



# Information Handbook



**DEGARIS PRESCHOOL CENTRE  
INCORPORATED**

**INFORMATION BOOKLET**

De Garis is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

Welcome to the De Garis Kindergarten. We hope that your association with our Kindergarten will be happy and that your child's education will get off to a great start.

This booklet aims to provide you with most of the information that we believe you will need when your child starts at this centre. The booklet contains a mixture of policy matters, some of the rules and regulations that apply to Kindergartens, timetable and fees details and a host of small practical details that everybody needs to know so that the kindergarten programme runs smoothly.

We do not expect you to read and understand it straight away but you should keep this booklet in a handy spot so that you may look up things like "what to do if my child gets the measles" and so on.

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Bus #2 0477 001 462

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STAFF: DIRECTOR/TEACHER - Mrs. Kylie Loveridge  
TEACHER - Mrs Brooke Jayet  
TEACHER - Mrs Chantelle Wyld  
TEACHER- Mrs Trish Harrison  
Miss Chelsea Brougham

EDUCATORS - Mrs. Chantal Allford  
Mrs. Jeanette Noble  
Mrs. Sherryn Lay

Mrs Melanie Payen  
Mrs Linda Mitchell  
Ms Sam McPherson

Bus Driver - Mrs Chantal Allford  
Mrs. Sherryn Lay  
Mr Russell Airs  
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Administration - Mrs. Korran Stevens

Incorporated Association No: A0017214N

Australian Business No: 66 914 180 540

***De Garis Kindergarten wishes to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we learn and play. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and future and the connection they hold with their Country.***

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# 1 DE GARIS PRESCHOOL CENTRE INC ~ who we are.

De Garis Preschool Centre Incorporated is an incorporated not-for-profit association (Reg No A0017214N). Trading as "De Garis Kindergarten", it is a licensed children's service that is **"operated in a way which ensures:**

- **the safety of the children being cared for or educated, and**
- **that their developmental needs are met"**. (Sect 18(4)- Children's Services Act 2010)

Through its Committee of Management, De Garis Kindergarten not only operates the children's service but it also looks after the associated building and grounds which are the property of 'Mildura Rural City Council'.

The kindergarten operates according to government regulations and seeks to better minimum requirements for such services. It is registered annually with the Department of Education and Training Vic (DET), Primary Care Branch, and undergoes an Annual Review by the Loddon Mallee Regional Children's Services Adviser.

A majority of the funding for the service is provided by the Department of Education and Training, Victoria through a Service Agreement that sets out details of per capita funding and conditions that must be met. Other funds come from special grants (e.g. Indigenous Educational Strategies Initiative Programme, ISA), fees, and fundraising.

## 1.1 **Management**

On enrolment, every family becomes a member of the De Garis Preschool Centre Incorporated. Interested members of the public may also join the incorporated association; currently the membership fee is \$2. The association's affairs are managed by a Committee of Management who is elected from the membership at the Annual General Meeting (**AGM**). (Copies of the rules of the association are available).

A strong committee generally leads to a well-managed kinder and a happy learning environment for the children. Consequently, you are all encouraged to attend the **AGM** and consider becoming a member of the committee.

The Committee of Management decides on fees budget, fund raising, and expenditure on major items, chooses contractors (for cleaning etc) and selects staff (when necessary). Along with staff it determines and reviews policy, e.g. health and safety, discipline, etc.

## 1.2 **Policy Handbook**

ELAA along with past Committees of Management have developed policies and procedures that along with Government regulations, determine how the Kindergarten operates on a day to day basis. This handbook gives much more detail than we can provide in this handbook. If you wish to inspect or borrow a copy of the Policy handbook, please do not hesitate to ask. We value parents who take an interest in how and why things are done the way they are.

## **2 ENROLMENT POLICY (See Policy Handbook for more detail)**

### **2.1 *Equal Access To All, Meeting the Needs of the local Community & supporting families***

It is our policy to give equal access to all eligible children, guided by the Priority of Access funding guidelines.

