

St Thomas's Riverview Kindergarten

Parent Information Booklet

2019



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Section 9: Communication

Section 1: Welcome

Welcome to St Thomas's Riverview Kindergarten and congratulations on choosing us to be part of your child/children's early years of education. We are an affiliated Lady Gowrie community centre and as such believe Community involvement is important to us as individuals and families.

To build these genuine partnerships we believe it is important that Educators value children, their families and the community. As such our Educators listen to parents and appreciate the ongoing support of families who give their time and skills. St Thomas's Riverview Kindergarten aims to engage children and families in a sense of community, cooperation and collaboration. We encourage you to become actively involved in our centre. Your involvement will enrich your child's learning experiences and promote their positive self-esteem.

To help facilitate your transition into our St Thomas family we have compiled this handbook for your reading pleasure. We appreciate there is a lot of information in here, so please don't be alarmed any issue/topic can be discussed with our staff and table of contents may help you find a particular topic should you wish and once again Welcome to our St Thomas's Family!

History

In 2018 St Thomas's Riverview Kindergarten community celebrated 50 years of supporting children and their families.

St Thomas's was originally located in Seventh Avenue, St Lucia and moved to its current distinctive setting in 1987. The building and grounds have been progressively developed through the commitment and hard work of community members and dedicated families over the years. This included after the Brisbane floods of 2011, which forced the closure of the kindergarten but led to a major rejuvenation effort. Also in 2018 significant improvements were made such as air conditioning thanks to the tireless efforts of the 2018 Volunteer Parent Management Committee.

Philosophy

At St Thomas's Riverview Kindergarten children are encouraged to develop a sense of self and knowledge of the world around them, by connecting with others in a caring environment which supports children to develop at their own pace and in their own unique style.

As a Kindergarten community we strive to provide a nurturing environment that encourages a love of learning and curiosity about the world.

The National Early Years Learning Framework states, "Play provides opportunities for children to learn as they discover, create, improvise and imagine". When children play with other children they create social groups, test out ideas, challenge each other's thinking and build new understandings." We believe that in a busy world, children need opportunities for a balance of uninterrupted play, quiet reflection and individual conversation as well as intense activity and group work!

Educators believe children learn through play in the beautiful and stimulating natural environment and that children benefit from interested adults who listen, challenge, support, and question and collaborate.

Families are encouraged to get involved in our program and form an integral part of the Kindergarten community. We value families in all their wonderful uniqueness and as their child's first and foremost educators. We understand that at times, families need support too. We believe Kindy is a great place to connect with others and make opportunities to link parents/carers with other families or support services. We believe a warm hug can make a difference!

Children learn respect for each other and the environment through observing our actions so it is our responsibility to show respect in every interaction, and to consider the future of our world in decisions made at Kindergarten.

We recognise and embrace diversity and promote positive partnerships with families through open communication.

We believe involvement of the wider community enriches our program and connects children to the wider world and prepares them for their next steps in life. Ongoing relationships with the community, educational and professional organisations enhance educator's skills and abilities.

Welcome to St Thomas's Riverview Family

Structure

Not for profit association

St Thomas's Riverview Kindergarten is a community based association, with all profits reinvested to benefit children and the community. The parent body that elects a management committee each year to oversee the operation and management of our Kindergarten owns this association and its assets.

Affiliation with Lady Gowrie

Lady Gowrie is a community-based, non-profit organisation and as our Central Governing Body is responsible for monitoring standards in community centres. As such, Lady Gowrie distributes the state government's Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme to all approved associated and affiliated community kindergartens which meet specific requirements. This funding contributes to approximately 40-50% of the overall costs of each individual centre, and the management committee is responsible for the remaining operation costs. These remaining costs can be covered by fees and fundraising, and the committee rely upon the personal commitment of the parents to become involved in these efforts for the benefit of the Kindergarten.

An affiliated Kindergarten's curriculum is supervised by a Gowrie Early Childhood Co-Ordinator. Affiliation gives us access to resources of the Gowrie Queensland-which include

- Management advice, including seminars for Committees
- Professional development for teachers and assistants
- Support for staff in curriculum development
- Marketing advice
- Playground consultancy
- Funding

The Team

Full time Director/Nominated Supervisor/Educational Leader

Nicole McIntosh- Bachelor of Early Childhood Studies, Diploma of Community Services

Part-time Educator (Start of the week)

Robin Smith - Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care; Certificate 3 in Community Services (Children's Services)

Part-time Educator (End of the week)

Jennifer Miller - Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care; Certificate 3 in Community Services (Children's Services)

Part-time Educator

Leanne Hester- Certificate 3 in Community Services (Children's Services)

Administration Officer (Tuesday and Friday mornings)

Anne Riachi

Section 2: Learning

Program & Content

St Thomas's Riverview Kindergarten is a single-unit centre comprising:

- **Group 1** - a 5 day fortnight group of up to 22 children, aged 3½ to 5 years, attending on Monday, Tuesday and alternate Wednesdays;
and
- **Group 2** - a 5 day fortnight group of up to 22 children, aged between 3½ to 5 years, attending on Thursday, Friday and alternate Wednesdays.

Daily Flow

Our day is flexible to the needs of the children and what is happening on the day. The times are approximate as our day flows by the children's needs and not the clock. Each day is different and we value the outdoors as much as the indoors and at times chose to have a full outdoor day to allow extended time for exploration of the outdoor environment. However, our general daily schedule is:

8.30am Children arrive and are greeted by Educators. Children are encouraged to unpack their own items, put their lunch in the fridge, wash their hands and make their way into the lower playground to start their day.

10.45am The children assist with packing away in the lower playground and then gather as a group for songs, story or group discussion.

11am gather for morning tea (morning tea is eaten as a whole group)

11.30 the children move to some time for uninterrupted play either indoors or outdoors.

1pm pack away and gather for a group time.

1.30pm lunch (lunch is eaten together as a whole group)

2pm- children that require a sleep go to the quiet room and the other children engage in quiet experiences.

