

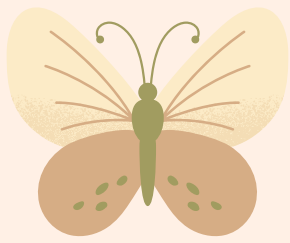


Family Handbook



Director: Kylie Tull

Assistant Director: Gaynor Hetherington



Our Team

Extended Services Directors - Kylie Tull and Kathia Martin
Assistant Director - Gaynor Hetherington

Administration Team

Caitlin Eason
Lizzie Grosvenor

Children's Services Educators

Ali Ey
Amber Morton
Andrea Blackmore - Kabir Team Leader
Ashlee Gillon
Bec Devlin
Bianca Bovell - Turanggal Team Leader
Dakota Hateley - Kabir Team Leader
Hayley Sutherland
Jackie Ormerod
Jade Lyhtgo
Julie Mills - OSHC Team Leader
Karen Bowden - Kurra Team Leader
Kristy-Lee Ellery

Kindy Team

Chelsea Galpin - Teacher
Jo Ey - Early Childhood Worker
Judith Whitehead - Teacher
Kathia Martin - Teacher
Kristy Ellery - Early Childhood Worker
Michelle Tregenza - Early Childhood Worker

Casual Relief Staff

Charlotte Simmons
Holly Dinnison
Jo Brand
Judith Whitehead
Keira Roper
Liam Nott
Lucy Chant
Maddie Copping
Nessie Manondo



Bookmaking is an important part
of our age 3-5 programs.
Halle - Age 4

Our Learning Spaces

At McKay Children's Centre, children are grouped into rooms to foster strong, consistent relationships and to provide high-quality, developmentally appropriate programs. Children are only moved to the next room when they are ready, although some may move earlier if they demonstrate readiness.

Kabir Room – Led by Team Leader Andrea and Dakota

Kabir is the Bunganditj word for Emu. This room is designed for our youngest learners, offering rich sensory experiences and opportunities to explore cause and effect in a safe and engaging environment.



Kurra Room – Led by Team Leader Karen

Kurra is the Bunganditj word for Kangaroo. In this room, toddlers engage in a variety of experiences including art experimentation, sensory play, and dramatic play, supporting curiosity, exploration, and emerging independence.



Turanggal Room – Led by Team Leader Bianca

Turanggal is the Bunganditj word for Turtle. This room caters to children over three years, providing opportunities to extend their learning and develop autonomy. Our makerspace, complete with real tools and glue guns, is a popular area where children can explore, create, and problem-solve.



Kindergarten - Led by Team Leader Kathia

Our Kindy program shares the Turanggal Room space, offering a varied curriculum that supports child in the year before they start school while building on their interests and strengths.



OSHC and Vacation Care - Led by Team Leader Julie

Our Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) and Vacation Care programs provide a leisure-based approach, giving children the freedom to play, explore, and have fun while engaging in meaningful activities with peers.





Governing Council

Chairperson- Kacey Holloway

Vice Chairperson - Mark Denman

Council Members

Kacey Holloway, Katie McPherson, Mark Denman, Sam Freeman, Talya Rutter

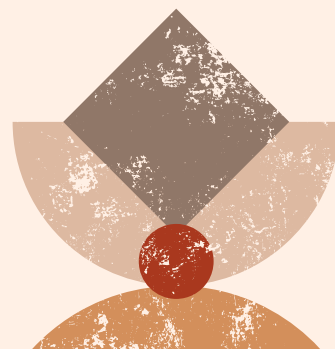
Staff Council Members

Kylie Tull (Director), Gaynor Hetherington (Assistant Director), Kathia Martin

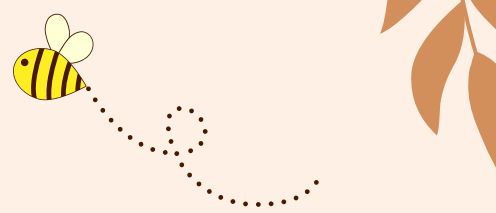
McKay has 2 providers and so GC members are identified against the 2 providers. DfE and McKay Children's Centre Childcare Incorporated.