Enrolments are recorded through the Mildura Rural City Council Central Enrolment system and prioritised via the Priority of access guidelines. Where the number of requests for places exceeds our capacity, names are placed on a waiting list held by the Council.

### **2.2 *Second-Year of Preschool*** **Funded**

When a child is considered not ready to manage in a normal school environment, he/she will be formally assessed by your child's teacher and/or the Preschool Field Officer (DET) (with appropriate permission from parents). A formal application for a second year of funding can be made and if successful, the child will be given a place in the following year. Note – these applications must be processed by October.

#### **Non-funded**

A child, who has completed 12 months of a funded four-year old Kindergarten Programme and is ineligible for a funded second year, may be considered for a second year of kinder at this Kindergarten. To qualify the child must:

- Have areas of delay in at least 2 of the 5 learning outcome areas from the VEYLF (Victorian Early Years Framework)
- Have other influences that may be affecting the child's normal development ie trauma, family situations, ESL, refugee status etc

For non-funded places, parents will be expected to pay the full STANDARD fee, plus the funding amount from DET irrespective of Health Care Cards, etc. (NB. This policy was adopted by the MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE on August 18<sup>th</sup> 1999.)

### **2.3 *Enrolment Procedure***

- (a) Enrolments open through the Mildura Rural City Council Central enrolment in June
- (b) Parents/guardians may register application for enrolment by logging online and completing the enrolment registration.
- (c) Families will be notified as to which Kinder you have been successful with and then families will be contacted by the individual Kinders.

### **2.4 *Confidentiality (Enrolment & Other)***

For a Kindergarten teacher to fulfill their role, it is important to have relevant information on a child's background, health, development, family situation etc., as these may have an effect on the child's behavior and development during the year. All information received remains confidential.

### 3 AGE REQUIREMENTS

#### 3.1 KINDER GROUP (FOUR & FIVE YEAR OLD GROUP)

Your child must turn four before April 30th in the year he/she will attend kindergarten. Your child will be placed in one of the following groups. The groups are called "Kangaroos", "Kookaburras" and "Wombats"

#### 3.2 Three year old Kinder

Your child must be aged three to be eligible to attend this group. To assist staff in the daily running of the programme, it would be appreciated if your child is also toilet-trained. These Groups are called "Joeys 1 and 2"

### 4 PROGRAMME & TIMETABLES

De Garis Kindergarten provides 15 hours per week of kindergarten for three groups of Kinder children. Three year old Kinder is offered for up to 10 hours per week over two sessions.

The Kindergarten is closed for all school and public holidays.

#### 4.1 FIRST TERM TIMETABLE

##### Start-Up Programme For Kindergarten

Kindergarten commences with a two week programme of shorter sessions. (The special timetable for this programme will be provided to families).

The purpose of the special programme is to enable children to become familiar with the centre, the staff, other children and being away from parents.

If you feel your child will not cope with the times of the sessions, you are welcome to come and collect your child earlier.

#### TIMETABLE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Kangaroos	8.45-2.45 Room 1	8.45 – 2.45 Room 1	8.45-11.45 Room 1 Bush Kinder		
Kookaburras			11.45-2.45 Room 1	8.45-2.45 Room 1	8.45-2.45 Room 1
Wombats	9.00-2.00 Room 2	9.00-2.00 Room 2	9.00-2.00 Room 2		
Joeys				8.30-1.30 Room 2	8.30-1.30 Room 2

### 5 SIGN-IN & OUT PROCEDURE

You are required (by law) to make a note of the time you deliver your child to this centre for each session and to sign your name. You will need to sign your child in and out on the daily sheets located in the rooms.

If you have been held up for any reason, a phone call informing us of who will be collecting your child instead of you will be accepted.

The *SIGN-IN-SHEET* is situated on a table near the door into the centre.

