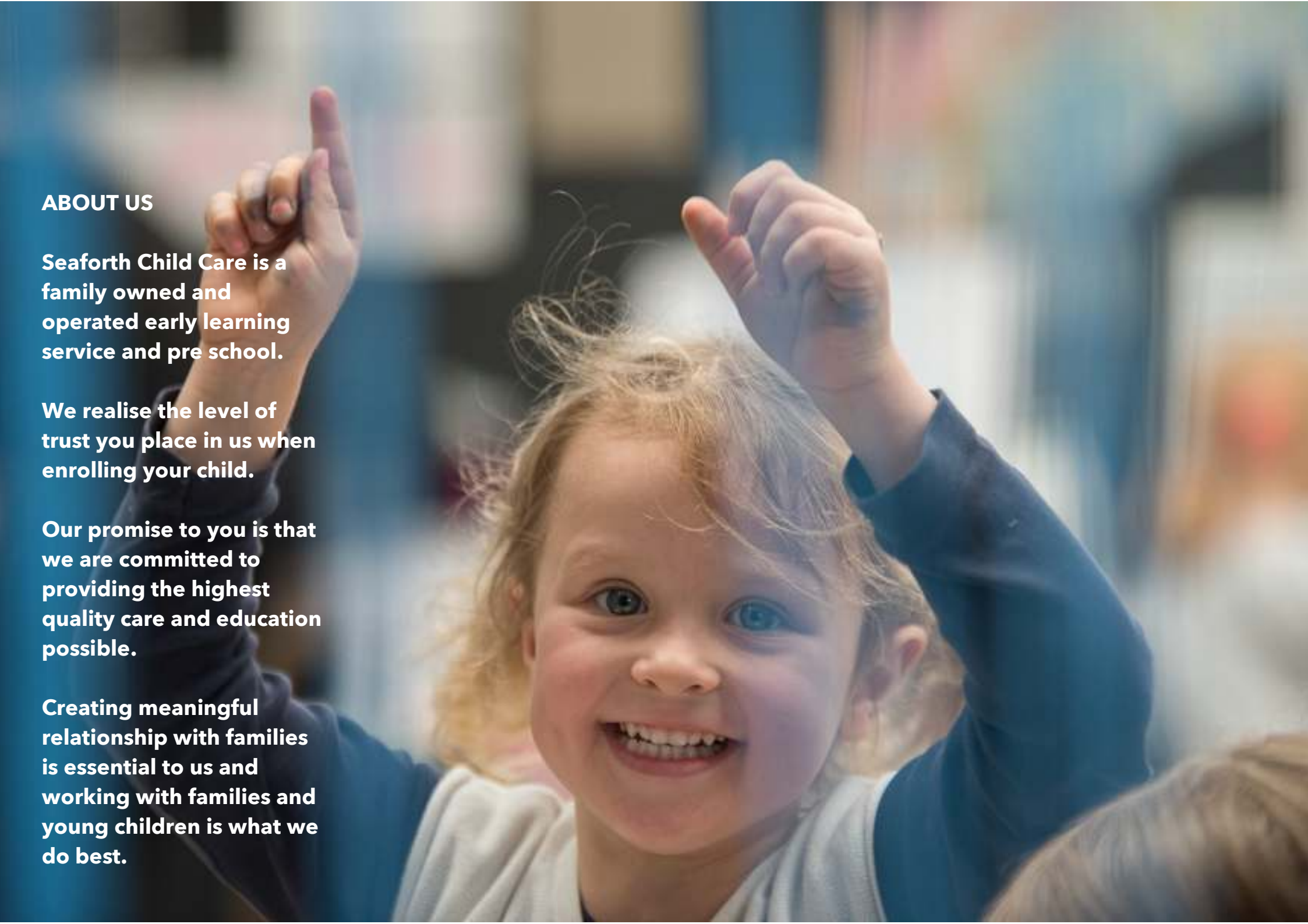
Seaforth Child Care
Parent Orientation Guide

seaforth
CHILDCARE



ABOUT US

Seaforth Child Care is a family owned and operated early learning service and pre school.

We realise the level of trust you place in us when enrolling your child.

Our promise to you is that we are committed to providing the highest quality care and education possible.

Creating meaningful relationship with families is essential to us and working with families and young children is what we do best.

