Early Learning

Pre-Kindergarten

Outside Kindergarten Hours Care

Outside School Hours Care
Purpose and Concerns

The Friends’ School is a coeducational 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, emotional and spiritual development of each person in our care.

We seek to help our students develop as people who will think clearly, act with integrity, make decisions for themselves, be sensitive to the needs of others and the environment, 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.
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WELCOME TO FRIENDS’ EARLY YEARS

Children learn more quickly during their early years than at any other time in life. Before the age of five each child will learn to crawl, then walk and run. They will learn to interact with their peers and with adults. They will learn to share and to listen. They will learn about feelings. They will start to learn about letters and numbers.

The first five years are particularly important for the development of the child’s brain, and the first three years are the most critical in shaping the child’s brain architecture.

Our goal at Early Years is to provide a caring, safe and secure environment in which children are offered developmentally appropriate experiences that encourage exploration and hands on learning. To this end, our child centred programs are based on the social, physical, emotional, cognitive, cultural and spiritual needs of each individual child and are guided by the Purpose and Concerns of The Friends’ School.

Our dedicated, friendly and highly trained staff aim to foster your child’s natural curiosity about the world around them, nurture their creativity and nourish their love of learning and of life.

Friends’ Early Years has a family atmosphere that is created and sustained through the active participation of the families who come here. Please feel welcome to participate in one of our excursions, offer assistance in one of our rooms or make suggestions for on-going improvements. Friends’ Early Years is to be seen as a genuine home away from home for all children and their families.

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’ Early Years

Nelson File
Principal of The Friends’ School
STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION

CENTRE DETAILS

Street Address
395 Argyle Street,
North Hobart, Tasmania, 7000

Postal Address
PO Box 42,
North Hobart, Tasmania, 7002

Telephone
(03) 6210 2276

E-Mail Address
feyadmin@friends.tas.edu.au

Internet Address
http://www.friends.tas.edu.au/early-years/

Opening Hours
7.30am to 6.00pm

Office Hours
8.30am to 5.00pm

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 start of Term 4.

SERVICES WE PROVIDE

Early Learning
Green Room (12 weeks to 1.5 years)
Orange Room (1.5 years to 2.5 years)
Red Room (2.5 years to 3.5 years)

*Room age ranges are approximate only and relate to the start of each year.

Pre Kindergarten
Pre Kindergarten for children commencing kindergarten in the following school year

*Also suitable for children commencing part-time kindergarten in the current school year, who require extra days in an early learning setting.
**Outside Kindergarten Hours Care**
- Before and After Kindergarten Care
- Vacation Care

**Outside School Hours Care**
- Before and After School Care
- Vacation Care

**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 and Supporting Roles

Management Structure
The Friends’ School owns and operates Friends’ Early Years. The Director of Friends’ Early Years manages the daily operations and staff of the centre.

Director: Mark Seager

Supporting Roles
Compliance Coordinator: Melanie Neville
Curriculum Coordinator: Sheila Button
Centre Administrator: Roslyn Moult

Staff Information

Educators
Friends’ Early Years floor staff hold the positions of Lead Educator, Early Childhood Educator or Early Childhood Assistant.

Qualifications
Lead Educators and Early Childhood Educators hold an early childhood teaching degree, advanced diploma in Children’s Services or a diploma in Children’s Services.

Early Childhood Assistants have Certificate 3 in Children’s Services or are studying towards this qualification.

All staff members have Working with Vulnerable Persons Registration, current Senior First Aid and CPR, Asthma, Anaphylaxis and Epi-Pen training and undergo regular professional development.

Staff Information is located at the entrance to each room.

Staff Ratios
Friends’ Early Years maintains and exceeds the staff to child ratios stipulated by the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority.
CURRICULUM

LEARNING FRAMEWORKS

Belonging, Being & Becoming
Friends' Early Years uses The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, Belonging, Being & Becoming, from birth to five years and through the transition to school.