Artwork by Kabir Room (0-2 years)



Welcome



We warmly welcome your family to McKay Children's Centre and look forward to building a strong, positive relationship with you and your child. Our dedicated staff team brings a wide range of qualifications, skills and experiences, united by a shared passion for supporting children and their families.

This handbook has been designed to provide clear and helpful information about the Long Day Care, Outside of School Hours Care (OSHC) and Preschool programs offered at McKay Children's Centre. We hope it supports you to feel informed, reassured and confident as you begin your journey with us.

Philosophy

At McKay Children's Centre, our philosophy guides everything we do. It reflects our beliefs about children, families, learning, and community, and shapes how we plan experiences, interact with children, and build relationships.

A philosophy is important because it provides a shared vision for educators, families, and the wider community. It ensures that all children are supported in a consistent, respectful, and nurturing way, while recognising each child's individuality, culture, and strengths. Our philosophy underpins our commitment to creating a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment where every child can learn, grow, and belong.

Our Philosophy was reviewed at the end of 2025 and is stated below:

Our Place

McKay Children's Centre is an integrated community hub offering early learning, kindergarten, and out-of-school-hours programs for children from six weeks to twelve years of age. We provide a nurturing, predictable and caring environment that supports each child to feel safe, secure and ready to learn. Through intentional, relationship-based practice, we foster a strong sense of belonging that lays the foundation for engagement, wellbeing and growth.

Our Values

Our shared values are being kind, supportive, nurturing, respectful and collaborative.

These values guide our daily interactions and decision-making and are reflected in how we build relationships, regulate together, and promote wellbeing across our community.

We value strong connections to community and enjoy regular excursions. We especially love to visit Pinchunga Aged Care Home, AC Care Playgroup and the Penola Community Herb Garden.





Our Beliefs

- We believe children are competent, capable and resilient learners, each with unique strengths, interests and dispositions
- We believe children learn best when they experience physical, emotional and psychological safety, and when they are connected to trusted adults who co-regulate and support their sense of agency
- We believe children thrive when they are engaged, curious, and able to express themselves creatively through play and exploration
- We believe that educators and families share responsibility for children's learning and wellbeing. Working together in partnership and advocacy strengthens children's outcomes
- We believe that positive, consistent and trusting relationships are the foundation for growth, wellbeing and lifelong learning
- We believe that when educators work as a connected, reflective and relational team, we build collective capacity and model the values we teach
- We believe that our community partnerships enrich our programs, connect children to place, and deepen their understanding of belonging and contribution
- We believe our environments should be predictable, inspiring and responsive, encouraging children to take risks, explore their creativity and build stamina for learning and life

Our Commitments and Practices

- We provide trauma-informed environments that nurture every child's sense of safety, connection and confidence to learn
- We prioritise emotional regulation through consistent routines, responsive relationships and calm, supportive spaces
- We engage in strength-based practices that build on each child's potential, supporting persistence, problem solving and joy in learning
- We strive for open, empathetic and reciprocal communication with families, recognising them as partners and co-educators.
- We celebrate and embed the cultures, languages and traditions of our families to strengthen identity and belonging
- We engage in ongoing reflection and professional learning to strengthen our capacity to support every child's engagement and wellbeing
- We actively mentor and encourage one another, building collective efficacy and relational trust within our team
- We commit to shared decision-making and collaboration through open dialogue and respect for diverse perspectives
- We support children and families to participate in centre decision-making processes, ensuring all voices are valued and heard
- We maintain environments that are inviting, inclusive and restorative, promoting curiosity, persistence and care for self, others and place

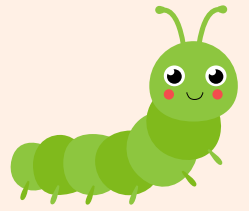
At McKay Children's Centre, we nurture curious, resilient, and connected learners. We provide a safe, engaging and inclusive environment where children, families and educators grow together, build strong relationships, and explore the world with confidence, creativity, and joy.