2.15pm Children gather for a game or story before going home.

During group gatherings there are times for music and movement, stories, yoga games, songs and group discussion.

Curriculum

Our program is developed in accordance with the Qld Kindergarten Learning Guideline (QKLG). The guideline helps teachers develop quality learning programs for children in the Kindergarten year. The guidelines build connections between what children already know their learning at Kindergarten and future learning.

The guidelines are based on the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF) and embrace the inclusive vision that all children should experience learning that is engaging and builds success for life. While the EYLF focusses on children from birth to 5 years, the QKLG aims to specifically enrich children's learning in the Kindergarten Year. Each curriculum has 5 separate Learning and Development Outcomes:

1. Identity,
2. Connectedness,
3. Wellbeing,
4. Active Learning and
5. Communicating.

Behaviour guidance

Educators take a positive approach to behaviour guidance and understand that all children are learning and that all behaviour has a reason.

An important aspect of children's learning in the Kindergarten years involves them learning how their behaviour and actions affect themselves and others and developing the skills to regulate these independently. Educators support children to develop these skills by guiding children's behaviour as a mediator and helping children to negotiate their rights in relation to the rights of others. Educators aim to create a caring and respectful environment which assists everyone to feel part of the group where all take responsibility for the wellbeing of others.

An important part of supporting children to manage their behaviour is giving them some responsibility. Educators have clear and consistent expectations of children's behaviour and talk with children about this individually and in whole group discussions. Educators support children to learn to self-regulate, for example, to take themselves away from the group to have some quiet time when they need it. Children are encouraged to help others and remind them of rules and limits and let them know that adults are always there to help.

Educators are Warm Responsive and Available.

When guiding and supporting children to learn about self-regulation, educators acknowledge that these skills develop gradually and on a continuum. Children's capacity to apply these developing skills can often change. This may depend on their mood, health, family circumstances and situations they find challenging.

Educators support children to learn to manage their behaviour by:

- viewing children as capable and competent and approaching situations from a strengths based perspective
- supporting children to feel secure and know that adults are there to help and support them
- by providing positive reinforcement, encouraging a strong sense of identity and pride in themselves,
- encouraging children to use a range of communication strategies to express their needs, wants and feelings
- helping children deal with conflict constructively and develop a sense of empathy for others.

Environment

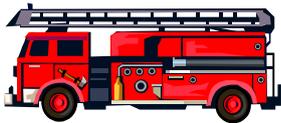
St Thomas's actively promotes environmental awareness and encourages children and families to protect the environment through modelling and education. We strive to cultivate a lifelong respect of environmental awareness and sustainable practices.

Native wildlife is treated with care and respect and is allowed to remain free while appropriate observation for children's information is made.

The planting of and tending to food gardens, trees and shrubs is a valued aspect of our services. They provide us delicious food, effective natural shade and maintain habitats for birds and other native wildlife. Where practical and possible, hygienic composting of lawn clippings and fruit waste is practiced, along with recycling of plastic, paper, metal and glass materials.

Excursions

Our program is enhanced by Excursions which are planned throughout the year in accordance with the children's interests and community events. Parent volunteers may be required to assist with supervision for these activities. Appropriate child to adult ratios will be determined for each individual excursion. Educators conduct Risk assessments prior to any excursion and these are available in advance and permission slips for each excursion must be signed by parents prior to departure. Payment for excursions may incur extra cost.



Rest and Relaxation

We acknowledge that all children have different sleep, rest and relaxation needs. Our program is organised in a way that allows us to meet each individual's needs for rest and relaxation. Throughout the day our whole group experiences offer times to calm our bodies through guided meditation, mindfulness and yoga. Beds are available for those that need a sleep or time to relax on a bed and quiet activities are provided for those that do not require a sleep.

At the start of the Kindergarten year there will be opportunities to discuss your child's individual rest needs with your educators.

Section 3: Family involvement

We value your involvement

Our centre values your involvement throughout the centre program. You are welcome to visit and spend time with your child throughout the day, in consultation with the centre staff.

Before your child starts at the centre, you are encouraged to visit and observe the program in operation and to speak with the teaching staff about any queries or concerns you may have.

To facilitate smooth settling into kindergarten, after the New Parent Information Night an Orientation opportunity will be provided for families and children to meet before starting kindergarten. It is a chance for children to play in a learning environment where it is anticipated they will learn, have fun, extend their horizons and begin a life that is both inclusive of the family and outside it.

From time to time Committees may survey parents on their satisfaction with the Kindergarten this will enable them and staff to formulate Quality Improvement Plans for Assessment and Rating of the centre. St. Thomas's Riverview has a current rating of 'Exceeding' the National Quality Standards.

Once your child begins at St Thomas's, please feel free to spend time settling your child in and becoming familiar with the staff and program.

We appreciate any relevant information you can share about your child with the teacher. This enables the staff to understand your child's and family's needs better.

Parents, Guardians and carers are invited to discuss the activities and experiences provided as part of our learning programs and the goals to be achieved through our programs. Please ask your teacher for more detailed information about your child's development, how we will provide opportunities to foster your child's development and our philosophy of learning that underpins our programs.

At St Thomas's we also encourage your valuable views and perspective on how our kindy operates by seeking feedback through surveys, and comments on the Quality Improvement Plan.

Management Committee

The Management Committee is formed by parents of children currently attending St Thomas's. There are usually ten (10) positions available on the management committee, we understand parent time is valuable and these are volunteer positions. The management committee meets once a month and are responsible for:

- General management and financial matters of the centre
- Ensuring the centre is meeting The Gowrie affiliation standards so the centre continues to comply and receive Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme
- The employment of all necessary staff and compliance with the provisions of any awards or other industrial requirements
- Legislative requirements affecting the centre including the Education and Care Services National Law Act (Queensland) 2017 and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2017, and other legislation such as Child Protection and Workplace Health and Safety legislation
- Building and playgrounds
- Promoting the centre within the community
- Organising fundraising and social activities

Elections take place at the annual general meeting (The AGM is held early in the year and any decisions made by the management committee are based on a majority vote of the management committee. The Executive of the Management Committee consists of the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Other positions involve varying levels of commitment and specific skills and as such play an important role within the group.

