



# PRESCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

Updated: 01/2017

**Centre number: 6501**

**Centre name: Acacia Kindergarten**

## 1. General information

- Preschool Director  
Kimberley Crowe
- Postal address  
PO Box 2602, Mt Gambier, SA 5290
- Location address  
12 Bailey St, Mt Gambier, SA 5290
- DECD Region  
Limestone Coast
- Geographical location – ie road distance from GPO (km)  
Approx. 450km from Adelaide and Melbourne
- Telephone number  
08 87257373
- Fax number  
08 87249383
- Preschool website address:  
[www.acaciakgn.sa.edu.au](http://www.acaciakgn.sa.edu.au)
- Preschool e-mail address  
dl.6501\_leaders@school.sa.edu.au
- Enrolment/Attendance  
With a ratio of 1:10 in place from 2016, the kindergarten has an enrolment cap of 60 children.
- Co-located/stand-alone  
Acacia is a stand-alone facility adjacent to the Mount Gambier North School on what is known as the North Hill, with a beautiful outlook across the city to the extinct volcano cone which is “the Mount”. The Kindergarten and the Mount Gambier North School each operate completely independently of each other. The Kindergarten uses the North School’s facilities.
- Programs operating at the preschool
  - ❖ Transition to kindergarten

Transition to Acacia Kindergarten is offered when the kindergarten has the capacity to do so depending on current staffing and enrolments. Transition programs are not funded. Families are strongly encouraged to attend playgroup to support their child's transition to kindergarten.

❖ **Sessional Kindergarten for eligible children**

Children are entitled to 15 hours of preschool education in the year prior to starting school. Session bookings are configured to suit family needs and also the kindergartens current vacancies. Children attend two full days and an alternate Friday as the Universal Access session.

❖ **Inclusive Preschool Program**

A specialised program set up for children with significant additional needs operates on site alternate Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. This Program has its own teacher and Early Childhood Worker and caters for a maximum of 6 children, depending on the complexity and dynamic of children in this program.

❖ **Extended Care**

Acacia Kindergarten offers Before Kindy Care for parents who are working or studying. Children are able to arrive at kindy before sessional kindergarten starts, between 8:30am-9am. There is an additional fee for children who are booked into access this care.

❖ **Lunch/Full Day Program**

Acacia Kindergarten does not have a separate Lunch Care Program. Lunch is part of our daily session, and families are not charged for this time.

❖ **Bilingual Support**

Acacia Kindergarten offers Bilingual Support to children who meet the criteria for funding, as set out by DECD. More recently we have seen the number of children requiring this service increase, with the New Arrivals Program being offered at the co-located North School.

❖ **Preschool Support**

Preschools Support and Early Intervention hours are provided to children who are eligible based on assessments made by the DECD Integrated Support Services. Support time is funded through the DECD Preschool Support program and the site budget.

❖ **Playgroup**

Playgroup operates on Friday mornings from 9:30-11:30am. Our playgroup is run by our experienced Early Childhood Worker. Families are welcome to attend playgroup throughout the term. There is no playgroup on the last Friday of term.

❖ Mount Gambier Inclusive Playgroup

Families who have children with a disability or delayed development, and families in situations that may benefit from extra support are welcome to attend the Inclusive Playgroup. This playgroup is organised by Inclusive Directions and uses the facilities available at Acacia Kindergarten. This playgroup supports potential future referrals to the the Inclusive Preschool Program.

## 2. Key Centre Policies

### Values

Relationships, Respect, Responsibility

### Vision

An inclusive community of powerful, resilient and connected learners.

## 3. Curriculum

- Framework used: Belonging, Being and Becoming: the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF)
- Specific curriculum approaches
  - ❖ Playful learning pedagogies, inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach, using an emergent curriculum and the project approach.
  - ❖ Learning Stories are used to documents and assess children's learning.
  - ❖ A strong focus on environmental sustainability and nature play.

## 4. Centre Based Staff

- Staff Profile

1.0 Early Childhood Qualified Director, 1.0 Early Childhood Qualified Teacher, 1.0 Early Childhood Worker (currently a shared role). Additional staffing is supplementary funded for the Inclusive Preschool Program and Universal Access. Preschool Support Workers and Bilingual Support Worker as determined by needs.