Childcare and OSHC Hours of Operation

Childcare is available Monday to Friday, 7:30am–5:30pm, excluding public holidays, for up to 50 weeks per year.

Childcare Session Times

- Morning Session: 7:30am–12:15pm
- Afternoon Session: 12:30pm–5:30pm
- Full Day: 7:30am–5:30pm
- Before School/Kindy Care: 7:30am–8:45am (available for children aged 7 and under)
- After Kindy Care: 3:00pm–5:30pm



OSHC (Outside of School Hours Care)

Penola OSHC operates during school terms from 3:10pm–5:30pm. The service is available to children enrolled at:

- Penola Primary School
- Mary MacKillop Memorial School

Vacation Care may be offered during school holidays or Pupil Free Days when staffing and feasibility allow. Families are invited to register their interest so community need and viability can be assessed.

Childcare Capacity and Availability

McKay Children's Centre has approximately 35 childcare places per day, including a maximum of 12 places for children under 2 years due to staffing ratios and National Law requirements.

Kindy children may access Childcare or OSHC before and after Kindy, depending on their age and available spaces.

Kindy Hours of Operation

Kindy operates during school terms on:

- Tuesday (fortnightly)
- Wednesday
- Thursday

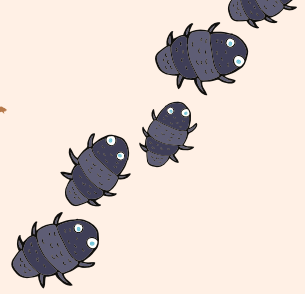
Children attend a 5-day fortnight and may apply for Childcare on non-Kindy days. Please speak with administration staff if you require Childcare or OSHC support.

- Kindy Day: 8:45am–3:00pm

We can usually accommodate children arriving via school buses. Families are asked to avoid early drop-offs or late collections, as the centre must maintain legal staffing ratios at all times. Early and late fees may apply.



Enrolment Process



Enrolment and Induction Process

All new enrolments are supported through a structured induction process to ensure children and families feel confident and comfortable when beginning at the centre.

Childcare and OSHC

For Childcare and OSHC enrolments, the Assistant Director will arrange a 1:1 induction session with families. This is followed by a series of introductory visits, allowing children to become familiar with the environment, routines and educators before their official start date.

Preschool (Kindergarten)

Preschool families are invited to attend a transition conversation with their child's teacher. This meeting provides an opportunity to discuss your child's needs, interests, strengths and preferences to support a smooth transition into the program.

Families are then encouraged to participate in a range of Kindy transition visits, with dates and details communicated in the term prior to your child beginning.

Preschool Registration of Interest

All Preschool enrolments must submit a Registration of Interest form in line with the Department for Education's enrolment policy. Places are prioritised for children living within the local catchment area. Registration forms are available on the DfE website, and the centre is always happy to provide one upon request.

Enrolment Documentation and Confidentiality

Please read all information included in your enrolment package carefully and return the required forms to the centre before your child's start date.

Your privacy is respected at all times, and personal information is managed in accordance with our Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

Waiting List

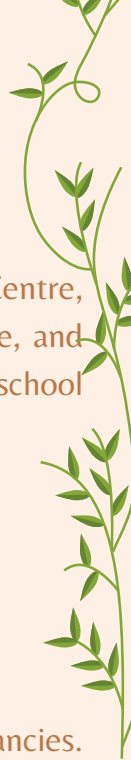
If no vacancies are available at the time of enrolment, your child's name and details will be placed on the waiting list. When a vacancy becomes available, Priority of Access guidelines will be followed (see Fee Policy for more information).

Families will be notified of their position on the waiting list and may choose to decline a place when offered. It is the responsibility of parents/caregivers to inform the centre of any changes to personal circumstances that may affect enrolment or care requirements.





Starting Kindy



Starting Kindergarten is an exciting milestone for both children and families. At McKay Children's Centre, we aim to make this transition smooth, positive, and supportive, helping children feel confident, safe, and ready to learn. This section provides important information about session times, bus services, and school transition programs, as well as tips to support your child as they begin their Kindergarten journey.

