

Welcome to Konomi Kindergarten International

It is very exciting for us at Konomi Kindergarten that you have selected our service for your child's first educational journey. We welcome you and your family into our setting. Konomi Kindergarten is a family owned Long Day Care Service. Our environment is designed to integrate Japanese traditional know-how into Australian culture. Konomi Kindergarten is a unique early childhood service with a well- deserved reputation in its quality educational program, which has been earned through our commitment to provide quality care and education for young children. For some families, it is our bilingual teaching and traditional practices which have attracted them to our service, but for most of our families, it is our passion for teaching and learning that make being part of Konomi Kindergarten's community a desirable choice.

Our Philosophy



At Konomi Kindergarten we take pride in the unique bilingual Japanese and Australian education and care service that we provide. We acknowledge that the majority of families at our service are from Japanese cultural background and they desire their children to learn Japanese language, education and culture. Children from all language and cultural backgrounds are welcomed to attend Konomi Kindergarten and offered an opportunity to be part of our unique bilingual learning environment .We believe in encouraging all children to engage in active learning of Japanese culture and language with in an Australian early childhood setting. By creating an environment of acceptance and by promoting a sense of belonging, we aim to provide a setting where each child feels safe and secure. We believe in the rights and best interests of the child, which guides our practice and interacting with children. We support children to develop to their full potential through a comprehensive curriculum that promotes lifelong learning. We are passionate about developing collaborative partnership with families and we strongly encourage family involvement within our service. We believe in practicing respectful, positive and professional interactions with children, educators and families, and we value and build upon the strengths and knowledge of others .At Konomi Kindergarten we believe in the importance of sustainable practice, and view early childhood as natural starting point for on-going education for sustainability.

Our philosophy is further defined by the following values and beliefs that reflect the EYLF, Code of Ethics, and Rights of The Child.

To view a complete copy of our philosophy statement, please go to our homepage, also is enclosed in our enrolment pack.

1. Our Services

Learning Environment

Our learning environment is divided between 3 age groups. In each room, native speaking educators providing a quality program in both English and Japanese for children age 2-5. The learning environment is stimulating, dynamic, innovative, and it engages children in hands-on minds-on experiences through music, art, nature, literacy, IT, sport and many more.

Our Educators

At Konomi Kindergarten, we select our educators for their professionalism, knowledge, experience, dedication and love for teaching and learning. Although our educators are from diverse backgrounds which reflect the multicultural nature of our society in Australia, a number of our educators are from Japanese background to enable the delivery of our unique program in both Japanese and English. Our program in addition offers celebration of many festivals that reflect not only our Japanese tradition, culture and values within our program but also celebration of the cultures of children from other cultures. Please see the event section for details. Our educators hold professional teaching qualification or are supported to achieve them. Information on educators' qualifications is displayed at the foyer for families to view.

Practice Review

Our team at Konomi Kindergarten regularly reviews our practice to ensure we deliver the best possible service for the children and their families as well as taking part in formal review by the National Quality Standards and framework. A copy of the recent review is available for families to view and feedback. Our policies are reviewed annually and copies of the policies under review are available to families for feedback.

Ratio /Group-size

At Konomi Kindergarten, we offer set sessions of 2days "A Course" 3days "B Course" and 5days "C Course" to children to select from. In our service, not only do we meet the mandatory requirements with ratio and group size, but we also employ additional educators throughout the day to maintain a high quality of care & education. At Konomi Kindergarten, we employ permanent relief staff to ensure and maintain continuity of care in the absence of regular educators.

The Governance Arrangement

A responsible person is present at the Centre at all times to respond to families' queries and concerns. Families will be informed of presence of any infectious diseases in the Centre. In case of an outbreak the relevant authorities will be informed. A weekly working roster for staff and educators is displayed on the information board for families to view. Photos of each classroom educators are displayed at the entrance of each room for families to view.