The Management Committee act as the Approved Provider under the Education and Care Legislation governing the kindergarten and for the government funding it receives and as such it has an important leadership role in ensuring that sound governance practices underpin the operation of their service. The committee is also responsible for ensuring staff apply governance practices, policies and procedures in their day to day work.

Committee Roles & Responsibilities

President

- Provide leadership to the management committee
- Liaises with Director
- Acts as Chairperson at meetings
- Delegates responsibilities
- Ensure that decisions are made and carried throughout
- Acts as spokesperson to the public

Vice President

The primary role of the Vice President is to support the president in the functions of leadership, co-ordination and motivation. Vice President should therefore be prepared to:

- Support the role of the president and adopt the president's role in their absence
- Accept the delegation for special projects as required (e.g. maintenance, marketing and promotion)

Secretary

The position can be shared by two people (e.g. minute's secretary and a correspondence secretary).

- Prepares a written agenda for meetings in consultation with the President
- Records and distributes meeting minutes
- Records all incoming correspondence in a register
- Presents actual correspondence to the meeting and responds to correspondence as agreed by the management committee
- Maintains official files
- Completes all forms

Treasurer

- Responsible for maintaining financial accounts of the centre including banking, term deposits, fees, budget etc.
- Ensure that all accounts are paid
- Responsible for presenting financial summaries and financial recommendations at each monthly meeting
- Together with Director, Administration Officer and Committee, develops the budget for the following year

Committee members

- Form part of the management committee and have input into the management of the centre – by attending meetings regularly
- Will be involved in the social, fundraising and maintenance activities
- May be part of any necessary sub committee

Maintenance Co-ordinator

(No real handyman skills required)

- Is responsible for coordination of the parents maintenance/working bee roster
- Liaises with the director on maintenance tasks required
- Should report to the committee regularly

All elected personnel work closely with centre staff, and should be aware of and realize their obligations before accepting nomination and once elected should carry out their duties to the vest of their ability. It is essential that committee study and understand their duties and obligations and laid down in the constitution (or rules).

Please note all Committee Members will be required to hold a positive blue card.

Working bees and parent roster

In order to reduce expenses, maintenance tasks of the grounds and equipment are carried out by working bees of parents. The kindergarten has been made very attractive and functional for the children by many parents over the past years. Without their help it would not have been possible to offer kindergarten facilities of such high standard in such beautiful grounds.



There are 4 working bees per year, one each term for four hours on a weekend, usually from 8.30am to 12.30pm.

If a parent is unable to attend on the nominated working bee day, he or she may make an arrangement with the management committee member in charge of the working bee's roster (or the President or the Vice-President) to complete some other task. We appreciate that not everyone has handyman abilities but there will be general tasks that don't require any expertise and your assistance with these will be most helpful.

A Family roster levy is charged on your first term fee invoice. This levy is rolled over each term and is refundable at end of year if required volunteer work is completed.

We encourage families to assist with tasks / jobs to maintain the kindergarten. Each roster is approximately 4 hours of volunteer work. If you are unable to assist, a roster levy of \$110 will be charged to your following terms invoice

Stay and Play- We welcome parent participation in our program families are very welcome to stay and play in any of our sessions. This provides a valuable opportunity to see your child's development in acquiring social skills and interacting with other children.

Parental responsibilities

In addition to formal involvement through parent roster, working bees, management committee etc parents are encouraged to raise any concerns they may have with the Director.

Where discussion is needed an appointment should be made to speak to the Director outside of session time so as not to divert attention from the children.

Appropriately, concerns relating to the program, waiting lists etc should be raised with the Director. Concerns relating to the management issues such as payment of fees should be raised with the Administration Officer, who will ensure Director is aware.

If the matter cannot be resolved, the concern will need to be raised with the Committee of Management and if the matter is still unresolved, The Gowrie Early Childhood Coordinator may be asked to assist. However, the expectation would be that all difficulties could be amicably resolved without recourse to a third party.

It is the parent's responsibility to-

- Notify the director regarding changes in information recorded about the child (particularly current phone numbers and contact names for all emergency contacts);
- Familiarize themselves with all policy information about the Centre as reflected in the Guidebook
- Comply with all relevant health and hygiene policies of the centre and to participate in the centre's activities; and
- Parents/carers are required to sign in the child attending kindergarten. They should also record contact details for the day and provide names of those collecting at the end of the day. Time out should also be recorded. If an unfamiliar person is to collect the child you will need to sign a Temporary Authority to Collect, staff should be notified and the collector provides photographic evidence of identity. A driver's licence is acceptable. Please notify the collector that the staff will photocopy the driver's licence and this will be placed on the child's file.

Please note: Lady Gowrie policies, Workplace Health & Safety folders and Industrial Manual are available. You may request access to them at any time.

Section 4: Inclusive service

Children with additional needs

St Thomas's provides an inclusive environment and program to meet the diverse needs of all children and their families accessing our service. Following an interview with the parents and child, the director, together with the parent/s, will collaborate to make program plans and modifications where appropriate. The director will communicate with the early education–coordinator and related services in order to make an appropriate decision regarding funding requirements and any environmental alterations required. The centre will arrange appropriate additional support and training for the staff, families and children as the need arises. The sharing of information between the teaching team and the child's medical and support services is encouraged in order to support the child's total inclusion.

Cultural diversity

St Thomas's recognizes and celebrates the multicultural nature of our community and aims to create an environment and curriculum that embraces cultural diversity. We value each child and family's culture and beliefs. All parents are encouraged to communicate any concerns or considerations with educators upon enrolment and on a daily basis.