Kindergarten Session Times

- Tuesday (Even Weeks Only): 8:45am – 3:00pm
- Wednesday: 8:45am – 3:00pm
- Thursday: 8:45am – 3:00pm

If you require care for your child outside of these times, Childcare may be available, depending on vacancies. Please speak with our administration staff for more information.

Bus Program

McKay Children's Centre supports children who travel to Kindergarten via the bus service:

- Morning: Children are collected from the buses at Penola Primary School from 8:30am.
- Afternoon: Children are delivered back to the buses at 3:10 pm.

Families interested in using the bus service should contact Penola High School on (08) 8737 0000 for enrolment and details.

Transition from Kindergarten to School

Transitioning to school is an important step, and McKay Kindergarten works closely with local schools to support children and families.

Both local schools, Penola Primary and Mary MacKillop Memorial, offer a mid year and end of year school intake. Transition to school information will be communicated with families two terms before they are due to start school. This usually includes some scheduled visits and teacher visits to our centre.

Kindy educators are informed by current research and can advise families about developmental readiness for school, including transitions from home to Kindy, Childcare to Kindy, and Kindy to school. Families are also encouraged to contact local schools directly for more detailed information about their programs.





Fees



Childcare Fees (before the application of any Commonwealth Child Care Subsidy)

- \$72.00 – Morning or Afternoon Session (Half Day)
- \$147.00 – Full Day
- \$16.50 – Before Kindy/School Care
- \$30.00 – After Kindy/School Care
- Early drop off or Late collection Fee - \$25 per 15 minutes (early or late) or part thereof.

OSHC Fees (before the application of any Commonwealth Child Care Subsidy)

- Before School Care: \$16.50
- After School Care: \$30.00
- Vacation Care: \$110.00 per day

Banking Details Childcare:

Account Name: McKay Children's Centre Incorporated

BSB: 633-000

Account Number: 198 832 685

Email for Remittance: info.mckay725@schools.sa.edu.au

Kindergarten Fees (Materials and Services Charge)

- \$130.00 per term for 5 full-day Kindergarten sessions per fortnight during school terms.
- Kindergarten fees do not attract CCS payments.

Banking Details Kindergarten:

Account Name: McKay Children's Centre

BSB: 633-000

Account Number: 159 183 425

Email for Remittance: info.mckay725@schools.sa.edu.au



Payment Options

Payments can be made via:

- EFT
- EFTPOS (available once the office is staffed)
- Centrepay

Please see our fee policy and schedule for detailed information about fees, Child Care Subsidy, casual days, cancellations, absences, notification of changes etc. We are happy to answer any questions you might have.





Arrival and Departure Procedures

During arrival and departure, families are asked to:

Arrival

- Drop off children after 7:30am when the Centre opens (Kindy drop off at 8.45am).
- Ensure children arrive with enough time for a smooth handover.
- Check the family file.
- Place lunch boxes and bottles in the fridge for Kabir and Kurra rooms and lunch boxes and drinks on the trolley for Turanggal and Kindy room.
- Place water bottles in the trolley.
- Place bags in the appropriate room.
- Communicate any relevant routine information to educators and upload Handover Notes on OWINA if needed.

Hand over duty of care by:

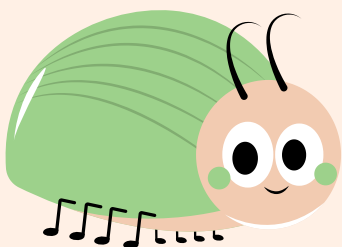
- Greeting educators
- Signing the child in on the iPad/attendance sheet
- Completing medical information if applicable
- Indicating who will collect the child

Departure

- Ensure collection before 5:30pm when the Centre closes. Arrival for collection should allow for staff handover (recommended 5:10pm–5:20pm). Kindy collection is at 3pm.
- Greet the educator and receive verbal handover information when possible.
- Sight and sign any illness or injury reports on the OWINA app. Kindy requires a paper form to be signed.
- Collect all belongings.
- Sign the child out on the iPad/attendance sheet.
- Families should be aware that repeated late collection may result in additional fees or cancellation of care.