My Time, Our Place
In the Outside School Hours program we use the Framework for School Age Care in Australia, My Time, Our Place.

Emergent Curriculum
Within The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia we run an Emergent Curriculum. An emergent curriculum is based on the interests of a child or a group of children. When a child shows an interest in a topic or activity then early childhood educators facilitate this interest by providing resources and materials to help guide the children’s learning, exploration and discovery.

High Scope Curriculum
Within the Framework for School Age Care in Australia we run a High Scope Curriculum. Central to this approach is a process called “Plan-do-review” in which children are given time to plan, carry out, and then reflect upon an activity of their own choosing. In Outside School Hours Care our children are given time to plan, carry out and then reflect upon the entire program, allowing them to actively co-ordinate their own daily activities.

ASSESSMENT

Learning Stories
To document and understand children’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 children’s learning in the form of a story telling narrative. The focus is on the positives and the story itself can include pictures, dialogue and even interviews with the child. Parents can also become involved, by writing their own learning stories about their children.

“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 compiles individual portfolios for each 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 each child’s time at our centre. Portfolios can be viewed at the centre or taken home throughout the year. Parents are also encouraged to add to their child’s portfolio by adding photographs and stories from home. At the end of the year, the portfolio is given to each family.
PROGRAM FEATURES

Primary Care Giving
Friends’ Early Years runs a primary care giving program in our Green and Orange rooms. The program aims to ensure that children are initially linked to an educator who assumes the main responsibility for their care. This system encourages the development of trusting and secure relationships between Friends’ Early Years and each family.

Learning Hubs
To further enhance each child’s learning opportunities, Friends’ Early Years operates twelve individual learning hubs, located throughout the centre, at different periods of the day. Accessible to all children, our current learning hubs are as follows:

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<th>Day</th>
<th>PM</th>
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<td>PE Zone</td>
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<td>Discovery Hub</td>
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<td>Sand Centre</td>
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Visiting Educators and Excursions
Friends’ Early Years routinely invites external educators, musicians and performers to attend our centre and to run activities within our rooms. We host our grade 6 leaders from Morris – Friends’ Primary Years and our older children also attend library classes and undertake excursions.

Pre-Kindergarten
Friends’ Early Years provides a pre-kindergarten educational program that is run by qualified early childhood teachers and is specifically designed to prepare children for Kindergarten.

The Pre-Kindergarten program provides a gentle transition into school life and a great preparation for Kindergarten, increasing the chances that your child will have a positive start at school.

Pre-Kindergarten operates throughout the year from the Friends’ Early Years building. The core program operates from 9:00am to 3:00pm but children may attend anytime from 7:30am through to 6:00pm.

The children attend library, undertake regular music, art and physical education activities and participate in a buddy program with both our upper primary and Kindergarten students. Regular excursions and guest visitors also form part of the program and the children are taught about sustainability and caring for our environment.

The benefits of Pre-Kindergarten include:

- Your child enjoys a gentle transition into the education process
- It increases your child’s ability to achieve success in Kindergarten
- Your child will develop relationships with his or her peers and the school community
- Your child will gain knowledge of the layout and the routines of a school, so that Kindergarten does not become a frightening prospect for them
- Cost savings, as Pre-Kindergarten fees are eligible for Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate discounts
The Pre-Kindergarten program covers:

- Introduction to Literacy skills and concepts
- Introduction to Mathematics skills and concepts
- Developmental play activities
- Group projects
- Science activities
- Cooking
- News time
- Library
NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK

OVERVIEW

Introduction
The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care was established on 1 January 2012 and applies to most long day care, family day care; preschool (or kindergarten) and outside schools hours care services. The National Quality Framework includes:

- A National Legislative Framework.
- A National Quality Standard.
- A National Quality Rating and Assessment Process.
- A Regulatory Authority.
- A National Body – Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

Further Information
The complete documentation relating to the National Quality Framework is available at Friends’ Early Years and can be provided in hard copy or digital form to any interested family. Information brochures are also available.