Our Philosophy

Learning environment

We believe that providing a safe, secure and stimulating environment is the key to a happy, healthy, confident and successful child. We view the environment as a rich and varied learning space for children.

Professional partnerships with families and children

Our highly skilled educators provide a respectful, inclusive, nurturing and homely environment. We strive to achieve a sense of belonging for the children by facilitating a connection with their home, families and communities. We acknowledge that these are the relationships children value most.

Commitment to children's learning

Educators view children to be capable, confident and involved learners and facilitate this by using the children's interests and development as a basis to intentionally implement our educational program. We encourage children to be environmentally responsible and teach them the importance of sustainable practices

Professional development and on-going reflection

We believe that the early years of a child's life are the most influential. Our educators take pride in their profession and are supported to engage in individualised professional development and reflection.

Our commitment to Reconciliation

We acknowledge and value the cultures, histories and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We are committed to working towards national reconciliation by integrating aspects of their culture throughout the year in a respectful and

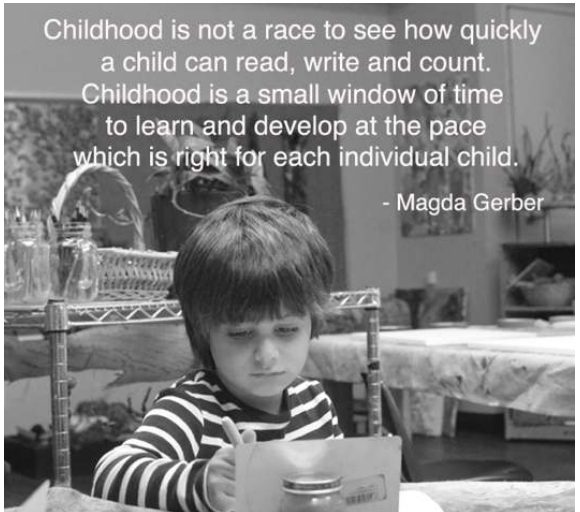
meaningful way reflective this is part of our Reconciliation Action plan.

What activities are provided for my child?

Our curriculum is based on the Early Years Learning Framework. This framework is our guide to the professional knowledge base of early childhood education. The principles, practices and learning outcomes are based on what we know about high quality early childhood education.

We also provide extracurricular activities throughout our week at no additional charges for our families. These are:

- Artist in resident program for 2 to 5 years.
- Bonjour French Classes for children aged 2- 5 years.
- Yoga and relaxation for babies for children aged 6 weeks to 2 years.
- Fit and Healthy Programs – Munch and Move, Seaforth Sustainability & Kitchen Garden Program
- Pre School transition to school program
- Munching with Mary



CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Artist in Residence Program

We have a designated art studio for children aged 2 – 5 years every day.
This is a place where children can freely express their artistic and creativity skills.

Children use a hundred languages to express themselves. Words, symbols, sounds, music and of course art. It is through those languages we learn about our children and what is important to them.

We view the environment as the third teacher. Our art space reflects this. It is a designated space where children come to create, explore and experience themselves through art. It is a beautiful space brimming with natural light, creativity and curiosity where the learning is endless.

We believe children don't need to be told what to do, they need to be given rich experiences to explore and engage in. Children are capable beings that given the opportunity will continue to raise the bar on their own learning and creative development.

Our educators support creative thinking simply by ensuring that children have significant time to play. Play provides children with the opportunity to problem solve, make mistakes, build connections and create within a secure environment.

