

THE FRIENDS' SCHOOL

**FRIENDS' EARLY YEARS
Information Booklet**

Long Day Care
Pre-Kinder
Outside Kinder Care
Outside School Care

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PURPOSE AND CONCERNS **(FRIENDS' EARLY YEARS PHILOSOPHY)**

The Friends' School is a co-educational Quaker School based on fundamental values such as the intrinsic worth of each person, the recognition of "that of God" in everyone, the desirability of simplicity, and the need to establish peace and justice.

As a learning community, we are concerned for the academic, cultural, physical, social and spiritual development of each person in our care. We seek to help our students develop into men and women who will think clearly, act with integrity, make decisions for themselves, be sensitive to the needs of others, be strong in service and hold a global perspective. We believe that these aims can best be achieved with the active support of all members of our School community.

BACKGROUND

WELCOME

Thank you for considering Friends' Friends' Early Years for your child's early learning and childcare needs.

This booklet is designed to provide you with an overview of Friends' Early Years and the services that we provide. It is an abridged version of our comprehensive Handbook, which will be provided to you at the time of your child's actual enrolment or which may be obtained from Friends' Early Years reception or the School website at <http://www.friends.tas.edu.au>

Should you have any questions, or require any additional information at any stage, please do not hesitate to contact us in writing or by telephone on (03) 6210 2276.

Yours sincerely



Mark Seager
Director of Friends' Friends' Early Years



John Green
Principal of Friends' School

CENTRE DETAILS

Street Address

395 Argyle Street, NORTH HOBART, Tasmania, 7000

Postal Address

PO Box 42, NORTH HOBART, Tasmania, 7002

Phone

(03) 6210 2276

Fax

(03) 6210 2283

Opening Hours

7:30 to 18:00

Reception Hours

8:30 to 17:00

Periods of Closure

Friends' Early Years is closed on weekends, public holidays and over Christmas. The dates of our Christmas break are advised at the commencement of term 3.

SERVICES WE PROVIDE

Long Day Care (0 to 3 years)	
Infant Room (6 weeks to 18 months)	7:30 to 18:00, yearly
Toddler Room (18 months to 3 years)	

Pre Kinder (3 years to 5 years)	
Pre Kinder 1 (3 years to 4.5 years)	7:30 to 18:00, yearly
Pre Kinder 2 (3.5 years to 5 years)	

Outside Kinder Care (Kindergarten children)	
Before Kinder Care	7:30 to 8:30, each term
After Kinder Care	15:00 to 18:00, each term
Day Kinder Care*	7:30 to 18:00, yearly

Outside School Care (Primary school children)	
Before School Care	7:30 to 8:30, each term
After School Care	15:00 to 18:00, each term
Vacation Care (& Student Free days)	7:30 to 18:00, term breaks

**Day Kinder Care sessions provide day care for children in kindergarten on days when they do not attend school. We accept permanent bookings throughout the year or casual bookings during periods of school vacation and student free days. Only limited spaces available.*

Provision for Special Needs

The enrolment of children with additional needs and disabilities is encouraged and actively supported with the aid of specially trained staff.

MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING

Management Structure

Friends' Early Years is owned by The Friends' School and overseen by the Child Care Committee. The Director of Friends' Early Years manages the daily operations and staff of the centre. The Assistant Director of Friends' Early Years assists the Director with these responsibilities.

Staff Structure

Friends' Early Years staff hold the positions of Room Supervisor, Early Childhood Educator or Early Childhood Assistant. Room Supervisors and Early Childhood Educators hold an early childhood teaching degree or an advanced diploma in childcare. Early Childhood Assistants have certificate 3 in childcare or are studying towards this qualification. All staff members have current Safety Screening and undergo regular professional development. Staff information is located near the door of each room.

Staff Ratios

Friends' Early Years maintains and exceeds the staff to child ratios stipulated by the Department of Education's, Tasmanian Licensing Standards*. These ratios are shown below:

Ratios for children 0 – 3 years

1:5 staff to child ratio with 1 qualified carer for every 10 children and 2 staff present when the number of children exceeds 5.

Ratios for children 3 to 5 Years

1:10 staff to child ratio with 1 qualified carer for every 20 children and 2 staff present when the number of children exceeds 6.

Ratios for children 6 to 12 years

1:15 staff to child ratio with 1 qualified carer for every 30 children and 2 staff present when the number of children exceeds 6.

First aid requirements

1 staff member with a current first aid certificate present at all times**.

**Friends' Early Years routinely provides extra staff members in order to ensure that quality of care is maintained in all circumstances. For example, extra staff are provided during all major excursions and as needed for children with special needs. Similarly, Friends' Early Years maintains a 1:10 ratio for the 6 to 12 age range.*

*** All Friends' Early Years staff have current first aid certificates, Asthma training and Epi-Pen training.*

CENTRE GOALS

Children

To focus upon the active role of the children in building personal meaning and making sense of information.