Section 5: Teaching Team

Director of the kindergarten is a multi-faceted role. The role encompasses both administrative and education aspects. It is also one of liaison, as the Director works with committee, parents, children and other members of staff in a partnership. The Director is responsible for initiating a curriculum that facilitates a child's learning. The Director is responsible for providing a challenging, safe and engaging learning environment for the active learner.

The role of the Educator is to support the teacher/director in delivering a varied, safe and informative program. Assistant and Director work as a team, observing children's needs, interests and abilities and it is from these that the flexible educational program evolves.

St Thomas's also employs an Administration Officer who is responsible for fees, salaries, BAS statements, preparation income tax, banking and other general administrative duties.



All staff members at the kindergarten are qualified; they have commitment to expanding their horizons and knowledge through Professional Development. They also hold First Aid certificates which are updated annually.

Teacher/child ratio

The educator to child ratio under the current legislation is 1 educator/teacher to 11 children. This means we have two qualified teaching staff for every 22 children. As well as this we may have a volunteer or rostered parent who assists the children during their daily activities.

Work experience and other students

St Thomas's supports the inclusion of work experience school students in the educational program. This can be arranged upon request from a school liaison officer and in consultation with the director. We maintain links with University of Qld departments and often have students who visit to observe children at play or requests to undertake research programs. Parents will always be notified of these visits and permission will be obtained before children are included in projects. All students must have a current Blue Card.

Volunteers

St Thomas's may accept placement of volunteers, following an investigation of their commitment and personal qualities, background and attributes. All volunteers must hold a blue card. Volunteers work under the guidance of qualified staff.

Section 6: Ensuring quality care



Queensland Tick

St Thomas's Riverview Kindergarten is a Queensland Government approved Kindergarten program provider and therefore eligible to display the Queensland Government identifier.

This identifier confirms that St Thomas's Riverview Kindergarten offers a learning program:

- that is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher
- for at least 15 hours a week, 40 weeks a year
- for children in the year prior to Prep
- that is aligned with the Queensland Government Learning Guideline

National Quality Framework

St Thomas's Riverview Kindergarten is regulated by the National law and Regulations and is committed to providing a program that is guided by the National Quality Standards.

The Kindergarten program is developed in accordance with the Early Years Learning Framework and The Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline.

Current documents are available for families to view at the Kindergarten or alternatively can be accessed by following the links below.

The National Law and Regulations

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/-/view/regulation/2011/653/full>

<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/2017-10-01/act-2013-ecsnlq>

The National Quality Standard

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard>

Guide to the National Quality Framework

<http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/NQF/Guide-to-the-NQF.pdf>

Early Years Learning Framework

<https://www.education.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework-0>

The Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline

https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/p_10/qklg.pdf

https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/p_10/qklg_companion.pdf

This listing is also displayed on Kindergarten wall should you need them at later stage.

Early Childhood Education and Care Department of Education

Contact details for our local regulatory authority

Metro South- Mt Gravatt

Email: Metrosouth.ecec@qed.qld.gov.au

Quality Improvement

Our service is committed to continuous improvement and regularly updates a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) throughout the year with feedback from children, staff, families and other stakeholders. A copy of the QIP is available for viewing.

Public liability

St Thomas's Riverview Kindergarten Inc is an association incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 and holds public liability insurance in the amount of \$20,000,000.

First aid

St Thomas's believes that all staff must be skilled in first aid to ensure the children are provided with a safe environment in which to play. All of St Thomas's permanent contact staff members are required by Lady Gowrie to hold current senior first aid and resuscitation certificates. All staff that has a senior first aid certificate are required to renew their CPR and Emergency Asthma and Emergency Anaphylaxis training every 12 months and their first aid every three years.

Suitability/Blue card

The Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) 2017 includes a requirement for all staff, students and volunteers working with children to hold a current suitability/blue card as well as members of the management committee. The blue card is issued by Blue Card Services Queensland to an individual after a criminal history check is conducted and the staff member, having no criminal record, is therefore deemed to be suitable for working with children. Blue cards must be current at all times and are renewable every three years.

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Section 7: Enrolment, fees & administration

Enrolment bond and administration fee

An enrolment bond of \$200.00 is required at the time of enrolment. \$50.00 of the enrolment bond is to pay a non-refundable administration fee. \$150.00 of the enrolment bond will be refunded to families and will be taken off the fees in Term 4 provided all prior term fees are paid by the due date

Finances

St Thomas's Riverview Kindergarten, being a community-based centre, is a non-profit organisation. Expenses include staff wages, office expenses, material, and building and grounds works and/or maintenance. Funding for these costs is derived from:

- Government grants
- Fees
- Fundraising

Fees

Term Fees - are paid in advance for each term. There are four terms per year. Fees are paid regardless of time lost through illness, public holidays, parent's vacations or other reasons. A month's notice is required of a parent's intention to remove a child from the kindergarten. Fees already paid will not be refunded except in extenuating circumstances. For 2019, a term fee of \$900 per child has been set. An invoice will be emailed each term. Payment can also be in cash or direct credit to the kindergarten bank account as detailed on the invoice.

Membership Fees - all parents are required to become members of St Thomas's Riverview Kindergarten Inc. The membership fee of \$2.00 per annum is payable with the first term's fees.

Building Fund Levy – parents are asked for a donation towards the building fund levy of \$100.00 which is paid in the second term. This contribution is fully tax deductible and voluntary.

Late Payment Of Fees - If fees are not paid by the due date on the invoice, a reminder letter will be placed in the parents notice pocket at Kindergarten. If after one week the account remains unpaid, contact via a phone call or email will be made. The Committee Treasurer will be contacted if the account remains unpaid after the above mentioned procedure. A \$50 late fee will be payable in most incidences.

Financial Difficulties - If you are in a period of financial difficulty, an arrangement can be made on consultation to make alternative arrangements

Late Pickup Fee – A late fee applies if the Director has not been contacted informing that you will be picking up after 2.30pm. Please note the Kindergarten has a mobile that you can contact the Director during the Kindergarten session. Late fees are charged at \$20 for the first 10 minutes and \$1.00 per minute after that. We understand and take into consideration that exceptional circumstances occur. If you notify the Kindergarten you are running late, the fee may be waived.

