

St Jude's Primary School

EARLY CHILDHOOD PHILOSOPHY



At St Jude's Catholic Primary School, we value early childhood education as the foundation for lifelong learning. We believe in developing the whole child and acknowledge that each child is a unique individual. We strive to support and foster each child's agency and needs.

At St Jude's we believe in purposeful play, allowing children to apply new skills and knowledge within a hands-on, play based environment. We believe play involves all aspects of the curriculum, and is active and creative, avoiding overuse of worksheets and cloned expectations. Play is child initiated and is owned by the child and not the adult. Play not only allows children to apply their knowledge and skills, but also assists children in developing their social skills, oral language skills and mathematical skills.

Teaching staff at St Jude's promote and facilitate high quality teaching through the balance of a Walker style approach to play, and the explicit teaching of Numeracy and Literacy skills. This approach allows for integration of all curriculum areas and is a total teaching and learning tool; providing a unique balance between the children being active participants in their learning and explicit instruction.

Teachers at St Jude's School place an extremely high value on the environment in the early learning context, for this reason, careful attention and detail is encapsulated in its design to allow for rich, authentic experiences to occur daily. Our early learning context supports scaffolding children's learning and development through quality interactions with peers, families and teachers in the overall attempt to pave the way for an exploratory understanding of themselves, the world around them and their place in it.



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EARLY CHILDHOOD PHILOSOPHY CONT.

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Our educational programs are reflective of emergent curriculum and adhere to guidelines set by ACECQA, National Quality Framework and The Early Years Learning Framework, taking the child's developmental level into account.

Our educational programs are created by the classroom teacher which consider children's interest and respect their agency. There is also opportunity for the children to participate in spontaneous independent experiences as part of a play based pedagogy. Educators at St Jude's School complete anecdotal records while observing the children and share these with parents and guardians through parent meetings, displays or workbooks and using the digital portfolio Seesaw.

As educators focus on the experiences of the 'whole' child, there is a large emphasis placed on Religion and Faith formation provided for the children daily. Each classroom displays a prayer focus on a dedicated prayer table. Students learn to participate in Catholic rituals by attending Mass, visits from the Parish Priest and regular prayer opportunities. The classroom teachers are guided by planning documents approved by the Catholic Education Office of WA.



At St Jude's School, we are responsive to student's needs. Students are given opportunities to eat in regular intervals during the day and also if the child requests in between these mealtimes. Appropriate seating is provided for the students. Parents are given information about healthy eating and drinking. We recognise and are respectful towards preferences, allergies and intolerances of the children. Parents are requested to adhere to our guidelines for being an allergy aware school. Children are encouraged to practice independence by feeding themselves during these social experiences as a means of preparing them for their future. Eating times are integrated with other key learning areas such as Health.

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Staff at St Jude's School are dedicated professionals who value the importance of maintaining an optimum level of care and education for all children. All staff working with children have obtained formal qualifications in the field of Early Childhood and are consistently developing and refining their professional practice. All staff strictly abide by a Code of Conduct, ensuring that duty of care is always maintained.

We place an extremely high value and importance on partnerships as a means of developing the best possible environment for children at our school. Partnerships with families provide us with invaluable information relating to cultural backgrounds and heritage. Staff strive to build relationships with families based on co-operation and a mutual respect for the reciprocal roles that each play in the lives of the child. Partnerships with families are developed through daily discussion, newsletters, Seesaw and meetings. Moreover, our open-door policy aims to facilitate an open flow of communication while maintaining confidentiality and respect of the privacy and wishes of each family.

Our respectful ties with St Jude's Catholic Church, Mercy Connect, School Nurse, CDS and Harmony Playgroup, nurture the development of a broader partnership within the local community. This evokes a sense of belonging in the children and a growing awareness of their place in the community.

At St Jude's School, we value Early Childhood education as the foundation for lifelong learning. We believe that each child is a unique individual and should be viewed, respected, and treated as such. As the welfare and wellbeing of each child is paramount, we strive to provide holistic support of the child's exclusive requirements and interests in a nurturing, environment that fosters the child's development across all developmental domains including Religious and Faith formation.

