

Footsteps Early Learning Centre School Readiness Program

At Footsteps Early Learning Centre, our school readiness program is integrated into our daily curriculum that has been developed using the Early Years Learning Framework with an intentional School Readiness teaching session each day. Our school readiness program has been developed in consultation with local kindergarten teachers and schools. It covers all aspects of the key developmental learning areas and introduces the 6 Key Learning Areas of the NSW Kindergarten curriculum. Our program provides opportunity for each child to extend on their interests and needs, developing opportunities for encouraging the skills needed for starting school.

Our school readiness program has been developed to ensure that we have confident, independent children who are ready to make the best possible start to school. We incorporate developmental skills, fine motor skills, Pre-literacy skills, Pre-numeracy skills and play-based learning into our school readiness program. An outline of the skills our program encompasses are:

DEVELOPMENTAL SKILLS

- **Cognitive skills** – Show curiosity and interest in learning new things, have a confidence to learn, be interested and show a willingness to solve problems
- **Language skills** – Ask questions and communicate thoughts and ideas listen to others, enjoy listening to stories and being read to, and encourage listening and talking (receptive and expressive language).
- **Social and emotional skills** – Participate in play, approach children in a positive way and make new friends, show an interest in others and make friends, express individual needs and wants, cope and deal with conflict in an appropriate manner, express emotions, take turns and sharing, follow and understand directions and rules, cope with transitions.
- **Self-help skills** – Use the toilet unassisted, dress and undress themselves independently, deal with small amounts of supervision, unpack own lunch box and drink from a drink bottle, deal with a structured environment, pack and unpack bag
- **Physical skills** – run, jump and balance, use equipment such as balls and climbing equipment.
- **Fine Motor Skills** – Using pencils, crayons, textas, glue and scissors.

PRE-LITERACY SKILLS

- Recognising and using phonics, sounds, letters and words

PRE-NUMERACY SKILLS

- Developing an understanding of problem solving and maths concepts

Some other key areas covered are:

- Learning numbers 1-20

- Learning all letters of the alphabet
- Recognition of upper and lower case letters
- Identification and recognition of primary and secondary colours
- Identification and recognition of shapes
- Writing own name
- Reading their name in a variety of typed and handwritten fonts
- Knowing the days of the week, months in the year and seasons
- Hygiene, health and safety, including dental and oral hygiene, road safety, fire safety, car safety, stranger danger, sun protection
- Using proper pencil grip
- Using scissors and glue
- Using words such as “please” and “thank you”
- Participates in small and large group activities
- Interacting positively and politely with adults
- Puts shoes and socks on without help

We also provide numerous school readiness experiences within our program that the pre-schoolers can participate in, to assist them in preparing for school. These experiences will enable children to extend on their current skills and abilities and provide opportunities to learn new developmental skills when starting school. The school readiness experiences include:

- Having “lunch box days” so children can practice opening and closing their lunch box and eating their own lunch
- Encourage children to participate in group games and experiences
- Supporting each child to develop friendship and co-operate with peers
- Talk positively with children about starting school
- Encourage children’s independence in all self-help skills
- Discuss school visits and orientation events with children before and after they occur
- Help children to use crayons, pencils, textas, glue and scissors unassisted
- Read with children regularly
- Invite guests to talk to parents about school readiness and the transition to school

- Arrange a visit to a local school so children can experience a school environment and school activities
- Encourage children in the 4-5 year old age group to raise their hands to ask questions in group time activities, in particular, when going to the toilet as this is an issue raised by kindergarten teachers that children lack confidence doing when beginning school.

At Footsteps Early Learning Centre, we believe that it is our duty to assist our preschool children in transitioning to school through a variety of experiences and making each child a confident learner. We will collaborate with parents in determining the overall strengths, interests and needs of each individual child and deliver a school readiness program that deliver confident, independent children who are ready to make the best possible start to school.