QKFS Plus Kindy Support

Where a family meet certain criteria a claim for Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme - QKFS Plus Kindy Support may be made. Subsidies are provided directly to services to reduce out-of-pocket expenses for eligible families and include when a child or parent for the child holds a Health Care Card, identifies as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or has multiple births. <https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/service-industries-professionals/service-industries/child-care/funding-scheme/subsidies>

To assist with the payment of term fees the Government offers a quarterly rebate to Health Care Card Holders. To be eligible to receive the rebate, your child must be of pre-prep age, the Health Care Card must be current, and a copy of the card provided to Kindergarten. The quarterly rebate will be deducted from the term tuition fee and will be itemised on the term invoice.

Fundraising

Most community kindergartens have three sources of income. These are government grants, fees and fundraising. Without substantial fundraising during the course of the year fees would need to be increased markedly. The Kindergarten acknowledges the busy lives of our families and the lack of time available to many to participate in several fundraising activities so we attempt to keep this to a minimum.

Occasionally the Committee may decide to hold a special fundraiser such as an election booth cake stall or Bunnings sausage sizzle should it be deemed necessary to boost funds for Kindergarten when large capital expenditure may be required (eg. The need to replace the roof, rebuild essential play equipment or refurbishment of key assets).

The Kindergarten encourages participation from families in non-fundraising activities during the year. These include:

- Two Family Social BBQs per year (the Kindy provides meat and drinks and guests are asked to bring a share plate)
- Parent social events – such as coffee catch-ups and Christmas celebrations.

Section 8: Keeping our children happy, healthy & safe

Arrivals, Departures and Absences

St Thomas's operating hours are from 8.30am to 2.30pm and it is a legal requirement that the person who brings the child to the kindergarten signs against the child's name in the register upon the arrival and on departure the personal collecting signs out.

The register book is on the entrance foyer bench. It is important to notify the kindergarten if a child will be collected at the end of the day by a person other than usual and this must be noted on the sign in sheet also.

Please notify staff of any absence prior to 8.30 am if possible.

If your child is going to be away from kindergarten/preschool due to illness, please notify the centre of this absence and the reason for the absence.

Centre Maintenance

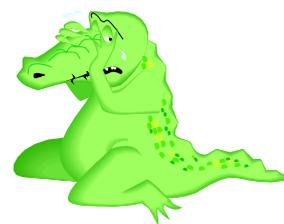
St Thomas's is cleaned daily by a professional housekeeper-cleaner as noted under the **Staff** heading. Cleaning of external walls, ceilings, carpets etc are conducted regularly throughout the year. With our parents help, our playgrounds, building and equipment are maintained throughout the year with the occasional use of a registered builder when necessary. The centre is sprayed for cockroaches and spiders yearly or as often as needed in both the playground and building. Sand is replaced on an annual basis and turned over regularly.

Protecting our greatest asset

As most parents are well aware, a healthy child is a happy child and at St Thomas's we do everything we can to make sure children in our centre are happy, healthy and most of all, safe. Whether this is helping them cope when mum or dad drop them off in the morning, making sure they have their hat on when going outside, or knowing what to do if they have an allergic reaction. Don't hesitate to tell your teacher about anything that will make your child's day happy and safe.

Initial separation

Some children become distressed when their parent's leave, which is quite normal at first. Separation anxiety usually disappears as the child becomes familiar with the surroundings and staff but it is not unusual for some children to experience delayed separation anxiety. Often the tears stop as soon as the parent/s leaves and, therefore, a swift departure (after saying goodbye and reassuring the child that you will be back soon) can avoid prolonged stress.



To assist your child in the adjustment period, try and arrange for some time when you and your child can be together at the centre. Staff will always offer extra support during these difficult times. As your child becomes more secure in the knowledge that you will return, separation becomes less stressful. Please feel free to ring the centre at any time to reassure yourself that your child has settled.

Emergency evacuation procedures

A diagram of Emergency Exits is provided on the last page of this booklet. These diagrams are prominently displayed throughout the kindergarten. Evacuation and Stay Safe (Lock down) practices are regularly conducted to familiarise the children with procedures and exits.

Workplace Health and Safety

The safety of your child is of paramount concern to us. On a daily basis staff carry out routine procedures to ensure an optimal level of safety is maintained. Such procedures include: checking sandpits for foreign objects or animal faeces, covering sandpits after use, emptying water trays when not in use, and checking equipment and the environment for wear and tear.

Other safety procedures include:

- Ensuring all poisons and dangerous items are kept in locked cupboards;
- Disposal of a syringe and/or packaging found discarded on centre grounds or within close proximity to the centre, as per The Gowrie's policy statements on needle stick injury and disposal of used syringes;
- Filling out incident report forms to document injury;
- Training staff on accident and emergency procedures;
- Ensuring that safety devices are installed and operational;

Requiring all permanent staff to hold a current senior first aid certificates.

- Fences and gates have been installed in accordance with legislation requirements. Should you have a concern about any safety issue please see the director.

Child protection and risk management

St Thomas's has in place the Lady Gowrie Qld. Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy. It contains information on child protection, warning signs of abuse, relevant government bodies responsible for child safety, phone numbers and relevant sources of information, procedures for the reporting of harm, as well as strategies of risk management (relevant to excursions and activities of events outside of the ordinary routine at the kindergarten). This information has been placed in a file which is available at the sign-in area if you wish to read it.