2. Partnership with our Families

At Konomi Kindergarten we aim to work in partnership with our families. Our goal is to create an enjoyable, open and mutual relationship with our families where they can be proud of the curriculum and feel a genuine involvement and belonging to the Kindergarten. Parent involvement and participation in our program is highly encouraged as we believe that families are the first and most influential teachers in the children's lives. Our Kindergarten Community is underpinned by a great sense of friendship and partnerships which are strengthened through a variety of social events including Sport, Art and Music Festivals. Every parent is required to take part in the Kindergarten program at least once a year. Konomi Kindergarten is a multicultural Early Childhood Setting. Children from a range of linguistic and culture background attending our Centre. To celebrate and accommodate every child's home language and culture we need active parent participation in the program. A calendar plan of participation will be made in each classroom and parents will select a date, day and time that is convenient for them and write their name in the calendar. Educators will plan for the day you have selected to participate. Parents can contribute into children's program in many ways for example organising parent library.

Communication

We communicate with our families in many ways to meet their needs:

a. Day to day chat

Please feel free to have a casual talk to the educators or the supervisor/director on arrival and departure. We also make time to meet with the parents if the concern and discussion needs more time or private space. We can also be contacted by email.

b. Email

Please check your email regularly as educators email class newsletter or updates on health changes to all families and don't forget to update your contact addresses when they change.

c. Communication pockets & Noticeboard

Please check the children's communication pockets regularly and read the information displayed on the noticeboard.

d. Homepage

Information on our homepage is updated regularly. Please visit the member's section to access information including our *newsletter*. To access the member page, the following password is required:

User Name: Konomikindergarten (First 'K'is capital letter)

Password: 1990konomi

Feedback

We encourage our families to provide feedback and suggestions through email, suggestion box or verbal.

Daily Needs/ What to Bring & hygiene practice

Hygiene practice at Konomi Kindergarten is the key to minimise the spread of infection and effective hand-washing will support hygiene practice. Children also will develop the habit of self-care through this routine. Parents are required to take the children to the bathrooms on arrival, and wash their hands before they are left in the care of class educators. At Konomi Kindergarten we encourage and support all children to wash their hands and dry thoroughly before and after each meal, after using the toilet, after blowing their nose and after any messy play or gardening.

A class pamphlet will be distributed to all families at the information session or will be sent home with the enrolment package. Please read the pamphlet and supply the daily needs of your child according to her/his classroom list. There is also an instruction sheet displayed on the parent's information board for children's daily needs. Please have a look.

Toys from Home



At Konomi Kindergarten, we request that children keep their home toys at home to avoid emotional distress which can occur if their toys were to become damaged or lost.

Parent Library (Bunko)

We have a parent library called "Konomi Bunko", which is operated by parents on a volunteer basis. If you would like to borrow books, please fill in the form to become a member. The application form is placed on the top shelf of the library. Parents are encouraged to take responsibility for borrowed books. Please keep them in good condition and return them on time. We appreciate parent's support as volunteers to help organise the library, keep the shelves in a good order, be in touch with people who are borrowing books and make sure they return them. NOTE; only Japanese books are for borrowing. English storybooks are educator's resource and are not for borrowing.

3. Settling your child into Konomi Kindergarten Environment

Separation Anxiety

For a number of children, Konomi Kindergarten may be their first experience of major separation from their parents. The change can be very challenging for the children as well as their families. We understand that it can be emotional and a difficult decision for you to



leave your child for the first time at Konomi Kindergarten, to be cared for by people that they don't know. We encourage families to call as many times as they wish to find out how their children are coping. At Konomi kindergarten, we have a special program for settling new children into the environment. We plan for every new child to visit the service with their family at least twice prior to enrolment commencing. Experienced educators who speak the child's language will be initially supporting the child and remain as their buddy until they are ready to start their own journey, exploring the environment independently and interacting with peers. The educators will be working closely with the parents to make this transition as smooth as possible.

Parents can assist us in this important step of transition by:

- Trusting the educators who care for your child and talk to your child about how his/her teacher will be with him/her instead of you
- If your child has a special security item, make sure you bring it with the child
- Sit with your child and get engaged in one activity then handover to a teacher and make sure you say goodbye and when you will be back
- Make the farewell short and make sure the staff know you are leaving
- Making the child's stay at the centre short/ early pick up on first days
- Being prepared to pick up your child when you receive the phone call that your child is experiencing a high level of anxiety and refuses to eat or is crying continually.