## 6 TIMES FOR DELIVERY AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

The kindergarten doors will open only at the start of the session. Staff are indoors setting up for the daily session so we cannot have early drop offs.

### 6.1 LATE PICK-UP PENALTY

All children are to be collected from Kindergarten at or before the stated finish times for the session. We understand that sometimes it is impossible to avoid being late. In such circumstances we expect a **telephone call** to let us know of the hold-up; we can also reassure your child that you have not forgotten them. It has been known for parents to arrive up to 30 minutes after a session finishes without notifying staff. If this happens on more than two occasion's parents will be issued with an invoice for \$5 for the first 15 minutes and \$5 for every 5 minutes thereafter. This measure is to remind parents that staff have other responsibilities to carry out after children have gone home and are unable to do so if their time is taken up trying to contact parents so that they can collect their children.

### 6.2 NO ONE PICKED UP YOUR CHILD

If a child has not been picked up and staff have attempted to notify all possible contacts, DFFH Child Protection will be notified and the Police and the child handed over to their care.



## 7 FEES

Free Kinder will be available for both three and four-year-old Kindergarten programs from 2023 onwards.

This will support families to access a funded kindergarten program by:

- Providing a free 15-hour program to four-year-old children enrolled at a sessional service
- Providing a free 5-to-15-hour program to three-year-old children enrolled at a sessional service

## 8 WHAT TO BRING TO KINDERGARTEN

- A BAG: is necessary to take things home from Kindergarten. Label all children's possessions, especially bags, as many are similar in colour and design.
- CLOTHING: As your child will be involved in many messy activities he/she will feel more comfortable in clothes that they don't have to feel too particular about. This will give your child the freedom to experience all activities necessary for full participation in the Kindergarten programme. Protective clothing is provided for messy activities, but accidents do happen. Sturdy shoes or sandals are recommended for proper formation of children's feet; Weather permitting, the children will be allowed to remove shoes and socks at outdoor time in the sandpit only. **Thongs are not allowed for safety reasons.**
- SNACK: Please provide a piece of fruit for your child every session. This fruit should be ready for your child to access and eat without needing to be peeled or cut up by staff. Fruits can be fresh or dried. Other healthy foods such as yoghurt, dry biscuits, popcorn can accompany the fruit.
- LUNCH: A healthy nutritious lunch is required for your child's sessions. We encourage sandwiches, salad, fruit, yoghurt, dry biscuits. Foods not permitted for consumption at the Kindergarten are rollups, chips, lollies, cakes, chocolate, sweet biscuits, cordial, soft drink, juices, jellies.
- LIBRARY BAGS (Kangaroos, Kookaburras and Wombats group only) Your child will be provided with a *library bag* to store library books borrowed from the Kindergarten. This bag needs to be named. (This service commences in Term 2)
- SUPPLIES: to help keep your fees at a minimum, we would like every family to bring, one of the following items twice a year: a box of tissues OR a bottle of Spray and Wipe OR a bottle of washing-up detergent. The items can be passed on to staff at the commencement of Term One and Term Three. You would have received a letter indicate which item to bring at enrolment)
- BIRTHDAYS
- *Children enjoy having their birthdays at Kindergarten.*
- *You are welcome to bring a birthday cake or substitute (small cakes) to Kindergarten to share at SNACK time.*
- *All cakes need to be store bought for health and hygiene reasons*
- *(Please bring enough cake so it can be divided into 30 pieces (4-YO) or 25 pieces (3-YO).*
- *We can then celebrate your child's birthday together.*



## 9 PERSONAL PROPERTY

- **LABELLING:** ALL your child's belongings should be clearly labeled with their name, as things are often lost or misplaced. We usually end up with a box brimming over with clothes and toys that 'nobody' owns.
- **CHANGE OF CLOTHES AND UNDERWEAR:** We have a small supply of these items but have found that children feel more comfortable in their own clothing, which is more hygienic, particularly in the case of underwear. A small change of clothes in case of 'accidents' should be left in your child's bag.
- **TOYS:** Please discourage your child from bringing any of his or her toys from home. We do encourage children to bring things of interest, such as a good book or a bird's nest, shells, bark, insects, etc., or a birthday present if they would like to show these to their friends. It must then be put in the office for safe keeping.