Bonjour French Classes

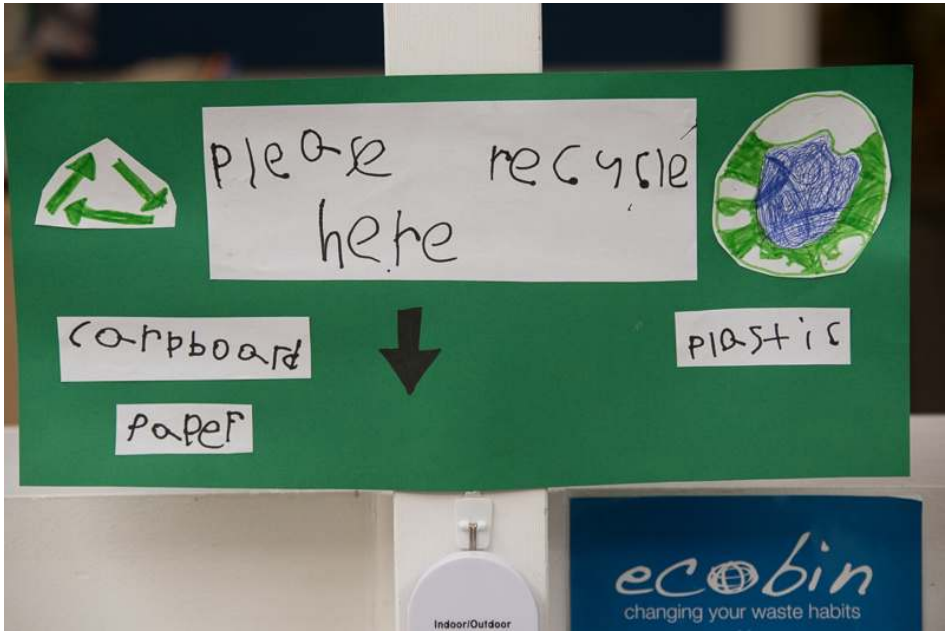
Children 2.5 – 5 years. This program rotates through the week.
The French classes cover basic French language conversational skills, routine discussions (introductions, eating, drinking, daily routines), the weather, feelings, days of the week and numbers. Each term follows a theme, which is incorporated in the chosen activities, songs and learning aids. Children are encouraged to speak French by repeating phrases and participating in games that elicit their verbal skills. We always place strong emphasises on learning through fun, so adapting the program to feed into the children's interests is also imperative.

Yoga and relaxation for babies

Children aged 6 weeks to 2 years every day.

Children's yoga is beneficial for their growing bodies and more importantly their developing mind, children discovering new ways of expressing themselves and developing mindfulness that carries on through their other learning experiences.

Yoga teaches children about their bodies, how to move it and respect it. It also helps to develop their spatial awareness and improves their musculoskeletal development and teaches children how to rest and be still, which is good for their brain development.



Fit and Healthy Programs:

- **Munch and Move**
- **Seaforth Sustainability Project**
- **Kitchen Garden Program**

Munch & Move *is* a NSW Health initiative that supports the healthy development of children birth to 5 years.
It's a fun, play-based approach to supporting healthy eating and physical activity habits in young children. The Munch & Move program fits within the new National Quality Framework and the Early Years Learning Framework.

Seaforth Sustainability Project - Fridays

Practicing sustainability empowers children to construct knowledge, explore values and develop an appreciation of the environment and its relationship to their worlds. This lays the foundations for an environmentally responsible adulthood. Our Sustainability educator works with the children aged 2 – 5s on a Friday on various projects.

Kitchen Garden Program – Monday & Fridays

Our kitchen garden is located in the grounds of Seaforth Public School. Our children aged 3-5 years enjoy regular outings to the Kitchen Garden on a Monday and Friday. This program teaches young children all about food – where it comes from, how to grow food and share it, and what fresh and even how to cook. This program promotes developing positive food habits for life, environmental and sustainability awareness.

Munching with Mary

Munching with Mary occurs at different times of the week and involves cooking new recipes to help children develop a positive connection to different types of food. We link our cooking experiences with the fresh produce that the children have grown from our kitchen garden. Forming these positive relationships with fresh food is important to create healthy food habits for life.

Cooking with children provides practical experience with many essential skills such as following directions, measuring, team work, sharing, patience, fine motor skills, eye hand coordination and concepts of maths and science.

School Readiness and our Pre-school Program

As your child moves through their early years, the transition to formal schooling is one of their most significant milestones. Preparing your child for the transition to school and their future doesn't just happen in the year before school, it happens from the day they are born. At Seaforth we scaffold children's learning through a wide range of experiences that set them up for successful lifelong learning.

Our pre-school program embraces current research and child development theory on literacy, science, technology, engineering, art, maths, music and language and has a focus on social and emotional development. Through intentional teaching and play children are guided by their natural interests and curiosities, while being supported by educators who inspire children to make meaningful connections to real world environments – not by learning through repetition and isolated recognition of numbers and letters.

School readiness does not mean being able to read, write and do basic maths before starting school. School readiness is about the development of the whole child – their social and emotional skills, physical skills, communication skills and cognitive skills.

Children cannot thrive at school if they haven't developed the skills to manage things like getting along with other children, following instructions, and communicating their needs.
'School readiness' in children includes many different skills and behaviours, such as:

Social skill

Being able to get along with other children, demonstrate basic manners, assert themselves, and being able to play independently as well as with other children.

