

Woody Yaloak Kindergarten Philosophy:

At Woody Yaloak Kindergarten we strive to create a learning environment that caters for the whole child. We understand the importance of early childhood education and the rapid development that takes place in these early years. The early years of a child's life lay the foundations for their future and have a profound impact on their learning and development.

Our program:

Our Kindergarten is situated in a small rural community consisting of a wide diversity of cultural and social identities. As educators, we aim to work in partnership with families and communities, encouraging involvement and participation, building strong connections and incorporating these wider contexts within our program. We believe it is important for children to build these connections, develop respectful understandings, to learn about themselves, construct their identities and develop a sense of belonging to their community.

Our programming is guided by the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework to ensure that each child's learning and development is supported, encouraged and extended. The (VEYLDF) identifies five Early Years Learning and Development Outcomes for all children:

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

We take inspiration from the Reggio Emilia approach and draw from philosophers including Malaguzzi, Steiner, Montessori, Bronfenbrenner, Gardner, Vygotsky and Piaget. These perspectives influence the curriculum decisions we make in- regards to: the organisation of time; space; resources; the environment; planned and spontaneous experiences; the strategies we use; and interactions we have. As passionate and dedicated educators' we are also continually learning, researching and developing our professional body of knowledge, to ensure the implementation of a high-quality program based on best practices.

The Child:

We view children as competent and capable learners who are full of potential, imaginative, resourceful, creative, curious and enthusiastic learners. The child's voice is heard, respected and acknowledged and children are encouraged to be active participants in their own learning journey. We recognise that children all develop individually, and we aim to meet the individual needs of each child.

The importance of play:

As educators' we understand the importance of play and the valuable tool it provides in children's learning, development and wellbeing. Our play based program is built upon children's interests and ideas with educators as the facilitators for nurturing children's lifelong love of learning. Children learn best when they have environments that support them in play because play is not only fun and what children enjoy doing but a motivator for learning. Play allows children to use their creativity, build their imaginations and strengthens children's physical, cognitive and emotional development. Research highlights play is important in healthy brain development and wellbeing and is a vital foundation for future academic and life success. It is through play children make sense of their world and practice what they are learning.

The learning environment:

We value the importance of our indoor and outdoor learning spaces and our connection with the environment through nature play. The environment is viewed as the third teacher and therefore being an integral part of the curriculum is set up with purpose and intention. It provides vital opportunities and possibilities with the potential to influence what and how children learn.