

# Early Years Learning Framework

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) is a national framework for children from birth to five years. The framework has been developed to ensure that all children receive quality education programs prior to school. The framework vision is for all children to experience play-based learning that is engaging and builds success for life.

Educators will use the framework to work with children from birth to five years, in partnership with families who are children's first and most influential educators, to develop learning programs responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities, and recognise that children learn through their play.

The EYLF describes childhood as a time of **belonging, being** and **becoming**.

**Belonging** – is the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel they belong because of the relationships they have with their family, community, culture and place.

**Being** – is about living here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need time to just 'be' – time to play, try new things and have fun.

**Becoming** – is about the learning and development that young children experience.

Children start to form their sense of identity from an early age, which shapes the type of adult they will become.

## Play is Learning

Play is very important for children. Through play babies and young children explore and learn to understand the world around them and they come to communicate, discover, imagine and create.

When young children play they are showing what they have learned and what they are trying to understand. This is why play is one of the foundations of the EYLF.

## Relationships are Key

We already know that children learn best when they have secure relationships. Primary caregiving supports children to feel emotionally secure to enable them to feel confident and able to explore and learn.

Educators will use the EYLF's five learning goals to assist your child to develop:

- A strong sense of their identity
- Connections with their world
- A strong sense of wellbeing
- Confidence and involvement in their learning; and
- Effective communication skills.

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## **Our Learning Environments and Programs**

We view programming as a cycle-

- Observations on small groups and individuals (including Learning Stories)
- Information gained from families
- Planning
- Implementation of program
- Evaluation
- Follow up

Using the EYLF we will observe your child's learning and build on it and plan the next steps. Educators will engage in discussion with your child and will listen and observe your child interacting with others and exploring the environment.

Each room within our Centre has a program on display for families to access. The programs incorporate the concepts and ideas of Belonging, Being and Becoming and Learning Stories. Programming is continuous, with evaluations and new programs displayed each term and feature room and individual children's goals, links to the Centre Philosophy, age and developmentally appropriate activities (based on children's interests, needs, strengths and learning styles) and opportunities for parent input, and the recording of spontaneous activities that happen throughout the week.

Educators are entitled to 2 hours programming a week, which is used as a non- contact time to evaluate the previous program, plan and write the next one, write up relevant learning stories and prepare any relevant reports. It is also a time for educators to discuss ongoing goals and achievements relating to the children and the room, and evaluate their own practises.

### **Other methods for receiving details of my child's achievements/learning**

Each room often features photos taken throughout that day, and a fun overview of the activities offered, relevant learning that occurred, significant milestones achieved, special events etc.

Parents will also have many opportunities to receive and give feedback on their child's learning and development through regular developmental reports, parent/ carer events and evaluation forms.

Term 1- End of Term Reports

Term 2- End of Term Reports

Term 3- Parent/carer night

Term 4- Evaluation given to those children leaving the Centre, including those going to school.

Periodically educators may also ask parents to contribute ideas to programming through questionnaires/ feedback sheets in a way of determining the ongoing goals parents have for their children.

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### **Working Together**

By working together we can enhance a child's learning and wellbeing. As the most important person in your child's life you can make a difference by talking regularly with your child's primary carer and ask about their learning. Information you provide allows us to link your child's experiences at home with the time they spend together in the Centre.

At St. Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool, we pride ourselves on the relationships that we build with families. Our Centre, its structures, programs and events are all organised in conjunction with parents so if ever you have a query or suggestion relating to your child, the care, education or setting please do not hesitate to let us know. Together we can build a learning environment that best suits everyone involved.

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# Learning Stories Information Sheet

## Learning Stories

### **Why educators in child care centres collect written observations on children?**

- To support and establish a basis for their room programs.
- To provide a written picture for what they are witnessing in the children's learning.
- To establish an interest base that reflects the needs, developmental levels and skills of the children in their care.
- To monitor any areas of concern relating to children's developmental milestones and learning.
- To establish both individual and whole group goals.

In the past educators have used a variety of methods to collect observations and data in relation to children, these have included; running records, anecdotes and time samples. These were then linked to room programs, but rarely seen by parents. Over time research into children's learning and evidence of their development has continued and a search for a more productive and user friendly approach has been sought.

### **Welcome a new research tool called 'Learning Stories'.**

Learning stories are based on the learning narratives of Dr Margaret Carr from Waikato University in New Zealand.

### **What is a Learning Story?**

Learning Stories are a way of documenting the different ways that children learn. These stories not only capture what is happening in a simple and effective way, but they can be the beginning point for future planning to extend a child's strengths and interests.

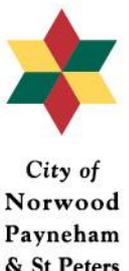
They are a story where the carer plays the narrator and the child plays the subject. The stories will tell what the child 'can-do' rather than what they can't do. It is a positive approach in capturing a moment (or linked moments) in time that represents the personality of the child, the relationship they have with others and the learning that has occurred. It will form a trail of evidence, over time that demonstrates the children's interests, strengths and learning dispositions.

The Learning Stories will often use photo evidence of what has occurred and link this with an analysis of the learning (reasons why it may be significant, how this links in with the early years learning outcomes and developmental milestones), and a what next? (Detailing what future goals may be set for the child, how the carer may anticipate this will occur and how the carer/s will promote this next stage of learning).

All educators working in your child's room will have an opportunity to write Learning Stories about and for your child, so that over time, as parents you will also be able to see another form of evidence of the wonderful relationships your child has formed while at St. Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool.

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**As a parent what would I expect to see in my child's room?**

Within the Centre each child has a Learning Story folder that is kept in their room, and is available for access from families, and the children, at any time. This folder will store all of the stories for your child to date, and move through the Centre as the child transitions from one group to the next. As staff we would anticipate that on departure from our Centre your child will have a history, through a number and variety of Learning Stories, of the learning stages, development and achievements that we've witnessed from your child while he/she has been in our care.

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