Emotional maturity

Being able to manage their emotions, cope with minimal adult contact in large groups, focus on tasks, follow directions and instructions from teachers, cope with the stress of the new school environment, and understand the rules.

Language skills

Being able to talk and listen to adults and other children, speak clearly, communicate needs, understand stories, and begin to identify some letters and sounds.

Cognitive Skills

Basic number sense, basic thinking skills, being able to wait and take turns.

Physical health and coordination

Basic health, fine motor skills (such as being able to grip a pencil and turn pages in a book) and physical coordination (being able to run, jump, climb, and play ball).

Independence
Basic skills to manage their needs without adult supervision, such as going to the toilet, dressing, unwrapping their lunch and managing their belongings.

School readiness is a very important component of our educational program at Seaforth. School readiness is more than a child's academic abilities. When talking about school readiness we are looking at a child's *readiness for school* with regard to their **social and emotional skills, communication skills, self-help/independence skills and motor coordination skills.** We are also looking at a child's *readiness to learn* which encompasses a child's level of concentration, interest in learning, confidence in sharing their ideas and processing information/following instructions and adapt to change - basically that they are at a developmentally appropriate age to cope with the learning conveyed to them in a formal school setting (DoCs, 2003).

These components will be a part of our everyday program and are also resonant with key components of the EYLF, which guides our practice. Therefore, when talking about a 'school readiness program' at Seaforth we are looking at a program that embeds these key developmental skills into the everyday. Children learn best when they are engaged and interested in a topic or scenario and we use these interests as a basis for our planning and providing the children with purposeful and meaningful learning experiences.

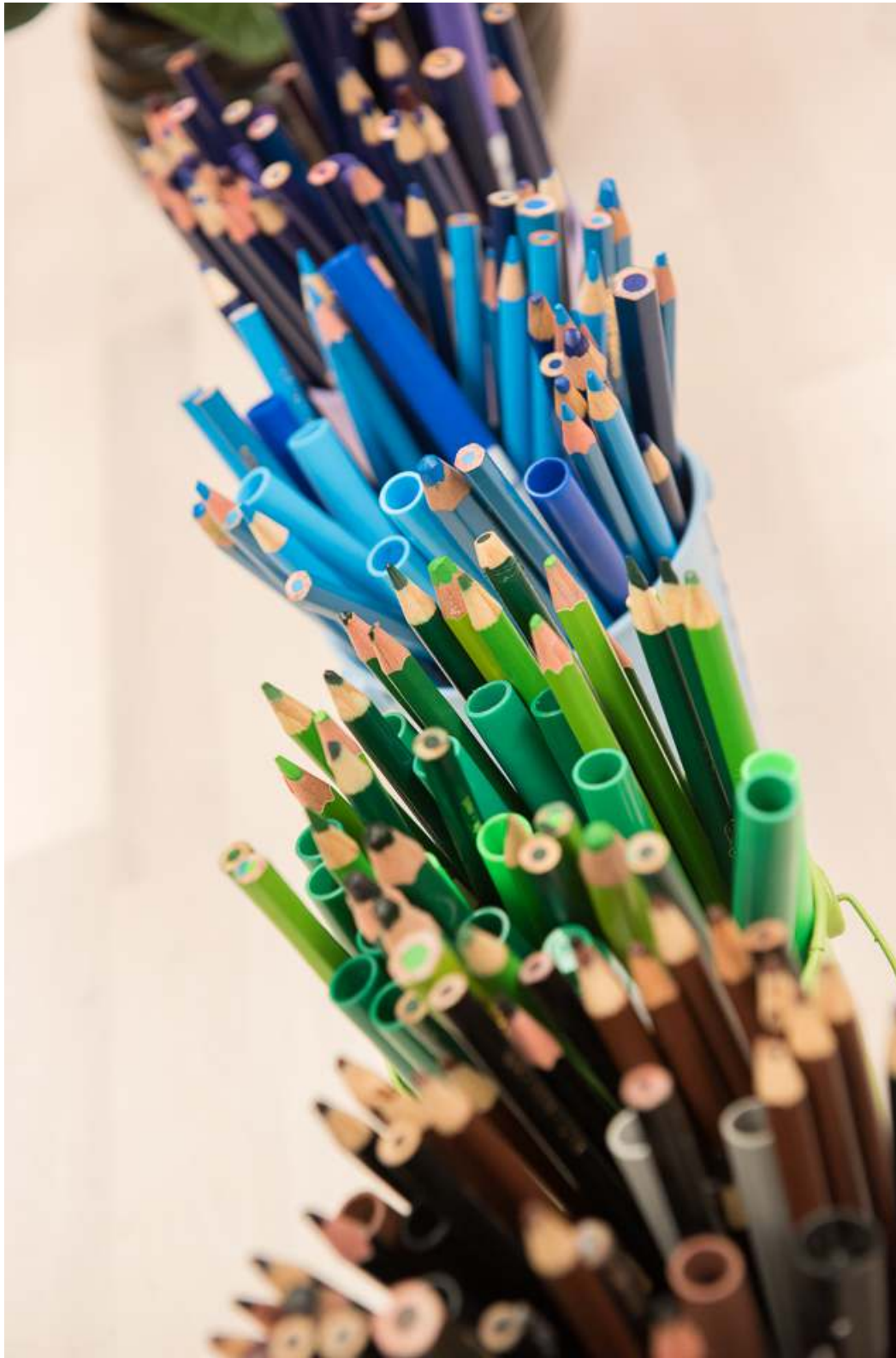
Research states that by engaging children in purposeful and intentional play experiences they can be provided opportunities with which to practice the skills and attributes needed for formal schooling, be it developing their social confidence and emotional competence, their much needed motor coordination skills or developing their understanding of how language is used. Play is the fundamental means by which children gather and process information, learn new skills and practice old ones. By fostering intentional play experiences children are more likely to have a positive perception of learning, a confidence to express their ideas and all the previously mentioned attributes regarding their *readiness for school* and *readiness for learning*.