## 10 BEHAVIOUR AT THE CENTRE

### 10.1 HYGIENE

Children **must** wash hands on entering the Centre, before eating, after going to the toilet and before handling books.

Hands must be washed before the preparation of food by parents and staff.  
Disposable gloves are available for use for food preparation and 'clean-ups'.

### 10.2 TOILET TRAINING

It is expected that all children attending the centre will be adequately toilet trained.  
If still in nappies parents will need to supply enough nappies for staff to change throughout the session.  
The centre does not supply nappies.

### 10.3 SWEARING

Swearing or rough language will not be tolerated at this centre.

### 10.4 NO SMOKING

*Parents please note! In Victorian smoking is prohibited:*

- *in an enclosed area within school premises*
- *at or within 4 meters of any part of a pedestrian access point to the school. ie fences/gate*
- *when approaching the Kinder bus.*

### 10.5 CONDUCT of PERSONS OTHER THAN ENROLLED STUDENTS or STAFF

A copy of our policy detailing the behaviour expected of PARENT/GUARDIANS, NON-PRESCHOOL CHILDREN AND OTHER ADULTS on the premises is available on request.

## 11 HEALTH & SAFETY



### 11.1 HAT POLICY

Our Centre is an Accredited SunSmart Centre.

Each child will be provided with a Kindergarten hat. This hat is to be worn when playing outside (particularly in 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> terms). We will monitor the UV rates and hats will be worn during peak UV times. Hats will be left in lockers at the Kindergarten. Please ensure your child has adequate sun screen protection applied before coming to the centre.



## 11.2 ILLNESSES

This centre complies with the requirements set down by the Victorian Health Department.

Column 2 Conditions	Column 3 Exclusion of cases	Column 4 Exclusion of Contacts
Chickenpox	Exclude until all blisters have dried. This is usually at least 5 days after the rash appears in unimmunised children, but may be less in previously immunised children	Any child with an immune deficiency (for example, leukaemia) or receiving chemotherapy should be excluded for their own protection. Otherwise not excluded
Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased	Not excluded
Cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
Diarrhoeal illness*	Exclude until there has not been vomiting or a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
Diphtheria	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received following at least two negative throat swabs, the first not less than 24 hours after finishing a course of antibiotics and the other 48 hours later	Exclude family/household contacts until cleared to return by the Chief Health Officer
Glandular fever (Epstein-Barr Virus infection)	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
Hand, Foot and Mouth disease	Exclude until all blisters have dried	Not excluded
Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)	Exclude until 48 hours after initiation of effective therapy	Not excluded
Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness	Not excluded
Hepatitis B	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
Hepatitis C	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
Herpes (cold sores)	Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing, where possible	Not excluded
Human immunodeficiency virus infection (HIV)	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
Impetigo	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing	Not excluded
Influenza and influenza like illnesses	Exclude until well	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer
Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer	Not excluded
Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash	Immunised contacts not excluded. Unimmunised contacts should be excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case. If unimmunised contacts are vaccinated within 72 hours of exposure with any infectious case, or received Normal Human Immunoglobulin (NHIG) within 144 hours of exposure of any infectious case, they may return to the facility
Meningitis (bacterial — other than meningococcal meningitis)	Exclude until well	Not excluded
Meningococcal infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed	Not excluded if receiving carrier eradication therapy
Mumps	Exclude for 5 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner)	Not excluded
Molluscum contagiosum	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
Pertussis (Whooping)	Exclude the child for 21 days after the onset of	Contacts aged less than 7 years in the