To seek to promote development in the physical, social, emotional, linguistic and cognitive areas through fun activities involving music, visual arts, movement, language, literature, drama, maths, technology, science, health, equity and cultures, safety and the natural environment.

To aim to foster skills and behaviours such as creativity, curiosity, independence, decision-making and negotiating.

To provide our children with the opportunity to grow and develop in an environment that is welcoming, warm and stimulating with staff that are encouraging, loving and supportive.

To encourage the enrolment and participation of children with additional needs and disabilities who may be actively supported with the aid of specially trained staff.

Family

To appreciate the importance of family in children's lives and actively encourage family involvement in our Centre.

To strive to gain knowledge of the cultural and social background of each child and show respect for the culture, beliefs and language of their families.

Management

To attempt to create a relaxed, informal and open relationship between the management of Friends' Early Years and the staff, children, families and the community it serves.

Staff

To remember that the relationship between staff member and child is the crucial and integral element of the entire child-care and early learning process.

To aim to develop genuine, trusting and lasting relationships with the children in our care.

To undertake to be professional, caring, respectful and approachable.

To participate in regular professional development opportunities in order to maintain and expand our level of professional expertise.

To make every effort to be receptive, encourage parental feedback and strive to meet the needs of families and their children.

Social Issues

To strive to ensure that all children have equal access to quality child-care and early learning which meets and exceeds the specific needs and circumstances of the child and their family.

Play

To focus upon the importance of play-based learning to a child's development.

To facilitate play-based learning by providing children with independent or group play periods, appropriate resources and appropriate encouragement and challenges.

Programming and Evaluation

To aim to provide programs that reflect our centre's philosophy and goals.

To strive to provide programs that cater to the needs, interests and abilities of all children.

To endeavour to work collaboratively with children to plan and implement experiences.

To undertake to regularly evaluate our programs.

To be child centred.

Our Rights

All members of The Friends' School community have a right:

To make the most of their educational opportunities.

To be safe and free from harassment.

To be treated with respect.

To expect fair and reasonable behaviour.

To a clean and pleasant environment.

To gain new knowledge and to develop social and academic skills.

Our Responsibilities

All members of the Friends' School community are responsible:

For respecting the rights of others.

For treating others with respect.

For behaving in a fair and reasonable manner.

For respecting property.

For maintaining a clean and pleasant environment.

For ensuring that our rights are respected.

*We believe in the Quaker concept of 'letting your life speak.'
Independent, inquiring and involved, Friends' students are well equipped
for further education and life beyond the School.*

CURRICULUM

Overview

Friends' Early Years provides a child centred program. Using written and photographic observations we take your child's ideas, interests and questions and use them to form the basis of an organised but flexible curriculum. Utilising a variety of learning approaches we strive to create programs which provide a balance of quiet and active experiences, individual and group experiences, indoor and outdoor experiences, planned and spontaneous experiences, child-initiated and adult-directed experiences.

Specialist Teaching Programs

Friends' Early Years supplements its curriculum with a specialist teaching program. Dedicated art and music classes are conducted in all rooms twice per week. In the Pre-Kinder program, we also provide twice weekly physical education and library classes. Regular excursions form part of our standard curriculum.

Primary Care Giving Programs

Friends' Early Years runs a primary care giving program in our Infant and Toddler rooms. The program aims to ensure that your child is linked to a staff member who assumes the main responsibility for their care. This system encourages the development of trusting and secure relationships between Friends' Early Years and your family.

Pre-Kinder Programs

Friends' Early Years operates in partnership with Morris – Friends' Primary Years and the sequential teaching program begins formally in our Pre-Kinder classes. Early childhood teachers lead a team of dedicated staff in the provision of a high quality pre-kinder program specifically designed to help your child ease into their Kindergarten year.

Learning Stories

To document and understand your child's learning, Friends' Early Years uses a research tool called 'learning stories'. Learning stories are based on the learning narratives of Dr Margaret Carr from Waikato University in New Zealand (Carr & Podmore 2000, Carr 2000, Podmore & Carr 1999).

Learning stories document and assess your child's learning in the form of a story telling narrative. The focus is on the positives. The stories tell what your child 'can do' rather than what they can't do.

Learning stories are more interesting and engaging than an anecdote and more lively than objective field notes. Learning stories can include pictures, dialogue and interviews with your child. You can also become involved, by writing your own learning stories about your child.

“Good stories, be they direct or indirect, give us valuable insights into the sense making component of learning” (Engel 2000).