Your Records

We retain all children and family records received (electronic and/or hardcopy) according to mandatory requirements of law for the period stated in the Education and Care Services Regulation 2011. All records will be kept confidential and only authorised people can access the information. For details please see our policy "Privacy, Security and Confidentiality" which is available to all enrolled families on our homepage and policy book at foyer.

Notification Forms for parents

There are 6 different forms that families can use in different situations to communicate their needs and information with us. These forms are available at the Centre, located in the shelf under attendance sheets. The forms also can be accessed via our homepage. Forms include;

a) **Holiday Notification**

When a child is absent from the Centre 'holiday' for more than one or two weeks, parents are required to fill in the notification form and hand in to the office

b) **Request for changing course**

If you wish to change the days your child attending, you will need to fill in the changing course notification and hand in to the office. We will contact you as soon as appropriate vacancy becomes available.

c) **Request for changing contact details**

Please fill out the notification as soon as any of your personal information changes,

including home address, home phone, mobile phone, email address and bank details and hand in to the office.

d) **Request for updating child's health information including Immunisation**

Please fill out this notification and hand in to the office when there is an update in your child's health condition including allergies, immunisation, any medical/physical conditions.

e) **Leaving Notification**

Please fill out this form and hand in to the office, when you would like to terminate your child's attendance at Konomi Kindergarten. The form must be handed in to us at least 4 weeks before the leaving date.

f) **Request for repeating the year before formal schooling**

This request can be granted only when vacancy become available in Tsuki class. The Hana class children have the priority to move up to Tsuki class. Any space become available in Tsuki class will be offered according to the date of request form submitted to the office.

Immunisation Requirements

Konomi Kindergarten is required to maintain up-to- date immunisation records for all children attending the service. Families are required to update children's immunization regularly. Please supply a copy of your child's immunization record prior to enrolment and when any new immunization occurs. The update includes the child's immunization /or medical condition is update.

Transitions

At Konomi Kindergarten children will make a series of transitions between classrooms when vacancies become available. These moves encourage the mastery of skills needed for the more significant changes that lie ahead. Room transitions are planned and organized well in advance through reciprocal visits. Families are consulted and their views are taken into consideration where possible.

Program, Portfolios, Learning Progress Discussion & Report

Our program is guided by the Early Years Learning Framework. As part of enrolment package, we include an information sheet about the national quality framework and the EYLF. For more information please visit www.acecqa.gov.au. A copy of Early Years Learning Framework is available for families in each classroom. At Konomi Kindergarten, each child has a 'portfolio' that documents their learning and progress on line. The portfolio include learning stories, photos, show & tell, work sample of children and developmental summaries which record children's learning progress at special moments. Portfolios are accessible to the families and children with an individual access code for each parent. Parents are actively encouraged to contribute comments and ideas and share their own stories with educators. Parent/educator conferences are held at least once during the time that child is in each room, usually in June-July to review each child's learning progress and

update information from each family through the feedback page of the portfolio.

Program & Involvement

Parents are always welcome to spend time at the service and work alongside the children to share a special skill. Not only that, but there are many ways to be involved in centre life. If you are interested in taking part in the program, talk to room educators. Your participation helps children to feel valued and that Konomi Kindergarten is a very important place.

Concerns & Complaints

At Konomi Kindergarten we recognise that constructive feedback from our parents helps to ensure that we continue to provide the best possible service to our families at all times. We encourage the parents to address any concerns they may have (no matter how small) with the educators or centre supervisor . All complaints are treated confidentially and are managed in a positive and respectful way. (For further information, please see our complaint policy, also available in our homepage)

Dropping Off, Collection & Gate Operation

At Konomi Kindergarten parents & people who you authorised at the enrolment will collect your child. Please make sure we have a sample signature and information on each person you authorise to collect your child. We cannot allow your child to leave with an unauthorised person, including grandparents and other family members. On arrival, please ensure that you take your child into the classroom and that educators acknowledge your arrival and departure and sign “IN and OUT” attendance sheet. Please check your class communication pocket and the notice board at foyer for important information or messages. At Konomi Kindergarten, the gate has a security combination to enter and exit the Centre. Keeping the children safe while in care at Konomi Kindergarten is a shared responsibility of the staff and the families. The combination will be provided to all enrolled parents at their orientation sessions. The combination must be used only by parents/authorised persons, and inaccessible to others including your child.