By drilling children, they may be provided with temporary content learning, however by providing them with purposeful play experiences that they are in control of, children can enjoy and make sense of their experiences while developing all their characteristics needed for formal schooling, whilst building a lifetime of knowledge.

We would also like to point out that we hold a School Readiness seminar half way through the year, which we recommend you all attend as well as mid-year meetings, which are important for reviewing your child's progress and making goals in the lead up to school.

A note from the Educational Leader

At Seaforth we program for the children in room groups as well as individually, based on their development, skills and interests.
When they start at the centre, each child will have an individual portfolio created on EDUCA – our web-based programming system. As a parent/guardian, you will receive an invitation via e mail, (and we recommend you check your junk mail in case it is filtered there), and all you have to do it press the link to set up your account.
EDUCA is a program that allows us to share with you, our written documentation on your child's learning and development. You should expect to see a new entry each month from February to May, and July to October, as well as a summative assessment of their learning based on the five learning outcomes in the Early Years Learning Framework, in June and November. In each observation, we will share photos of the experiences they have engaged in as well as how we have planned for the extension and development of your child's knowledge and skills in a range of learning areas.
We would also like to encourage you to engage with the online portfolio system, which is what it is designed for, to open up communication between families, children and staff, by writing your own stories, sharing photos or writing notes to your child's room/teacher, which we can then incorporate into our daily program with the children.
If you have any questions about the learning program, please feel to ask your child's room leader, or send through an e mail to Sophie in the office and we will get back to you as soon as possible.



National Quality Framework

The National Quality Framework (NQF) provides a national approach to curriculum, regulations, assessment and quality improvement in early childhood.

Research shows quality education and care early in life leads to better health, education and employment outcomes later in life. The early years are critical for establishing self-esteem, resilience, healthy growth and capacity to learn. Quality education and care shapes every child's future and lays the foundation for development and learning.

The *National Quality Framework* aims to raise quality and drive continuous improvement and consistency in education and care services through:

- a national legislative framework
- a National Quality Standard
- a national quality rating and assessment process
- a new national body called the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority.

National Quality Standard

The *National Quality Standard* sets a high national benchmark for the quality of education and care services. The *National Quality Standard* is divided into 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. Leadership and service management

Curriculum at Seaforth Child Care

Early Years Learning Framework
Our Curriculum embraces meaningful play-based learning to create successful lifelong learners. This Curriculum, which falls under the Government's Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), intends to maximise the potential of children by delivering a high quality, early childhood education programme.

The framework describes the principles, practice and outcomes to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years, as well as their transition to school.