Staff Role During Arrival and Departure

Staff will greet children and families on arrival. We aim to ensure a familiar educator welcomes your child whenever possible, supporting a smooth transition and strong, trusting relationships—especially during the settling-in period. When you arrive to collect your child, a staff member will complete a brief handover with you, sharing any important information from the day.





Centre Closure

- The Centre is closed on public holidays. No charges apply.
- There are four preschool closure days each year (total) and two whole-site closure days.
- The Centre closes for two weeks at the end of the year. These dates are confirmed annually, with advance notice provided to families. No fees are charged during the end-of-year closure.

Settling In at McKay

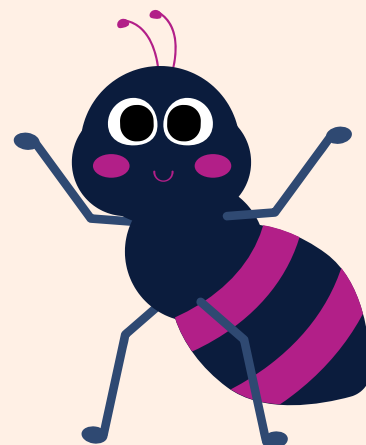
We recognise that beginning care in a new environment can bring a mix of emotions for both children and families. Supporting a smooth and positive transition is important to us, and we prioritise helping your child feel safe, secure and confident from their very first day.

To support this process, we ask that each child attends two orientation visits with a parent or caregiver prior to starting. These short, relaxed visits (at no cost to families) help your child become familiar with the space, routines and educators. As every child transitions differently, additional visits can be arranged where needed.

During this time, we begin building an understanding of who your child is—their interests, comforts, routines, strengths and needs. This information helps us meaningfully incorporate your child's identity into our program and environment.



Pupil free days provide important opportunities for our educators to learn, reflect and always strive to improve our practice.



Working Together

Partnerships with families are at the heart of our work at McKay Children's Centre. To support consistent care and strong relationships, we use a primary caregiving model. This means your child will belong to a small group overseen by key educators who focus on developing deep, trusting relationships with both your child and your family.

Your family's culture, traditions and beliefs are respected and valued, and we strive to reflect these in our environment and interactions. By working together, we create a sense of belonging for your child and support their learning, wellbeing and identity.

We view families as children's first and most influential teachers, and your input is always welcomed.

We encourage you to:

- Share information about your child
- Ask questions
- Engage in conversations with educators
- Participate in the life of the Centre whenever possible



Together, we can create a warm, inclusive and supportive environment where your child can learn, grow and thrive.

Environments and Routines

At McKay Children's Centre, we view children as a community of learners, where relationships are intentionally fostered and recognised as central to learning. Our children develop a strong sense of belonging and work creatively together, sharing knowledge and exploring the world around them.

Each of our learning spaces is carefully designed to:

- Support the different developmental needs of children
- Reflect the unique interests, cultures and strengths of the children in that room
- Encourage creativity, curiosity and meaningful exploration

Our environments and routines are thoughtfully planned to provide opportunities for children to engage, collaborate, and build on their emerging knowledge, skills and confidence.

Regulations and Licensing

McKay Children's Centre operates in full compliance with the National Quality Framework (NQF) and National Education Standards (NES).

Key information and certifications are displayed on our noticeboards at the Centre entrance, and records are maintained and kept up to date, including:

- Education and Care Service Prescribed Information
- National Quality Assessment and Rating Information
- Provider and Service Information



For more information regarding licensing, assessments, or regulations, please speak with the Assistant Director or Director.

Our Curriculum: EYLF and MTOP Frameworks

At McKay Children's Centre, our curriculum is guided by two national frameworks to support all children's learning and development across different age groups:

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)

For children from birth to five years, our curriculum is informed by the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). Educators use this framework to guide planning and decision-making, ensuring that children's ideas, interests and observations shape both planned and spontaneous learning experiences.