Custody Arrangement

At Konomi Kindergarten parents are required to provide us with a copy of their custody arrangement if there is any legal arrangement that outlines custody or restricting arrangement. Please also notify us immediately if the circumstances of the arrangements changes.

Newsletters

Parents will receive a management and educator newsletter time to time (each room maybe different) that will be emailed to all enrolled parents. The management side of news will keep you informed of everything that is happening in the Centre. Educator’s news is about your child’s learning in different rooms. A copy of newsletter will be kept in a folder at the foyer available to families.

Social Events & Celebrations

Konomi Kindergarten has 3 major events to celebrate with children and their families every year. These events are: Sport festival, Art festival and Music festival. All three events' venue will be outside of the Centre premises. We hire venues within our immediate community. These include Artarmon Reserve for Sport event, Uniting Church in Willoughby for our Art showcase and Theatre at the Concourse in Chatswood for our famous Music festival. We look forward to your participation. Usually we book the venue on Saturday morning for our music festival event but occasionally we are unable to book the theatre on Saturday. Friday are the alternate days for our music festival event. When music festival is planned for a Friday, children will go home after their performance.

Meals Routine

At Konomi Kindergarten, we believe that meal times are important times for social development. As such, they are an integral part of our Centre life. Meal times also provide opportunities where children can develop independence and self-help skills, sound nutrition, hygiene habits, and an understanding about the manners and etiquettes involved in sharing food as a group. Meals include morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. All meals at Konomi Kindergarten are prepared on a daily basis by our chef and her assistant. The menu is carefully planned in advance based on nutrition intake requirements for the age group and rotated regularly. The menu is available from our homepage. If your child has special dietary needs, please talk to your classroom educator, or the Centre Supervisor.

Clothing & Footwear



At Konomi Kindergarten children are actively encouraged to explore and experiment in the environment. Every day they will take part in a wide range of experiences and engage with a wide range of materials. Please ensure that your child is dressed in practical clothes that are comfortable, flexible for their movements and support their learning and play.

Clothing also should be easy for your child to change, this will encourage independence. At Konomi Kindergarten children will have 2 pairs of shoes for indoor & outdoor use. Outdoor shoes must be comfortable, well fitted and suitable for outdoor play including running, climbing and kicking a ball. Please make sure your child is not wearing clogs or sandals. It is very important to name all your child's clothing and footwear items and ensure there is a spare change of clothing in your child's bag. In each room, educators will keep a lost property box for unlabelled items. Should your child's belonging go missing, please search these boxes. Wet, dirty or soiled clothes will be put in a plastic bag with the child's name and placed in a bucket on the top shelf in the children's bathroom in each classroom. Please check these buckets on a daily bases and take home if your child's name is on the plastic bag.

Rest & Sleep Routine

At Konomi Kindergarten, sleep and rest are important. When your child is away from home we will provide similar home routine for their rest & sleep. Sleep routine is recorded in each room. Bed linen is provided by the parents and used only by your child. If you need more information on your child's rest and sleep, please talk to your classroom educator.

Sun-protection Practice

Konomi Kindergarten is a SunSmart Centre and our policies and practices are regularly updated to ensure we meet the national standard. We take effective measures to ensure children's safety in the sun. Our aim is to promote a positive attitude in children towards protecting their skin from the sun. Sunscreen is applied before children play outdoors and they must wear a suitable hat while outside. On arrival parents should apply sunscreen to their child when they are outside. If your child needs to have special sunscreen for a skin condition, please supply a copy of your GP prescription + the sunscreen to be kept in the Centre for your child's use.