The following is an excerpt from *Belonging, Being & Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*.

"A vision for children's learning"

All children experience learning that is engaging and builds success for life.

Fundamental to the Framework is a view of children's lives as characterised by belonging, being and becoming. From before birth children are connected to family, community, culture and place. The earliest development and learning takes place through these relationships, particularly within families, who are children's first and most in influential educators. As children participate in everyday life, they develop interests and construct their own identities and understandings of the world.

Belonging

Experiencing belonging – knowing where and with whom you belong – is integral to human existence. Children belong first to a family, a cultural group, a neighbourhood and a wider community. Belonging acknowledges children's interdependence with others and the basis of relationships in de fining identities. In early childhood, and throughout life, relationships are crucial to a sense of belonging. Belonging is central to being and becoming in that it shapes who children are and who they can become.

Being

Being recognises the significance 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.

Becoming

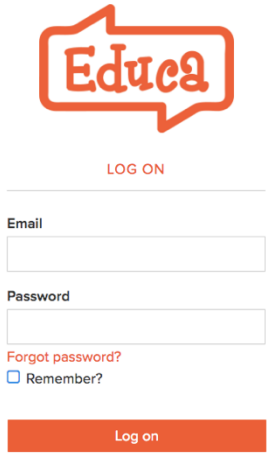
Children's identities, knowledge, understandings, capacities, skills and relationships change during childhood. They are shaped by many different events and circumstances. Becoming reflects this process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years as young children learn and grow. It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

The Australian Government's *Early Learning Years Framework - Belonging, Being and Becoming* describes the principles, practice and outcomes essential to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school.

Documenting your child's learning

Documenting children's learning is a powerful tool for viewing the learning process and assessing children's outcomes as per our guidelines in the National Curriculum (EYLF) and the *National Quality Standards*. By making learning visible it immediately becomes a shared communication tool between educators, children and families.

We know how daunting it can be leaving your child in child care, which is why we use the Educa Ap for families. This ensures daily photos and your child's learning and development are at your fingertips.



" As they say, out of the mouths of babes...when we pull into the car park at drop off of a morning Reggie throws his hands in the air and shouts "Ray (hooray) for Kindy!" I think he has more fun with you than he does at home - ha ha.
Mum and Dad to Reggie

Individual children's portfolios

A detailed portfolio gives children, educators and families an opportunity to revisit learning. Your child's portfolio is confidential and is available at the centre or via the Educa Ap for your perusal. Educators are required to assess all children against the five learning outcomes (EYLF), including their emerging literacy and numeracy skills.

- 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
- Children are effective communicators

We encourage your input into your child's learning to enhance a collaborative approach to your child's development. A summary of development will be collated at the end of year for children leaving the service for school as part of the transition to school program.

" We love Seaforth. The girls are amazing, creative and so loving to the children. Would not go anywhere else! Thank you" Oscar's Mum

Communication

Strong communication is the key to positive relationships. We provide many opportunities for not only in your involvement at the service but other forms of communication may include:

- Newsletters & regular email correspondence
- Daily feedback from educators
- Group parent meetings & 1:1 meetings
- Social events, annual surveys & feedback forms

Any concerns about your child can be discussed at a confidential meeting with the Director and educator at the service, as well as through less formal and ongoing conversations.

Policies and procedures

Our Service has policies and procedures for almost everything that happens. This is required as a condition of our provider approval by the State Government and is designed to ensure that children receive consistent, quality early education and care.

A copy of all service policies and procedures and a copy of the service Quality Improvement Plan is readily available for parents viewing at any time. These documents are usually located in the service foyer. We also invite your feedback on these policies and procedures at any time.

Please feel free to discuss them with our Director.

Included in this pack are the following general policies for your information:

- Medication & Accident and Injury policy
- Paracetamol (& over the counter medication)
- Fees Policy
- Late Collection Policy
- Sun Protection
- Positively Guiding Children's Behaviour
- Managing Infectious Diseases

" The staff at Seaforth are genuine caring staff. You always go the extra mile! Thank You" James Mum

In addition to these general policies are policies specific for under two year olds:

- Safe Sleep and Rest Times
- Biting Policy
- Nappy Change Procedure

Signing in and out

Settling a child into a service takes time, care and consistency from both educators and families. Having predictable routines at arrival and departure times assists children to build confidence in their separation skills.