Child Portfolios

Friends' Early Years staff will compile an individual portfolio for your child. These portfolios are developed during the course of the year, combining photographs, work samples, art work and *learning stories* to create a unique and informative record of your child's time at our centre.

You may view your child's portfolio at any time and may take the portfolio home to peruse at your leisure. You are also encouraged to add to your child's portfolio by inserting photographs, work samples and stories from home into your child's portfolio.

In this way the portfolio provides the basis for a meaningful connection between your family and Friends' Early Years, with both parties contributing to and gaining insights into your child's learning journey.

At the end of the year, the portfolio is given to your child.

Program Displays

Each room displays its fortnightly program on a wall near the attendance sheets. The program displays the learning activities that have been planned for that fortnight, grouped under five specific learning strands. The program also shows which developmental areas, learning areas, skill areas and physical areas are being addressed. Similarly it explains how previous program evaluations, child observations and direct child input have influenced the fortnightly program. Each fortnight's planned outdoor and 'regular' activities are also shown.

Further Information

Further details about the Friends' Early Years curriculum can be found on the display board at our reception area. Alternatively you can peruse the displayed programs, talk to a staff member, or visit the room and watch as your child participates.

ENROLMENT PROCESS

ENROLMENT

Application for Admission

To enrol your child at Friends' Early Years you will need to fully complete, sign and return the Friends' Early Years Application for Admission form. Completion of this form will place you on the Friends' Early Years waiting list, allowing us to call you when a suitable place becomes available. Upon completion of the Application for Admission form, we encourage families to visit Friends' Early Years. Please contact Reception on (03) 6210 2276 so that a time and date can be arranged.

Management of the Waiting List

Friends' Early Years manages the waiting list in accordance with the priority of access guidelines established by the Australian Government for childcare and early learning centres. The Friends' Early Years priority of access guidelines can be found on the back of the Application for Admission form and also on the Conditions of Enrolment sheet.

Formal Acceptance of Available Place

Upon verbal acceptance of an available place, Friends' Early Years will temporarily reserve the place and forward you an enrolment package. To formally accept the place and/or to reserve the place for up to 20 working days, you will need to

complete, sign and return the Enrolment Form and Conditions of Enrolment sheet by the date specified in the package. The cost of reserving the place is 50% of the normal booked session fee.

Formal Enrolment and Child Care Benefit Discount

To formally enrol at Friends' Early Years you must contact the Family Assistance Office on 136 150 to obtain Customer Reference Numbers for both yourself and your child. Once you have contacted the Family Assistance Office, they will send a letter to you with your Customer Reference Numbers and Child Care Benefit assessment details (where relevant). Once you have received this letter you must provide a copy of the letter to Friends' Early Years so that we can create a formal enrolment for your child. When you contact the Family Assistance Office, you may be asked to provide them with one or more of the Friends' Early Years provider numbers as shown.

Long Day Care (0 to 3 years)	
Infant Room (6 weeks to 18 months)	407 107 149 K
Toddler Room (18 months to 3 years)	

Pre Kinder (3 years to 5 years)	
Pre Kinder 1 (3 years to 4.5 years)	407 107 149 K
Pre Kinder 2 (3.5 years to 5 years)	

Outside Kinder Care (Kindergarten children)	
Before Kinder Care	407 107 149 K
After Kinder Care	
Day Kinder Care	

Outside School Care (Primary school children)	
Before School Care	555 009 843 T
After School Care	555 009 842 X
Vacation Care and student free days	555 011 393 H

Conditions of Enrolment

Full details of the Friends' Early Years Conditions of Enrolment are enclosed within the Enrolment Form. These conditions should be read thoroughly prior to signing your child's enrolment form.

ORIENTATION

First Visits

Once you have formally accepted a place at Friends' Early Years, you should contact Reception on (03) 6210 2276 to confirm a start date for your child and to arrange some orientation visits prior to your child's first day. Orientation visits are conducted

during the session time of your child's reserved place and are charged at 50% of the normal booked session fee.

The Room Supervisor and her staff will be aware that your child is commencing care. They will ensure that your child is settled into the program in a friendly and relaxed manner.

CENTRE INFORMATION

Behaviour Guidance

Behaviour guidance is applied within an atmosphere of positive re-enforcement in which your child will be given the opportunity to make choices, understand the consequences and take responsibility for their own actions. The Friends' Early Years Behaviour Guidance guideline may be obtained from reception.

Daily Routines

Each room at Friends' Early Years has its own set of daily routines. These routines are age specific and help to provide an important level of consistency for your child that will help them to develop their self-confidence and independence.

"Knowing what to expect from relationships and activities helps children become more confident" (Gorski 2001).