- Performance Management Program

All staff members have Performance Development Plans directly linked to the the site's Quality Improvement Plan and the National Standards for Teachers. The site has a Performance Development Procedure.

- Access to special support staff

Acacia, like other Kindergartens in the area, has access to a number of options for children and families needing additional, skilled support, ranging from DECD Integrated Support Services, to those at the SE Regional Community Health Service.

## 5. Centre Facilities

- Buildings and grounds

The building itself is of local limestone construction and includes the following:

- A large new office, overlooking main indoor area.
- Large kitchen, new library and store rooms
- Adult bathroom / laundry / shower / change room
- Children's bathroom equipped for disabled access
- Large open indoor learning area
- Specialised indoor and outdoor learning area for children with special rights.

Although the building is very large, this is not at the expense of the outdoor area, where we have a developed a beautiful natural park like setting, including:

- Very broad, mown-grass hillside that allows for energetic games and falls away to the east to a substantial digging patch under large eucalypts and large flat areas under huge deciduous trees to the west.
- A climbing and obstacle course area where gross motor play is encouraged.
- Many spaces in and around existing trees for spontaneous and planned small groups.
- A large undercover sandpit
- A boat and jetty with surrounding coastal garden.
- Double swing

- A large east facing paved area for setting up activities
- A smaller west facing verandah for well protected activities
- Vegetable and herb garden beds

Our approach to developing our beautiful outdoor areas has been one of minimal interference with the land, to allow it to speak to us as it is, and to work with it with respect. We have aimed to develop a variety of natural open ended spaces for children to utilise. We wish to support children's active play as well as their need for quiet spaces, recognising that each can be as imaginative and valuable to their learning as the other.

- Capacity (per session)

30 children attending per session to adhere to 1:10 ratio for a Category 1 site.

- Centre Ownership

DECD

- Access for children and staff with disabilities

Our site is well set up for people needing disabled access of any kind, including ramps, disabled toilet, and specialized equipment. The car park has two allocated disabled parks.

## **6. Local Community (intended for country preschools)**

- General characteristics:

Mount Gambier is the largest city in regional South Australia. 436kms from Adelaide and 441kms from Melbourne. Located on the slopes of a dormant volcano Mount Gambier services a population of 30,000 and is one of the fastest growing cities in South Australia.

As the largest city in regional South Australia, Mount Gambier has a wide industry base. This ranges from primary industries, such as softwood timber, livestock, crops and fishing, to manufacturing and transport.

The culture is primarily Australian/European with migrants from South East Asia, Africa, Middle East and Europe. The kindergarten is in a mixed socio economic area that has families from the housing trust area on low incomes or pensions mixed with families on double incomes. Many kindergarten families live on farming land in the surrounding districts.

- Parent Involvement

All parents are invited to be part of the kindergartens Governing Council

- Schools to which children generally transfer from this preschool

40% of children transfer to Mount Gambier North Primary School. The kindergarten has many children who enrol at Compton, Suttontown and Reidy Park Primary Schools, Tenison Woods College and St Martins Lutheran College.

- Other local care and educational facilities,

There are 6 Child Care Services operating as well as Family Day Care. Out of School Hours Care operates at some of the schools. There are nine large and small primary

schools in and around Mount Gambier, 2 public high schools and 2 R-12 private schools. Gordon Education Centre provides education for school aged children with special rights. Further studies with TAFE and University of South Australia are available through the Mount Gambier Campus'.

- Commercial/industrial and shopping facilities

Mount Gambier is a large regional centre with excellent sporting, recreational and shopping facilities, ranging from large well known chain stores to a variety of specialty stores.

- Other local facilities

Mount Gambier is a well known tourist centre with a number of medical clinics, a new public hospital, cinemas, theatres, and community library.

- Availability of staff housing

Government Housing is available in Mount Gambier as well as private rental.

- Accessibility

Plane services to Adelaide or Melbourne at either end of the day on a daily basis, bus service once a day to Adelaide. Good quality and scenic roads to Adelaide via the Coorong or Keith if travelling by car. Public transport within Mount Gambier is available through local taxi services and a town bus offers public transport in the city.

- Local Government

Mt Gambier City Council  
PO Box 56  
Mount Gambier SA 5290  
Phone: 8721 2555