We ask that you follow some important procedures during these times:

- Parent/guardians must accompany their child/ren into the service.
- Parent/guardians take their child to their room and ensure that an educator is made aware of their arrival.
- Parent/guardians are required to log in on the ipads in the foyer.
- Parent/guardians are required to log out when you collect your child.
- If your child requires any medication, ensure that this is handed directly to a staff member together with a signed medication consent form.
- Please say goodbye to your child before leaving.

- If there are changes to collection during the day, please inform the service Director as soon as possible in writing.

Sleep & Rest times

We will ensure all children have appropriate opportunities for sleep, rest and relaxation in accordance with their individual needs. Younger children have individual cots in a supervised and peaceful cot room.

Older children may rest on stretcher beds.

We believe it is important to accommodate each child's individual sleep and relaxations routine. This is done in consultation with the families depending on the age/stage of the child. We provide beds and cots that comply with Australian Standards.

Children with allergies

It is vital that we are aware of any allergies or asthma. Families are required to explain any allergy or asthma on the enrolment form as well as provide us with the diagnosis from the doctor. The Service has a procedure the staff follow to minimise allergic reactions.

The Service requires an Action Plan filled in by your Doctor to assist in managing your child's needs. The Action Plan is to be updated every 6 months.

Your first day

The first day of child care can be super exciting but also quite overwhelming. We are here to support the transition for your child and your family. There are so many things to think about; what to expect, how long do I stay when I drop them off, what should I pack, how should I dress them? Our friendly educators are here to help you and your child settle in on your first day.

We have put together a little checklist below to help you prepare for the big first day!

What to expect

First days can bring nerves and mixed emotions. It is natural to feel anxious as this is a big change for you as a parent, child and the entire family. Our Director and Educators will explain the process of dropping off your child and saying goodbye throughout your orientation and first day. They will also call or email you throughout the day letting you know how your child is settling in and what activities they have participated in.
At any time throughout the day if you are curious as to how your child is going, call us and ask to talk to the Educators in the classroom and they will be able to update you every step of the way. Before you know it your child will be showing you to the classroom and waving goodbye independently as they see their new friends and get involved in the many activities they will experience!

You can put your child's bag on a hook in the hallway or in a basket provided in your child's classroom.

What to wear

We promote sun smart practices at Seaforth Child Care and provide 30+ sunblock.

When you are dressing your child for their day consider:

- Tops and dresses that cover the shoulders and as much of the arms as possible.
- Closed toe shoes or sandals with a back so they don't slip off.
- Clothes that have the potential to get a little messy at times even though we try and prevent it.
- A wide brimmed hat labelled.

What to bring *Please label all items including socks, underpants and shoes.*

When packing your child's bag for their day you may like to consider the following:

- Two sets of spare clothing. If your child is toilet training, please provide at least 4 spare pairs of clothing.
- Sleeping bag for babies
- A jumper or jacket in case the weather changes.
- Comfort item such as teddy, blanket, dummy labelled with your child's name.
- A family photo.
- Formula/Bottles (If required) we provide S26 formula and sterilised Avent bottles.
- Drink bottle for children aged 2 – 5 year
- **Please do not bring toys or food from home into the service.**

Sample Daily Routine for children 15month – 5 years

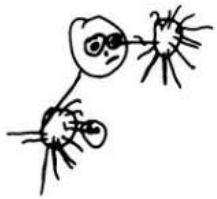
7.00am – 7.30am Breakfast

7.30am – 9.00am Uninterrupted indoor time to inspire curiosity, foster creativity and support discovery. Group gatherings, intentional teaching, music and language experiences. Large group projects and nurturing small group activities.

9.00am -9.30am Progressive morning

9.30am – 11.15am Uninterrupted outdoor time for spontaneous and intentional teaching that invites open-ended interactions with nature, promotes spontaneity, risk-taking, exploration, discovery and connection with our environment.

11.15am Group Time



11.30am Shared group lunch with friends, fresh & nutritious home style meals.

12.00 – 2.00pm Rest and relaxation & quite activities

2.00pm -3.00pm Progressive afternoon tea

3.00pm – 4pm Outdoor time

4.00pm late snack

5pm Hot dinner

4.15pm till 6.30pm.
Uninterrupted indoor play and family grouping.

Please note this is a sample of our day. It is not set in stone and it is always based on the needs and interests of the children and the weather.