The staff and management at St Thomas' Riverview Kindergarten are committed to the protection and safety of children. Staff undertake mandatory training annually in Child Protection and there is material available at the kindergarten for families who would like more information. **Mandatory reporting of child abuse or neglect is a requirement for all staff under Child Protection legislation.**

Persons authorised to collect children

Children must be collected and signed out of the centre by an adult. At the time of enrolment, you must provide the names, address and telephone number of persons authorised to collect your child. It is your responsibility to notify the centre of any changes in this authorisation. The centre requires the signature of all persons authorised to collect your child. Children will only be released to the authorised signatories nominated on your child's file. In the case of a parent giving staff a verbal authorisation for someone else to collect the child, a Temporary Authority to collect will need to be completed, and handed to staff who will require photo identification e.g: a driver's license before the child will be released to them.

Children will only be released to adults whose names are recorded on the Enrolment Forms, or previous arrangements have been made with staff by the parents/guardians.

In unexpected circumstances a phone call or email to the Service detailing the information for collection can be undertaken. Staff will complete the information on the Temporary authority to collect form and the circumstances in which this information was provided. Staff will advise the Responsible Person at the time of the change of circumstances. The parent / guardian will then sign this form when next at the Service.

Custodial and resident conflict

Parents who wish to restrict another parent or family member from collection their child must provide a certified copy of any court order (stamped with an official seal) to the centre upon enrolment or immediately following issue by a law enforcement agency.

Staff will respect and adhere to the restriction stated in the order while respecting each individual's right to privacy. Should a restricted person attempt to collect the child, the director will secure the safety of all children, staff, parents and visitors, and notify the police. The resident parents will then be contacted.

Should a resident parent not have a court order and a restricted adult attempts to collect the child, every effort will be made to delay the restricted adult while the resident parents is contacted.

Requirements

Clothing and bedding

Children should dress in comfortable clothes which they can manage with minimal help and do not restrict them in play. No belts please. Remember, as children are often involved in messy type play at kindergarten these clothes WILL likely get dirty! Please consider having some 'kindy' clothes for your child that you will not mind if they become a little worn as children engage actively in their play and learning.

No singlet tops as shoulders must be covered as we spend time in our beautiful QLD sun!

What to bring: all clearly

- If your child requires a sleep while at Kindergarten please provide a sheet of cot sheet size (samples and a limited number of sets are available for you to purchase), Sheet bag: 300mm x 300mm with drawstring and a light blanket (winter only) or top sheet.
- Hat – broad brimmed
- Kindy bag or backpack- this needs to be large enough to carry all of your child's belongings.
- Spare set of named clothes, kept in Kindy bag (no plastic bags please)
- Drink bottle which children can open and close
- One lunch box with morning tea and lunch.

Please name all items.

The Kindergarten suggests you maintain a high standard of nutrition in the food you send with your child. Please don't send sweets, cakes, biscuits, or chocolate muesli bars!

Some Healthy lunch box suggestions are:

- Fruit
- Healthy sandwiches
- Pita bread
- Pasta
- Rice
- Yoghurt
- Cheese
- Sultanas and dates
- Vegetables

We DO NOT reheat food and children encouraged not to share food due to allergies.

Water is always available to the children, both in the garden (a bubbler/ drinking fountain) and inside. Please do not send any other type of drink.

Birthdays



special occasions.

We enjoy sharing the special occasion of your child's birthday and children may celebrate their birthday at the kindergarten. For ease of serving, please send **small cupcakes** or patty cakes instead of large cakes which need to be sliced and served. As some children may have allergic reaction to some ingredients, please inform staff of the ingredients or bring the packet in. If your child reacts to certain ingredients, please bring in a small supply of their own cakes for us to keep in the freezer so they don't miss out on

Sun protection



The staff will promote the protection of children from the damaging effects of the sun during their attendance at St Thomas's. To achieve this the staff will:

- Try to ensure that all children wear an appropriate wide brimmed hat, no less than 5cm, or a legionnaire's cap, at all times during outdoor activities
- Ensure that all children are covered with a broad spectrum water-resistant sunscreen lotion rating not less than 50+
- Include in the program discussions about sun protection and encourage children to be independent in sun safe behaviour
- Model sun-protective behaviour.
- Reapply after 4 hours if going back out in the sun

We ask you to:

- Provide appropriate protective clothing for your children's use
- Shirts/dresses with sleeves – hats with (5cm) brim or legionnaire's cap and clearly named
- Apply sunscreen to your child 20 minutes before arriving at the centre Sunscreen is provided at the service should you need this
- Model sun-protective behaviour yourself.



Children who do not have sunscreen and hats on will be restricted to play in shaded or covered areas. You will be asked to tick this on the Kindy sign in sheet.

St Thomas's supplies sunscreen and insect repellent for parents to apply to children on arrival in case it is forgotten before leaving home.

A child's thoughts on starting Kindergarten

1. Please plan the beginning of each day so I don't have to be rushed there or I get confused or worried or irritable.
2. Don't push me inside the door and run. It makes me feel unhappy – as if you wanted to get rid to me. Come and look with me at all the interesting things I can do.
3. Please don't slip away without saying goodbye, or I will be afraid that you may leave me for good. When you leave, tell me when you will be back, and try hard to be on time or I will worry.
4. Sometimes I spend a lot of time making something, and I am proud of it. If you laugh at it or call it rubbish, half of it seems wasted, but if you show you value it too, it makes me feel happy and successful and ready to tackle more difficult things.
5. I like you to visit me when I'm at kindergarten. When you come I will be proud and say to my friends, "That's my Mummy" or "That's my Daddy".
6. Please don't talk about me when I'm in earshot. I don't miss much and worry about what I hear. The teacher will always be happy to find somewhere out of earshot to talk with you about me.
7. Send me to kindergarten in clothes that I am comfortable in and that are easily washed, so that I can play in them without fussing about getting dirty.
8. When you come for me, please don't ask me or the teacher if I've been good. I try to be, but sometimes things go wrong and I don't like to be reminded of my mistakes.
9. What makes me feel good is if you show that you are really pleased to see me and are ready to look when I have something to show you.

Accidents and Injuries

If child sustains an injury at the centre, first aid is delivered immediately and the director/responsible person is informed of the incident.