Column 2 Conditions	Column 3 Exclusion of cases	Column 4 Exclusion of Contacts
cough)	cough or until they have completed 5 days of a course of antibiotic treatment	same room as the case who have not received three effective doses of pertussis vaccine should be excluded for 14 days after the last exposure to the infectious case, or until they have taken 5 days of a course of effective antibiotic treatment
Poliovirus infection	Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Re-admit after receiving medical certificate of recovery	Not excluded
Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (head lice)	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced	Not excluded
Rubella (German measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of rash	Not excluded
Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is produced	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer
Shiga toxin or Verotoxin producing Escherichia coli (STEC or VTEC)	Exclude if required by the Chief Health Officer and only for the period specified by the Chief Health Officer	Not excluded
Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well	Not excluded
Tuberculosis (excluding latent tuberculosis)	Exclude until receipt of a medical certificate from the treating physician stating that the child is not considered to be infectious	Not excluded
Typhoid fever (including paratyphoid fever)	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer

\*Diarrhoea illness includes instances where certain pathogens are identified including Amebiasis (*Entamoeba histolytica*), Campylobacter spp., Salmonella spp., Shigella spp. and intestinal worms, but is not limited to infection with these pathogens.

### 11.3 **HIV/AIDS & HEPATITIS B (See policy handbook for details)**

A confidential informed consent form must be signed by parents of a child with HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B. Please see Director for appropriate form.

### 11.4 **COVID INFO**

Our service will be following the DET guidelines for COVID safe services.

### 11.5 **PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ILLNESS AND EMERGENCY CARE**

Parents authorise the centre to seek emergency medical, hospital or ambulance services by signing the relevant section on the enrolment forms. In cases of accident or illness, centre staff will try to notify parents (or emergency contact person if parents cannot be located). If all parties are unable to be located, staff will proceed as follows:

- (a) Minor accidents - cuts, grazes, etc. The child will be treated at the centre by staff using the first aid box.
- (b) Illness - the child will be made as comfortable as possible and kept under observation until parent or guardian arrives.
- (c) Emergencies and serious accidents - an ambulance will be called.

### 11.6 **PRIVACY POLICY**

Any information obtained by this Centre, relating to your family will be strictly used for the well-being of your family and the necessary operations of the Kindergarten. A 'Permission to Release Information' form must be signed by each family. The form details how the information we collect will be used.

## 12 THE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMME

### The Philosophy of the De Garis Kindergarten

At De Garis Kindergarten we believe our role as Early Childhood Educators is to deliver a play based program and learning environment which children can actively engage in experiences based on their individual needs and interests.

We believe in the benefits of nature play, and endeavour to embed this in our everyday practice.

#### **We believe that the children need to:**

- Feel safe, secure, valued, respected, supported
- Develop their own sense of identity
- Learn to interact with and respect other people and things
- Form a connection with and respect their environment
- Be accepting of diversity, whether it be culture, disability, traditions
- Become emotionally and socially resilient
- Begin to understand and contribute to their own health and physical well being
- Become curious and confident learners
- Become effective and confident communicators

#### **We believe that the Educator's role is to:**

- Provide for the children a high quality program in an environment that is rich in interactions and experiences
- Provide a variety of learning environments to cater for all children's development and interests
- Provide a balance of child directed and intentional teaching experiences giving the children opportunities to learn and expand on their natural curiosity and enable them to test out ideas and build new understandings.
- Guide children in a positive, responsive and supportive way to contribute to a child's self worth and identity.
- Develop a partnership with families and recognise that the family is the child's first and most influential teachers. We respect the diversity, culture and knowledge that come from family and actively encourage their participation and contribution to our Kindergarten environment.

## **13 HOW PARENTS CAN HELP**

### **13.1 Stay and Play**

Parents/carers will have the opportunity to spend some time at the Kinder assisting children with activities, reading stories, light cleaning, assisting children with their snacks, washing dishes and getting drinks ready. You will have the opportunity to put your name on a roster each term.

Your child will enjoy having you with them, although do not expect him/her to behave as he normally would. You will also benefit from seeing your child learning. If you have any special talents, we would love you to share them with us.