The EYLF supports children in achieving the following outcomes:

1. Children have a strong sense of identity
2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
4. Children are confident and involved learners
5. Children are effective communicators



My Time, Our Place (MTOP) Framework

For school-aged children attending OSHC, our program is guided by the My Time, Our Place (MTOP) framework. MTOP provides a framework for outside school hours care, recognising children as capable, confident, and connected learners.

The MTOP framework focuses on:

- Choice and agency – children actively make decisions and contribute to planning experiences
- Play and leisure – opportunities for meaningful engagement, creativity and recreation
- Relationships and community – fostering connections with peers, educators and the wider community
- Wellbeing and resilience – supporting emotional, social and physical development
- Communication and learning – developing skills to express ideas, explore interests and problem-solve

At McKay Children's Centre, both EYLF and MTOP guide how educators plan programs, interact with children, and provide environments that are safe, inclusive, engaging and reflective of children's interests, cultures and abilities.



Cooking experiences are an important and embedded part of our program.



Things to Bring

To help your child have a comfortable, safe, and enjoyable day at McKay Children's Centre, please ensure they bring the following items, depending on the program:

Childcare

- Named bag / nappy bag
- Nappies – cloth or disposable. For a full day, we request 6–8 nappies. Soiled cloth nappies will be rinsed, soaked, and placed in a plastic bag to be collected at the end of the day. Nappies are checked every 2 hours and changed as needed.
- Nappy cream (if required)
- Changes of clothing (named)
- Milk and water bottles (named)
- Hat – named, seasonal, inexpensive, and wide-brimmed for sun protection
- Nutritional lunch, fruit, and snacks – morning fruit is provided. Some foods are excluded due to choking hazards; see our Nutrition Policy for details
- Dummies and comfort items
- Sunscreen – if your child requires a specific brand, please provide and inform staff

Kindergarten (Preschool)

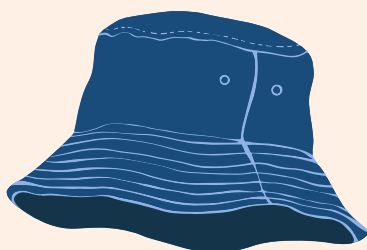
- Named bag
- Spare change of clothes (accidents can happen during active play or art experiences)
- Hat – named, wide-brimmed, appropriate to the season
- Water bottle – named
- Lunch and snacks – Please refer to our nutrition policy.
- Comfort item (optional) – e.g., a small soft toy to support settling in



Clothing

Children at McKay engage in a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities. To support comfort and safety:

- Dress children in casual clothing suitable for active play (e.g., trackpants, shorts, short- or long-sleeved shirts)
- Clothes that can get messy are recommended, as children participate in painting, sensory activities, and outdoor play
- Provide sturdy, supportive shoes for running and climbing (thongs are not suitable)
- Please ensure hats are wide brimmed sun safe designs and tops ensure that shoulders are covered.



Parent Involvement

At McKay Children's Centre, we value families as an essential part of our community. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to:

- Visit the centre as often as possible prior to their child starting care to familiarise your child with staff and the environment
- Drop in during the day at times convenient to you, such as lunch breaks
- Participate in the centre program by sharing skills, hobbies, cooking, reading stories, or celebrating your culture
- Engage in governance by joining the Governing Council.

Your involvement is always valued and appreciated, and helps build strong connections between families, children, and educators.

Policies and Procedures

McKay Children's Centre maintains a comprehensive set of policies and procedures to ensure the safety, wellbeing, and learning of all children. These documents are available on site and via the OWNA app.

Families are encouraged to familiarise themselves with these policies to understand the centre's procedures, expectations, and practices.

Personal Devices

To keep children safe, we have policies and procedures in place to support the safe use of digital technologies. As part of this policy, our learning environment is a personal-device free zone. Families are asked to leave their phones in their bag or pocket whilst within our centre and are asked not to take photos of children within our centre. We thank you for helping us keep children safe.

Our Special Grandparents Day in Term 4 is always a highlight.