In the case of an incident requiring an ambulance or doctor, the director/responsible person will immediately authorize such help. Parents must agree to this upon enrolment.

All incidents are recorded and parents are asked to sign these forms when the staff members have informed them of the incident. If the incident is serious and/or requires parent or medical assistance, a parent will be notified as soon as possible after the incident. Small knocks and scrapes will be reported to the parents at collection time.

In the event of a child requiring transportation by ambulance to hospital, we will make every effort for a staff member to accompany the child in the absence of a parent if staffing arrangements allow.

All costs involved in emergency medical treatment are the responsibility of the parent.

Immunization policy

The Kindergarten service requests parents to provide an immunisation history statement when enrolling their child and an updated statement when their child passes the 4 years scheduled vaccination. If a child is not up to date the service can choose to: refuse/cancel

enrolment. Children who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons (and can provide evidence of this) or who are on a recognised catch up schedule are considered up to date and cannot be refused enrolment. Please note that it is the responsibility of the parents to regularly amend the child's vaccination status by submitting new vaccination certificates after each immunization.

Administering puffers, spacers and nebulisers

Lady Gowrie's Asthma/Allergy Management Policy

Prior to beginning care, parents of asthmatic/allergic children are required to complete an Asthma Action Plan or Medical condition plan in consultation with a medical practitioner. (Please refer to this policy for information required.)

Asthma management and the well-being of a child with asthma is primarily the responsibility of the child's parent / guardian. The Director must be informed of any significant changes in the child's asthma management with a new Asthma Action Plan. Staff will be made aware of case history and treatment. Staff will only administer medication which is prescribed by a medical practitioner and is normally being received by the child. Interpretation of peak flow meter readings will not be undertaken by any staff member.

Medication

Prescribed medication

Prescribed medication will only be administered as directed by the child's doctor or as set out by the doctor on the original medication bottle label issued by the pharmacist. The label must include the following information: name of the child, name of the drug, dosage to be taken, frequency of dosage, how it is to be administered, prescribing doctor's name, and date issued. If this information is not on the label we will not administer the medication.

The dosage and time to be given must be completed on an Administration of Medication or Ongoing Administration of Medication Form. Staff will not administer unless specific time/dosage is indicated by the parent. Recording "as required" will not be accepted.

Non-prescribed medication (including alternative therapies)

Non-prescribed medication (i.e. over the counter medications and alternative therapies) will not be given to any child unless prior written permission and instructions from your child's doctor have been received by the director/-responsible person.

All medication/sunscreen/insect creams are not to be stored in lockers. They are to be stored with the staff.

Paracetamol

Prior written consent is required for one initial dose of liquid paracetamol to be administered when the temperature of a child has exceeded 38°C. Following the administration of one only dose of paracetamol, the parents/contact person of the child will be notified as soon as possible to collect the child. No further doses will be administered.

The parent is required to take the child to a medical practitioner for diagnosis if the fever continues.

Please note:

All medication must be handed to a staff member on arrival for appropriate and safe storage.. For the safety of children, under no circumstances is medication to be left in the child's bag, in lockers or any other unsecured location.

Sick children



Sometimes children need to be away from the centre for the safety of others when they are sick, to prevent introduction or re-infection at the centre. Minimum exclusion periods have been established for various illnesses (see poster in the entrance).

Children with diarrhoea, vomiting and bad colds are sick and, therefore, should not be brought to the centre. A child who is not excluded may still need to stay at home because they do not feel well.

If your child becomes ill at the centre staff will contact you immediately. Infection can move swiftly through a group. Therefore, we ask you or your nominee to come as quickly as possible to collect your child.

Lady Gowrie policy on dealing with sick children

- Children with contagious illness will not be admitted into the centre.
- Parents must contact the centre to report contagious illness.
- In the event of a child taking ill at the centre the parent will be contacted. For this reason, it is essential the centre has current work and emergency contact numbers.

Common sickness concerns

If children are still able to cope with and enjoy a normal day, the child will not be excluded. In the case of more-severe symptoms developing such as:

- Persistent or deep cough
- Wheezing
- Fever
- Listlessness or lack of appetite the child must be kept away for a minimum of 24 hours or until well enough to cope with a normal day.

Ear infections

If there is discharge, the child will need to be excluded.

Vomiting

Regardless of the cause, they must be kept home for 24 hours from the last vomiting episode.

Diarrhoea

Regardless of the cause, they must be kept away from the centre for 24 hours from the last episode and have normal bowel motion before they return.

Conjunctivitis Exclude until discharge has stopped.

Parents and carers will be informed if there is an outbreak of an infectious illness (e.g. by email and notice at the service)

Hygiene practices

A high standard of hygiene practices is implemented at St Thomas's. These include:

- A strict hand washing procedure for staff upon arrival, before and after wiping children's noses, before and after serving food or administering medication, and after cleaning equipment
- The use of separate sheets, beds, cups, plates, cutlery, towels and tissues for each child
- Encouraging children to assist in keeping the environment clean and tidy.

Hand washing



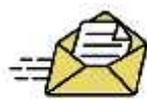
St Thomas's maintains an overall high standard of general hygiene and cleanliness, which contributes to a healthy environment for children. It is Gowrie policy for all to wash hands on arrival to the centre as this reduces the introduction of germs.

Hand washing is said to be the most important way of controlling infection and preventing the transmission of disease (Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services, 1997). Research into infection control procedures highlights that hand washing is highly effective when practised consistently by children and staff.

Children will be encouraged to wash their hands regularly throughout the day. Younger children will be assisted by staff to learn sound hand washing techniques. All staff and visitors, as well as parents who may visit during the day, will minimise the risk of cross-infection by washing hands thoroughly at appropriate times.

Section 9: Communication

Notices and newsletters



Parents will be notified of business and social activities via email, through notices placed in family pockets, notices on the entrance veranda or near the sign-in book. Regular information about the program is available in the form of the written program, a visual diary and photos. The director also produces newsletters throughout the year which are emailed to parents.