### **13.2 LAUNDRY**

Each family will be asked to wash smocks, tea towels etc once or twice a year. Washing needs to be folded and returned to Kindergarten on the following week.

### **13.3 EXCURSIONS**

We appreciate parental help on excursions. One adult to four children is required on excursions, so we need parent help on these days. During the year, your child will have the opportunity to visit such places as Kinder Express (Historical Train), The Arts Centre the Fire Brigade, the Dentist and other Community attractions.

## **14 STAFFING MATTERS**

STAFF NAMES: Children will refer to all staff members by their first names.

### **14.1 STAFF QUALIFICATIONS**

\* Kylie Loveridge, the Director, is a qualified Early Childhood Educator (ECE Dip) and began working here in 2005.

\* Chantelle Wylde has a Bachelor of Early Childhood Studies and has been at De Garis since 2014.

\* Brooke Jayet has a Bachelor of Early Childhood Studies and joined our team in 2019

\* Chelsea Brougham holds her Bachelor of Early Childhood Studies and joined us in 2019.

\* Trish Harrison has a Bachelor of Early Childhood and joined us in 2020.

\* Jeanette Noble holds a Diploma of Children's Services and has been with us since 1998.

\* Chantal Allford has been with us since 2016 and holds a Diploma of Children's Services

\* Linda Mitchell will joined us in 2021. Linda holds her Diploma of Children's Services.

\* Sam McPherson joined us in 2022 and holds her Diploma of Children's Services.

\* Sherryn Lay has been with us since 2011 and holds a Certificate III.

\* Melanie Payen started in 2020 and has her Certificate III in Children's Services.

### **14.2 EMPLOYMENT OF RELIEF STAFF**

Qualified teachers and Educators will be employed to cover absences of the Director and other staff (eg for illness etc).

In emergencies executive members of the Committee will fill in until a session ends. For longer absences, Committee approved personnel will be engaged.

### **14.3 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

We recognise the importance of professional development and training for staff and allocate funds to cover the cost of registration, travel and relief staff (if needed) to ensure that our staff keep up to date.

Staff are entitled to 2 closure days for PD per year.

#### **14.4 WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENTS**

Our centre welcomes work experience students. Secondary students performing work experience do so on a voluntary basis. Students undertaking Child Care Degrees/Diplomas or Certificates are welcome, providing their course guidelines fit into the operating programme. Supervisors of students regularly visit students throughout placements and liaise with the Director and students regarding student progress, reports and future directions.

#### **14.5 CLEANING**

A cleaner is employed to clean the centre 5 times a week with major cleanups during term breaks.

### **15 QUERIES & CONCERNS**

Please make a time to speak to a staff or a committee member. If you feel your concern has not been dealt with to your satisfaction, you are welcome to ring the Department of Education and Training.

#### **15.1 PRESCHOOL ADVISER**

A Children's Services Adviser (for this region can be contacted at Regional Headquarters, Dept. of Education and Training, Bendigo. Phone 1300338691, 7-15 McLaren Street Bendigo Vic 3550. The postal address is: Department of Education and Training, North-Western Region, PO BOX 442 Bendigo, 3550.

#### **15.2 STAFF AVAILABILITY and Support Meetings**

If at any time you wish to ask any questions regarding your child's progress or the Kindergarten curriculum, please do not hesitate to ask. Speak to a teacher anytime outside class hours, we are happy to help you in whatever way we can. For private and/or confidential meetings, please call us to make a suitable appointment time to be held either at the preschool centre or in your home via phone or zoom.

### **16. Centre Policies**

Our Centre has a Policy Handbook located in the Office which families are welcome to access at any time.

WE WELCOME YOU AND YOUR CHILD TO  
OUR CENTRE AND HOPE YOUR CHILD'S  
KINDERGARTEN YEAR IS FULL OF  
PERSONAL GROWTH, FUN AND HAPPY  
EXPERIENCES