Medication

At Konomi Kindergarten medications that are prescribed by a General Practitioner will be administered to your child only. All medication **MUST** be handed personally to a staff member (medications or cream never to be left in your child's bag or anywhere in the room) and **MUST** be in the original container, clearly named and labelled with the doctor's original instructions. Each classroom has a medication chart which parents must sign and write instructions in prior to a child's medication being administered. The medication administration form must be completed each day that medication is required. In this form, you must provide the following information: *___Full name of your child, today's date, the name of the medication, the dosage, the time the medication is to be administered, and the time of the last dose given to the child by you. There is also a space for parent signature to authorise the administration.* The 2 educators who administer the medication will sign the form. **If your child requires any prescribed medication(s) to be administered to them, please approach a staff member to discuss it.**

Infectious Diseases & Exclusion

Children who are unwell should stay home from education and care services. Even if they do not have a condition that requires exclusion, the best place for an ill child to rest and recover is with someone who cares for them. For the Recommended minimum exclusion periods, please view the guide available in our homepage and display on the parent information board at the

foyer of our centre (Staying Healthy / NHMRC2012, p17)

Illness & Communicable Diseases

At Konomi Kindergarten we are committed to provide and maintain a healthy environment for everyone. Good health is a joint effort; whilst we have a high priority on cleanliness in the Service and teach children techniques in blowing their nose, coughing etiquette and hand washing procedures, our Service is not equipped to care for sick children. However, we will do everything we can to comfort a child who has become sick whilst in our care. To try and prevent the spread of disease, please monitor your child's health and watch for: runny, green nose, High temperature, Diarrhoea, Red, swollen or discharging eyes, Vomiting, Rashes, Irritability, unusually tired or lethargic. **If your child has any of these symptoms, our environment is not the right place for them.** Children who have had communicable illnesses must stay at home until they are no longer infectious (a doctor certificate). Please notify us immediately if your child has, or has been exposed to, a communicable disease/illness.

Special Needs

Every child is unique and all children need support to make the most of the opportunities we provide for them at Konomi Kindergarten. Please do not hesitate to discuss any of your child's needs with the educators or the supervisor.

Accident & Injuries

At Konomi Kindergarten every day we conduct a safety check indoor/outdoor before children use any space. Accidents can happen in safest environment. We record all accidents that occur at the Centre in Incident Report no matter how insignificant the accident may be. If your child had an accident during the day at the Centre, you will be required to sign the incident report. This indicates that you have been informed of the incident. If an injury requires medical attention, we contact you immediately to collect your child. If you cannot be contacted and your child needs medical attention, we take any necessary steps required, including calling an ambulance. You will be responsible for any medical expenses incurred.

Emergencies & Evacuation

At Konomi Kindergarten the types of emergencies that may need evacuation is displayed throughout the Centre. We practice an emergency drill every three months (repeated for A and B course children). These drills aim to familiarise children with the procedure so that in the event of a real emergency such as fire, children will follow their teachers to the meeting points. This will ensure that they can be evacuated as quickly as possible. If you are in the premises at the time of drill you are required to take part in this procedure. The report of

each drill is displayed on the parent board for parent viewing. After each emergency drill practice, educators discuss with children about the drill and safety.

Behaviour Guidance and management

The use of physical punishment by staff, students/volunteers/visitors as a behavior guidance strategy is not acceptable under any circumstances. The use of isolation, humiliation, intimidation or negative labeling by staff/carers/students/volunteers/visitors as a behaviour guidance strategy is not acceptable under any circumstances. Staffs at Konomi Kindergarten implement the center policy to deal with challenging behavior.

Challenging Behavior

when a child displays a pattern of inappropriate behavior including “hitting, biting, pushing, punching, spitting, use of inappropriate words, and kicking” towards another child or educator, or visitors, to protect children and adults within the environment, ‘ modification plan’ will be considered in conjunction with the child’s parents. For details please see our “Behaviour Guidance” Policy available at the Centre and in our homepage.

4. Administration Requirements

Attendance Records

At Konomi Kindergarten we are legally required to keep an accurate attendance record of all enrolled children at the Centre. For each room there is a register at the foyer. Please make sure that you sign your child in and out on your arrival and departure each time they attend the Centre. Please write the exact times that you arrive / leave the centre. We highlight names of the absent children. Please check, sign and state reason for not attending if your child’s name is indicated in the attendance sheets.