Notice of Rating Certificate
In accordance with section 172(d) of the National Law our Notice of Rating Certificate is displayed near our main entrance in the administration area. Friends’ Early Years has a Final Overall Rating of EXCEEDING NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD.

Quality Improvement Plan
Friends’ Early Years reflects on its practices, policies and procedures against the seven quality areas of the National Quality Standard and uses this self-assessment to constantly update the Friends’ Early Years Quality Improvement Plan. Family involvement in the creation of this plan is strongly encouraged with the plan on display in the administration area for perusal and comment.
ENROLLING

APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION

Application Process
To apply for admission at Friends’ Early Years you need to complete 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.

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. A copy of these guidelines can be found on the back of the Application for Admission form and also on the Conditions of Enrolment.

Families are welcome to visit Friends’ Early Years during the application process by contacting the Centre Administrator, Roslyn Moult on (03) 62102276. Visits are arranged by appointment between 10.00am and 11.00am each day.

Please Note
The application and enrolment process for The Friends’ School is separate to that for Friends’ Early Years. If you wish to enrol your child at The Friends’ School please contact the Enrolment Office on 6210 2286.

ENROLMENT

Acceptance of Available Place
Enrolment is confirmed upon the verbal acceptance of an available place, at which time Friends’ Early Years will reserve the place, commence the charging of fees and forward you an enrolment package.

Conditions of Enrolment
The Enrolment Form includes Friends’ Early Years’ Conditions of Enrolment. This document must be read, completed, signed and returned with all required attachments prior to your child’s commencement.

ORIENTATION

Preparing Your Child
Prior to your child’s first visit it can be helpful to do the following:

• Engage in conversations with your child about where they will be going, why they will be attending, what they will be doing and whom they will meet.

• Answer all of your child’s questions openly and honestly and reassure them that they will be okay.

• Drive or walk past the centre to show your child where they will be attending.
Orientation Visit

Our educators will be aware that your child is commencing early learning and will settle your family into the program in a friendly and relaxed manner. The first visit provides an opportunity for parents and educators to exchange information about routines and to start to build trusting relationships:

- Your first visit is by appointment and will be of 60 minutes duration.
- You will be asked to stay in the room with your child, exchange information with the room staff and assist your child to become familiar with the room.
- You will be shown how to complete the attendance register.
- You will have the opportunity to book subsequent orientation visits as and if required.
- All orientation visit(s) are charged at half fee.

First Days

Start with shorter visits before commencing a full day:

- Try not to rush out of the room in the morning and instead take some time to sign your child in, assist them to put their belongings away and settle them into an activity. Once your child is involved in an activity, this is your chance for a hug, a kiss good-bye and an exit. Younger children can be handed to an educator for a cuddle.
- Always say 'good-bye' to your child and reassure them that you will be returning to pick them up. You may like to specify a time such as after a sleep or before afternoon tea.
- If your child is upset when you leave, please feel free to give us a call. Don’t worry - we will always call you if your child continues to be upset.
- When collecting your child please take the time to talk to educators about how your child’s day has gone, what they enjoyed and if there were any concerns. More importantly engage your child in positive conversations about their day.

First Weeks

During the first few weeks continue conversations with the educators and your child:

- Find out what your child is enjoying and also if there are any times when your child may feel sad or unsettled.
- Be aware that your child may settle easier on some days than others, dependent on what has been happening during the week.
- Talk to the educators about important events in your child’s life or changes in routines, such as what they did on the weekend, how well they slept the night before or if you have noticed any indications of illness.
- Always talk to your child about what they have been doing during the day.