Excursions

From time to time your child will have the opportunity to go on excursions relevant to their program to enhance their experiences and learning opportunities. When applying for admission to Friends' Early Years, you will be asked to give permission for your child to participate in excursions around the school community. These excursions take place within the Primary School Grounds and may include a visit to the Library, PE on the School Oval or to see a performance in the Frank Wells Hall. You will be informed in advance before your child attends excursions outside of The Friends' School Grounds. You are very welcome to participate in any excursions.

Food

Friends' Early Years has the facility to heat and serve food that is brought from home and actively promotes the consumption of nutritionally balanced meals.

Nut Free Zone

Due to the frequency and severity of nut allergies amongst children, Friends' Early Years seeks to be a nut free zone. As such, we ask you to avoid packing any nut-based product in your child's lunch box. Food items, which state that they 'may contain elements of nut', are acceptable. Friends' Early Years apologises for any inconvenience that this may cause but believes that the health and well being of all the children who attend Friends' Early Years is of paramount importance.

Quality Improvement and Accreditation System

Friends' Early Years is an accredited childcare and early learning centre that actively participates in the above system administered by the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC). Friends' Early Years' involvement in this system enables us to receive Childcare Assistance, granting you access to Child Care Benefit Discount.

Such participation requires an ongoing self-study, requiring Friends' Early Years to regularly examine and evaluate our activities, attitudes and guidelines, to identify our strengths and highlight potential areas for improvement.

Safe Environment

Friends' Early Years provides a safe environment that minimises the possibility of accidents. Indoor and outdoor maintenance checks are completed each morning and matters requiring attention are dealt with immediately.

SunSmart Centre

Friends' Early Years is an accredited SunSmart centre. In consultation with the Cancer Council of Tasmania, the Friends' Early Years SunSmart guideline has been developed to ensure that your child is protected from skin damage caused by the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun. The Friends' Early Years SunSmart guideline is implemented in term one and term three. The Friends' Early Years SunSmart guideline may be obtained from reception.

Toys

Friends' Early Years does not use or permit the use of war toys or toys that promote aggressive or violent play.

Trained Staff

Friends' Early Years seeks to provide quality childcare and early learning services that meet and exceed the highest possible standards. To this end, Friends' Early Years employs a range of highly qualified and experienced childcare and teaching staff. Friends' Early Years staff undertake regular Professional Development, maintain current first aid certification and update their asthma, Epi-Pen and food handling training on a yearly basis.

FEE INFORMATION

FEES

Fee Structure

The Friends' Early Years fee structure is on display in the information area. Copies may be obtained from reception.

Fee Information

Discounted Periods

Friends' Early Years does not charge for public holidays or periods of centre closure.

Friends' Early Years charges 50% of the usual booked session fee for a period of up to 20 working days for absences with two weeks written notice, sickness with a medical certificate or reserved places.

Friends' Early Years charges 50% of the usual booked session fee for orientation visits.

Late Fee

A late fee of \$30 per 15 minutes, or part thereof, is charged for children who have not been collected by the closing time of their booked session. This is strictly enforced.

Fee Assistance

Child Care Benefit Discount

Child Care Benefit Discount can significantly reduce the fees you are charged for the services that Friends' Early Years provides. Your eligibility for Child Care Benefit is assessed by the Australian Government as part of the Formal Enrolment process explained under the heading ***Enrolment Process and Child Care Benefit Discount***. To find out more visit <http://www.centrelink.gov.au/> and look under 'C' in the A to Z index or phone 13 61 50.

Child Care Tax Rebate

The Child Care Tax Rebate covers a percentage of your out-of-pocket expenses for Friends' Early Years fees. Out-of-pocket expenses relate to the amount you have actually paid for childcare and early learning after any applicable benefits have been deducted. From 1 July 2008, (for the 2008-09 financial year onwards), the Child Care Tax Rebate is 50 per cent. For 2006-07 and 2007-08 financial years, the Child Care Tax Rebate is 30 per cent. To find out more visit <http://www.centrelink.gov.au/> and look under 'C' in the A to Z index or phone 13 61 50.

Other Government Payments

Other Australian Government payments made to families to assist with the costs of childcare and early learning include Special Child Care Benefit, and Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance. To find out more visit <http://www.centrelink.gov.au/> and look under 'C' in the A to Z index or phone 13 61 50.

ACCOUNTS

Account Statements

Fees are generated at the end of each week on the basis of the type and amount of childcare or early learning your child has used. Account statements are produced and distributed on a fortnightly basis and you are asked to pay your account by the due date indicated on the invoice.

Payments

Friends' Early Years accepts cash, cheque, EFTPOS and credit card payments. Friends' Early Years also provides an automatic credit card payment system, details of which are available at reception. Friends' Early Years strongly encourages the use of this payment facility.