognise their feelings and emotions and develop the skills of self-regulation. We use mindful practice to help students manage their emotions and anxiety.

## What your child will do at Kindergarten

We aim to provide a happy, stimulating, and fun on-air and off-air learning environment where all children are given the opportunity to encounter new challenges and experiences. We will cater for children's individual needs and interests. Children will learn to:

- *Share and co-operate with other children, Home Tutors and teachers.*
- *Work independently.*
- *Follow simple routines.*
- *Develop the ability and confidence to communicate verbally and non-verbally their thoughts, ideas and feelings.*
- *Think critically, question, problem-solve, and be creative*

## Reporting to Parents

All students are required to provide evidence of the work they have completed off-air. Students will submit evidence of their work via **Seesaw** for their teacher to mark. At the end of each semester, a Kindergarten report will be provided to families showing their child's progress and achievement.

## Session Times

Students in Kindy have a **30-minute** Literacy Block and a **30-minute** Maths block.

## Attendance

While there is no legal requirement for children of pre-compulsory age to be enrolled in kindergarten, once enrolled, those students must attend as required by Section 23 of the School Education Act 1999. Consistent, regular attendance at kindergarten is essential as this practice sets your child in good stead for the rest of their life at school.

A child will be deemed to be **attending** if:

- They have attended an Air Lesson.
- If they haven't attended the Air Lesson, they have advised the school that they will carry out the learning activity at another time and submit to the teacher. This may be because of technical issues or another event.
- They may not have a satellite system, but they are completing and returning set work and having regular communication with the school and their teacher.

A child will be judged to be **not attending** if:

- They are not attending Air Lessons, and they have no explanation or parent/guardian justification.
- They are not attending Air Lessons, and no set work is being received by the school.



## Health

It is appreciated if you can keep us up to date with matters concerning your child's health and wellbeing. Often a simple change in routine or the home environment may be enough to cause an unhappy child.

## Muster Assembly

Assemblies at KSOTA are held every fortnight. We endeavour to have an assembly on the first and last weeks of each term. Parents and Home Tutors are informed via email, at least the day before an assembly, if their student is receiving a merit award. Parents can request the award be 'held' until the next assembly if they are unable to attend. Dates for each assembly will be provided to Home Tutors and parents in school newsletters.

## Camps

Camps, like Home Visits, are an essential element to schooling through Kimberley School of the Air as they provide teachers, students and the wider school community with face-to-face interactions. Camps at KSOTA are very different to camps at a mainstream school. All students from **Kindy to Year 6** are invited to attend, along with their families and Home Tutors.

## Supporting Your Child's Transition to Kindergarten

- Engage in conversation with your child about their learning.
- Encourage independence.
- Keep in touch with your child's teacher on matters concerning your child's development.
- Notify the teacher of any changes in the usual routine within the home. Some changes may affect your child's social and emotional well-being during school.
- Notify the teacher if your child is receiving any therapies outside of school, e.g., speech or occupational therapy and provide copies of any reports.
- Notify the office of any changes in emergency contact information or medical updates.

The Department of Education's [Hello Kindergarten](#) booklet provides more information on supporting your child in this critical year of their education.



## Home Tutor Expectations

The Home Tutor is an invaluable resource at KSOTA. We recognise their continued commitment to improving the educational outcomes of students living in geographical isolation. Home Tutors are an extension of our KSOTA teachers. Despite being organised by each individual site, Home Tutors can expect to be held to the same high standards as our teachers.

*Home Tutors at KSOTA will:*

- Model Respect, Resilience and Integrity.
- Speak respectfully and appropriately to each other, KSOTA staff, and students during air-lessons, when in the schoolroom, and at camps.
- Speak respectfully and appropriately to other adults when in the schoolroom.
- Use safe and respectful contact with students when managing challenging behaviour during air-lessons, in the schoolroom, and at camps.
- Support teachers to deliver air-lessons by maintaining an orderly schoolroom.
- Ensure off-air work is completed and submitted to teachers.





- Communicate directly with the classroom teacher regarding any educational or behavioral concerns that have arisen in the schoolroom.
- Be appropriately dressed for the on-air classroom and their schoolroom.
- Be proud to be a part of KSOTA.

### **On-Air Expectations**

Well planned and prepared air-lessons are an essential part of the curriculum delivery at KSOTA. Lesson materials and programs are designed to address the curriculum and class priorities in an interactive manner.

*On-air, students will:*

- Demonstrate Respect, Resilience and Integrity.
- Arrive on time and prepared.
- Have their camera on and microphone ready.
- Remain at their computer for the entirety of the air-lesson.
- Refrain from eating.
- Be appropriately dressed.

### **Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)**

PBS is a proactive approach that relies on research-based practices, including developing clear behavioural expectations, teaching these expectations, acknowledging appropriate behaviour, consistently correcting inappropriate behaviour and using data to systematically solve problems.

*KSOTA operates across three very distinctive environments:*

- The on-air classroom
- The on-site schoolroom
- Whole-school camps

The KSOTA community works together to set consistently high behaviour expectations for all students and adults. Through our fortnightly assemblies, students are explicitly taught behaviour expectations. These expectations become a 'focus' in the classroom and schoolroom, with teachers and Home Tutors acknowledging appropriate behaviour.





## Peggy Lego Pre Writing patterns



The Peggy Lego prewriting patterns, break down letters into seven pencil movements. Generally the Peggy Lego program includes a story for each pattern, a gross motor activity, a sensory / tactile activity, a fine motor activity and then finally the writing activity. Here are the pencil movements required, along with the verbal cue you provide when writing the shape. It is ideal to start with the Tall man shape and then progress onto Sideways Sideways, Starts with a Click, Jack and Jill, Under the Gate and Over the Gate.



Starts at the top, pulls  
down and stops.



Sideways, sideways,  
to the magic land.



Starts with a click,  
goes around and stops.



Jack and Jill went up the hill,  
and down the hill.



Down and under the gate.



Up and over the gate.

Gross motor	
Sensory based	
Consistent verbal cues	
Consistent visual cues	

Remember! Start teaching the child the movement with their whole body (gross motor), then draw it in sand or rice (sensory), use the consistent verbal cues and give them a clear example of what the shapes looks like

*Children should be consolidating these shapes by the end of kindy, so they are ready to translate them into letters as they enter preprimary.*

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