Fees & Payment Arrangement

At enrolment parents are required to pay acceptance fee “deposit” equal to 4 weeks of childcare fee. The deposit is refundable when the child leaves the service. Parents also are required to pay for their first month /4weeks of their childcare fee in advance. From second month we will issue an invoice and fees are automatically deducted from your nominated account as you authorised us in the enrolment form (ezidebit).

At Konomi Kindergarten fees are charged by direct debit only from a nominated account or nominated credit card. We do not accept cash payment and overdue accounts will risk the cancellation of your child's place at Konomi Kindergarten. CCB and CCR can be used as part of Childcare fee.

Public Holidays, Personal Holidays, & Sick Leaves and Fees

Two weeks over Christmas/New Year period, Konomi Kindergarten is closed. No fees will be charged for this period. Fees apply to all other public holidays. Fees apply to the days your child is absent from the Centre for any reason including personal holiday, or a child stays home while he / she is unwell.

Late Fees

At Konomi Kindergarten, a late fee will be charged to the families who have not collected their children from the Centre by 6pm. The late fee schedule is \$2.00 per minute for first time late collection and \$5.00 per minute for second late collection. The family will be issued with a written warning of cancellation for their child's place if late collection happens on a regular basis.

Casual Days

At Konomi Kindergarten we offer enrolled children casual attendance when it is available. Casual days are charged as extra attendance days at the normal rate. Casual days are not make up days when your children are absent because of being sick or taking holiday. At Konomi Kindergarten we do not offer make up days.

Change of Attendance Days / Course



At Konomi Kindergarten we offer set 2days of Monday & Tuesday only (A Course), set 3days of Wednesday, Thursday and Friday (B Course) and 5days Course (C Course). If you would like to change your child's attendance days, there is a request form to complete and hand in to the office (please refer to notification for parents section in this booklet). Your request will be top priority when a vacancy becomes available. 4 weeks notification is required if your child is attending 5 days a week and you would like to reduce the attendance days. You

must submit the request form (notification) at least 4 weeks before the date you would like your child's attendance to be reduced.

Cancelling your Child's Enrolment/Leaving Care

At Konomi Kindergarten we need 4 weeks of leaving notification if you wish to cancel your child's attendance. All fees and any outstanding balance are due prior to departure. If the termination date falls on a weekday, the whole week's fee will be applied.

Enrolment Cancellation Regarding Graduation

At Konomi Kindergarten, we celebrate children's achievement in our preschool room through a 'Graduation Ceremony' with their families, which is usually the last day of the year in December. A different arrangement will apply for cancellation of enrolment for children who are graduating from our Centre. Prior to the graduation date, all concerned families will be informed of the arrangement via email. The deposit will be returned to the families as soon as CCB and CCR have been calculated and sent to Konomi Kindergarten for individual child by the Family Assistance Admin Team. If you are paying the full fee and CCB& CCR does not affect your payment, your deposit will be returned immediately up on graduation.

Visitors/Volunteers & Students

At Konomi Kindergarten we accept students for their practicum requirements. Students and volunteers from Japan (small groups and individuals), visit Konomi Kindergarten. These visitors are related to our exchange program with our early childhood Sister Centres and Universities in Japan. All visitors, including students and volunteers are introduced to families at the time. A photo of the visitor accompanied by a brief description of the reason for their visit will be displayed on the parent noticeboard at the foyer.

Fundraising

At Konomi Kindergarten we have a number of activities each year to raise funds. Fundraising activities are usually in conjunction with our social events such as festivals. Any funds raised will be spent on purchasing extra equipment and tools that empower educators to provide specific programs for children's learning and interests. E.g. SMART Board as a high technology tool has been purchased with the support of all families who took active part in the fundraising activities in 2013. For more information please contact your child's class educators.

We welcome you to Konomi Kindergarten

**Please do not hesitate to talk to us if you have any questions about this handbook
or our policies and practices.**