Ongoing

Once your child has settled:

- Be kind to yourself - take one day at a time.
- Talk to the educators and ask for help or advice if you are concerned about something.
- Meet other parents/guardians to share ideas and support.
- This is your centre too – please feel at home here.
INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

A TO Z

Allergy Aware
As there are a number of foods that children may be allergic to, Friends’ Early Years promotes an allergy aware environment in which we implement practical, age appropriate strategies to minimise exposure to known allergens.

Due to the frequency and severity of nut allergies amongst children, Friends’ Early Years seeks to exclude the presence of nuts within our centre and therefore asks parents to avoid packing nut-based products in their child’s lunch box. Food items, which state that they “may contain elements of nut”, are acceptable.

Be Contactable
Friends’ Early Years asks that you remain contactable via telephone while your child is at the centre.

Centre Events
Friends’ Early Years conducts a variety of special events throughout the year, including visits from children’s entertainers, parent evenings and our annual children’s Christmas party.

Communication
We strongly encourage you to talk with our staff whenever you leave or collect your child from our Centre. Open communication between staff and your family is a vital component to the provision of quality early learning.

Communication Booklets
Each child at Friends’ Early Years is given a Communication Booklet, which is used to share information between staff and parents. The Communication Booklet goes home in your child’s bag at the end of each day and should be returned each day your child is in care.

Family Feedback
Family feedback is welcomed and encouraged. If you have an idea that might enhance our centre, please let us know by talking directly to any of our staff, placing a note in our suggestion box or emailing us directly at feyadmin@friends.tas.edu.au

Family Participation
Friends’ Early Years welcomes parent involvement in a variety of ways. In past years parents have grown vegetable gardens, played musical instruments, come in with their pets, dressed in their fireman’s uniform, attended excursions, painted children’s faces, etc. If you have a skill or special interest we encourage you to share it with us.

Food
Friends’ Early Years encourages the consumption of nutritionally balanced food and seeks parent support in this endeavour. Families are responsible for providing their child’s own meals and are encouraged to pack healthy food in their child’s lunch box. For example, sandwiches with assorted fillings, fresh and dried fruit, raw vegetables, cheese and yoghurt, etc.
Friends’ Early Years staff undertake food handling and food hygiene training and the Centre has a comprehensive food safety program that is independently audited on an annual basis.

**Information Exchange**

Friends’ Early Years shares and provides information to parents in a variety of ways. These include:

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<tr>
<td>Display Boards</td>
<td>Display Boards and Communication Books - Located in each room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Cupboard</td>
<td>Located in our administration area, the information cupboard contains regularly updated information on numerous topics of interest to parents.</td>
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<td>Parent/Lead Educator Meetings</td>
<td>These can be arranged at any time during the year through consultation with the Director.</td>
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<td>Publications</td>
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**Meal Times**

The mealtime atmosphere is important to the development of healthy eating practices. At Friends’ Early Years meal times are a happy and social experience, with staff sitting and talking with the children and assisting them as needed. Friends’ Early Years encourages healthy eating patterns and positive attitudes to food and always supervises children while they eat.

**Nappy Changing (as applicable)**

Your child’s nappy is checked regularly. Please ensure you pack enough nappies for the duration of your child’s day.

**Publications**

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<tr>
<td>Early Years Newsletter</td>
<td>A newsletter, which contains news and events that are particular to Friends’ Early Years.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Echoes</td>
<td>The annual school magazine, issued at the end of each year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Room Newsletters</td>
<td>Produced by each room as required to provide information and news from an individual room.</td>
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<tr>
<td>What’s On</td>
<td>Weekly newsletter that communicates organisational information for the coming week and details of future events. It is distributed electronically every Friday and is also available on the School website.</td>
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**Sleep Time (Green, Orange and Red Rooms)**