Concerns and complaints (Grievance Procedure)

When a parent has concerns or a complaint relating to the centre, it is important that it is brought to the attention of the relevant person or persons and properly addressed. Where the issue concerns the program, the complaint should first be discussed with the director. If the problem is not consequently resolved, it should be brought to the attention of the Management Committee.

When the complaint concerns an administrative matter, including the payment fees, it should be discussed first with the Administration Officer.

Procedure to address complaints:

If a parent / guardian feels that their grievance has not been resolved satisfactorily at this level, the parent/guardian will be encouraged to place the complaint in writing and address the matter to the President who will bring the complaint/concern to the attention of the Executive Committee (Approved Provider) for noting and action. All complaints and grievances will be handled with respect for confidentiality and procedural fairness will be observed in all aspects of handling a complaint. On completion of Record of Complaint Form, The Gowrie (QLD) as the service CGB is to be informed. The Executive Committee will acknowledge the receipt of the grievance and advise the parent / guardian of the timeframe in which a response will be provided.

How and who to complain to:

1. Person to contact about the complaint will be the President of the Management Committee.
2. Please give a verbal or written explanation of the complaint.
3. Each person involved has the right to be heard.
4. Each complaint will be investigated.
5. If the matter cannot be dealt with or resolved easily by explanation of the facts by the aggrieved parties, the matter will be put to a closed meeting to be held at the earliest convenience of all parties involved.

The members of the meeting will consist of:

- Members of the Management Committee:- President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary
- Director of the Centre

- Complainant
- Person or persons at whom the complaint is directed

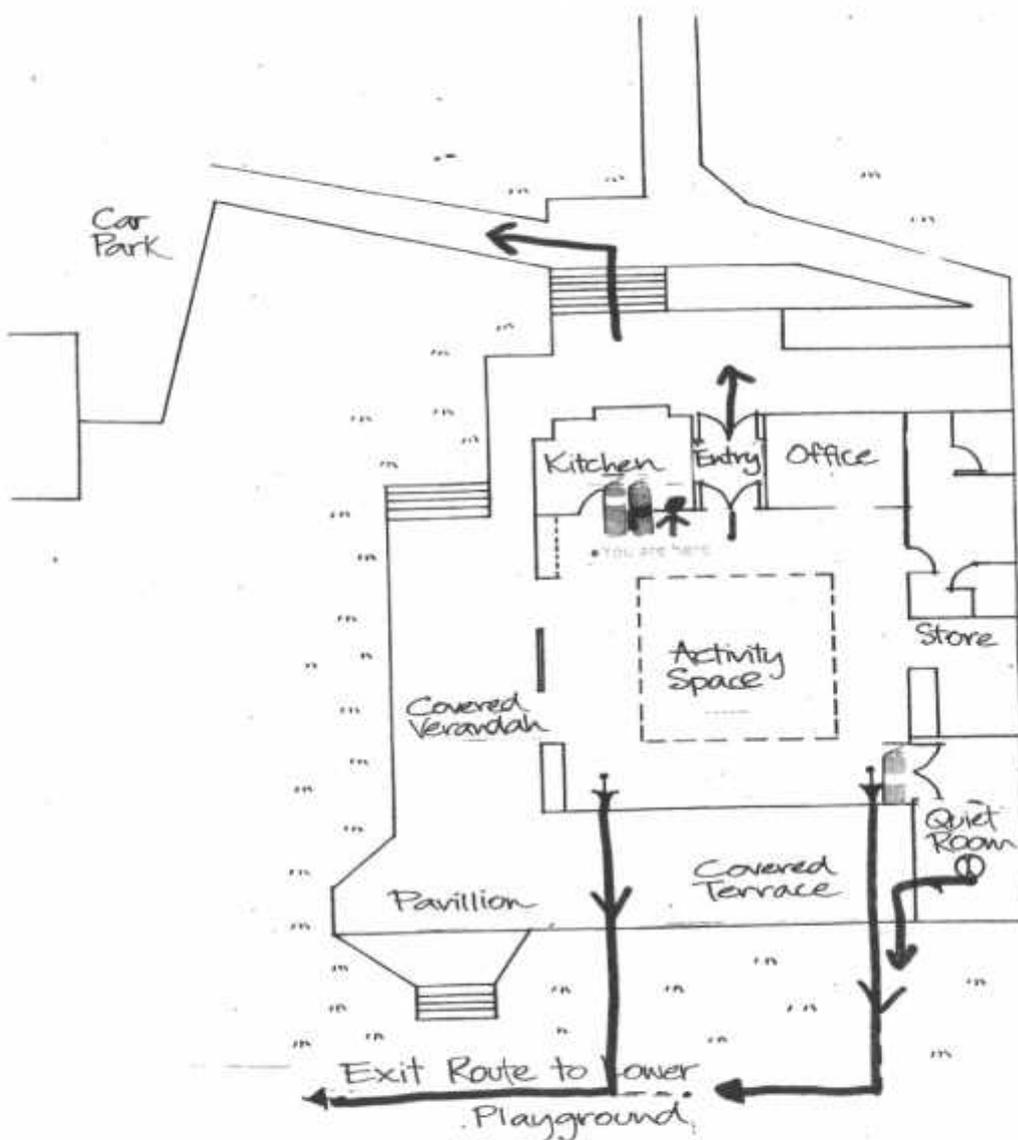
There will be a report back to all parties concerned at the closure of the matter.

Parents / Guardians may also choose to view the information regarding Making a Complaint or Accessing Information as shared on the Early Childhood Education and Care, Department of Education and Training website www.deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood

Compliance Log

Each Early Childhood Education and Care Service must hold a Compliance Log. There have been not compliance issues at our Kindergarten. The Compliance Log is available at the kindergarten for viewing.

Evacuation Map



St. Thomas's Riverview Kindergarten
 186 Macquarie Street
 St. Lucia. 4067, Queensland.