The children in our Green room sleep in cots, while the children in our Orange and Red rooms sleep on mattresses. Each child is provided with their own cot or mattress and bedding. Soothing music is played and the lights are dimmed. Your child’s educator sits with your child and helps them go off to sleep by rubbing their back or tummy, or telling them a story until they drift off to sleep. Cot rooms are electronically monitored and all children are checked every 15 minutes by our staff. When your child wakes, their educator will check their nappy (if applicable) and help them dress. Your child will be offered quiet experiences until they are fully awake and ready to join the afternoon program. Older children who do not wish to rest (or whose parents do not wish them to rest) are offered other quiet experiences during rest time.
Sleep or Rest Time (Pre-Kindergarten)
The children in our pre-kindergarten room sleep or rest on mattresses in a quiet area of the room. Bedding is provided for those children still requiring a sleep. Soothing music is played and the lights are dimmed. An educator sits with the children and helps them to rest by telling them a story. Children who do not wish to rest (or whose parent’s do not wish them to rest) are offered other quiet experiences during rest time.

Structure of the Day
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).

SunSmart Centre
Friends’ Early Years is an accredited SunSmart Centre. When the UV level is 3 and above, children require the following provisions for outside play:

- Sun protective clothing.
- SPF30+ broad spectrum water resistant sunscreen, which our staff apply 20 minutes before outside play.
- A hat that protects their face, head, neck and ears.

Things to Bring
Please bring the following clearly named items each day:

- A bag for your child’s belongings.
- A drink bottle filled with water.
- A lunch box with a healthy morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.
- Clothing appropriate to each days expected weather and our Sunsmart guideline.
- For the Orange, Red and Pre-Kindergarten rooms, a piece of fruit to share.
- Shoes with ‘good grip’ soles.
- Spare clothing.
- Waterproof bag for soiled or wet clothing items.

Toilet Training
If you would like your child to start toilet training at Friends’ Early Years, please discuss the signs of readiness to toilet train with our educators.

Toys
Friends’ Early Years asks families not to bring toys from home into the Centre, unless the toy is a ‘comforter’ for your child. Toys brought from home can cause disputes between children and it can be upsetting if the toy becomes lost or broken.

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

Transfer of Duty of Care
Parents are required to sign their children in and out of Friends’ Early Years by completing the Attendance Record in their child’s room. If your child is attending Before Kinder and Before School Care, they only need to be signed in and if they are attending After Kinder and After School Care they only need to be signed out.
In all instances it is important to ensure that you have directly spoken with a staff member, so that we are aware of your child’s arrival or departure.

If your child is going to be collected by someone other than those noted in your enrolment form, Friends’ Early Years needs to be informed, preferably in writing. In an emergency situation, please ring and let Friends’ Early Years know of the change in arrangements. In such instances the person collecting your child will be required to show identification.

Transfer of School Age Children To and From Morris

*Outside Kinder Hours Care:*

Kindergarten students are escorted to and from the Frank Wells Hall and Kindergarten buildings.

*Outside School Hours Care:*

Primary school students must make their own way directly to and from the Frank Wells Hall and their classroom.

Transportation of Soiled or Wet Clothing and Cloth Nappies

To store and transport wet and soiled clothing and cloth nappies, Friends’ Early Years requires families to purchase a reusable, machine washable, eco-friendly, waterproof bag called a ‘Smelly Bag’. These bags (which are purposely designed for carrying cloth nappies and soiled or wet clothing items) come with a carry strap, zip and name tag. They also greatly reduce odour.

Families are asked to purchase the bag as part of the enrolment process. The bag costs Friends’ Early Years $10 and new families will be charged this amount for the bag in order to cover our costs.

Up To Date Details

Please advise Friends’ Early Years immediately of any changes to you or your child’s details by completing a Change of Details form at reception.
POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

ACCESSING INFORMATION

Applicable Friends’ School policies and the full range of Friends’ Early Years guidelines are located in our Family Information Cupboard.

GUIDELINE REVIEW PROCESS

Friends’ Early guidelines are reviewed on a cyclic, ongoing basis and we strongly encourage and appreciate parent input with this process. Please see our administration area notice board for further details.