

About the Kindergarten

The Islamic College of South Australia's Early Learning Centre opened in 2004 with the aim of preparing children for further schooling at Islamic College of South Australia. Our center has grown significantly since then and is currently licensed for 35 children every day, which allows for 70 enrolments at any time. The kindergarten of the Islamic College of South Australia provides community members with early education for children aged 3.8 to 5.5 years. Our students come from a wide range of cultural and language backgrounds with Arabic, Somali, Dari, Bosnian and Urdu being the most common languages. Many of the children start at the kindergarten with little or no English and as such, the promotion of their English language development is a key outcome of the program. We also place a strong emphasis on social skills, emotional resilience, fine and gross motor muscle development, creativity and self-expression, self-help skills, health and safety, independence, school readiness and early literacy and numeracy skills.

Our Philosophy

Our center has the philosophy of providing high quality and inclusive educational experience in safe, healthy, caring and fun environment. Our vision is to make the children responsible and socially competent individuals in Australian Muslim context with passion of learning to achieve excellence. Our curriculum is guided by the Early Years Learning Framework and we value learning through play and discovery, and provide varied and stimulating experiences to enhance children's knowledge. We respect multi-cultural backgrounds of our families and incorporate diversity in our programs through displays, songs, books and talks. We work in partnership with families and value and celebrate the diverse community to which we belong. The guiding principles of our center are to encourage children to become lifelong learners, who can communicate fluently, develop mutually beneficial social relationships with their peers, and respect and care for the world around them.

Our staff

Our center operates under the leadership of a highly qualified director and staff possesses rich mix of expertise to addresses the needs of Muslim children. Our director has Master degrees in Teaching (Early childhood), Education Management, and English Literature, and a Bachelor degree in Economics; whereas the Preschool Teacher has a Bachelor degree in Early Childhood. Our center also has access to specialist teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies. All early childhood educators have certificate III in children Services. All staff holds current First aid, Asthma Training, and Mandatory Notification certifications, in addition to specialist knowledge such as English as Second Language, Arabic language support, and working children with special needs.

Hours of Operation

Monday to Thursday 8.45am -3.15pm

Fridays 8.45am – 12.45pm

Term Dates

The Kindergarten terms follow Independent School terms. Information are available on the College website: www.icosasa.edu.au

Curriculum

Teaching programs at our center are based on the curriculum document Belonging, Being and Becoming---The Australian Early Years Learning Framework. Our curriculum design, assessment and reporting is based on this national document.

Early Years Learning Framework or EYLF is built around 5 developmental learning outcomes to capture integrated and complex learning development of children. These outcomes are;

- **Outcome 1 Children have a strong sense of identity**
"I am who I am"
- **Outcome 2 Children are connected with and contribute to their world**
"I am a great friend"
- **Outcome 3 Children have a strong sense of wellbeing**
"I am independent"
- **Outcome 4 Children are confident and involved learners**
"I am curious, inquisitive and eager to learn"
- **Outcome 5 Children are effective communicators**
"I can express myself"

The Frame work focuses on your child's learning. Our staff will work with you in order to know your child well. They will create a learning program that builds on your child's interests and abilities. These outcomes are broad and observable and acknowledge that children can learn in a variety of ways and also differ in their capabilities and pace of learning. We, therefore, use EYLF to provide an inclusive environment which develops knowledge, skills, social interactions and communication.

At ICOSA Kindergarten staff works with children towards school readiness. We focus on language and literacy, mathematics and science, social-emotional development, physical development and the arts. Teachers use the key experiences to design the classroom learning environment, implement

individual and group instruction, and observe and document children's progress with variety of assessment tools. At ICOSA Kindergarten we employ pedagogy which integrates all aspects of young children's development throughout the daily routines, using research-based strategies to enhance growth in academic, social-emotional, and creative areas. Below is a brief description of how the curriculum addresses development at our Kindergarten in language and literacy, mathematics and science, social skills, and the arts.

Communication and language

- Daily language activities themed to incorporate relevant vocabulary and designed to practice following instructions, conversation skills and to develop phonemic awareness.
- Weekly target vocabulary.
- Weekly themed songs and games.
- Targeted lessons to enhance children's awareness of language features such as letters, words, syllables, initial sounds and end sounds.
- Reading a book of the week' daily for two weeks, so that children have opportunities to recite a text, feel confident about reading, enjoy reading and gain a stronger comprehension of the text through questioning and class discussion.
- A writing table is a permanent fixture in the classroom and houses paper, pencils, envelopes, stencils, scissors, glue, charts, word and picture cards, different types of paper, pencil control tasks using wipe-off boards and markers, displays of children's writing.
- We visit the library each week.
- We have daily reading time dedicated to children spending time enjoying books independently, in small groups or with teachers.
- In the context of reading we do explicit instruction about books e.g. terms such as author, illustrator, cover, title, spine, title page, page number, etc.

Numeracy & Science

- The children participate in daily math lessons which introduce students to numerals, counting, shapes, concepts, measurement, patterning, sorting and classifying.
- We engage in themed discussions designed to expand on children's knowledge of the world around them.
- There is a 'look table' in the classroom which is refreshed each fortnight with library books, posters and relevant objects.

Self and Social and Diversity

- The children have Arabic & Islamic studies lessons once a week. In which they learn about Islamic manners, responsibilities, the Names of Allah, Five pillars of Islam, names of prayers, Arabic alphabet shapes & sounds, stories and the recitation of Surahs.

- We have discussion topics on themes such as caring for others, or experiences related to the theme.
- We follow the 'Program Achieve' program which guides the children with their social and emotional interactions and responsibilities within the school context and out in the wider community. The students readily use language such as 'Look, my bag is tidy, I'm being organised' or 'I helped my friend, I'm getting along aren't I?'

Arts & creativity and Design & Technology

- The children are offered many opportunities for self-expression in a play-based context. They freely utilise painting, box construction, role-play toys, craft materials and tools such as scissors, glue, hammer and nails etc.
- Artistic and creative techniques are also demonstrated to students and the materials made available so that students can experiment.
- The contents of our home corner are frequently changed to encourage children to role play using theme-based resources and reinforce their learning.
- We have a dolls house complete with furnishing and tiny dolls.
- We regularly do drama in a group context giving children opportunities to practice expressing themselves through actions and words.
- The students have access to 2 computers which have software designed to assist both their computing skills and their language and numeracy development.

Health and Physical Development

- Students have daily opportunities to practice their gross motor skills and coordination in a play context through the use of climbing equipment, sporting equipment and games and activities.
- We teach specific motor skills in a group context to include balance, movements such as galloping or skipping, arm strength, leg strength, body strength and body awareness.
- The children have opportunities to develop their fine motor skills through the use of resources such as stationary items, construction toys, puzzles and threading toys.
- Students engage in discussions on health and safety topics and regularly practice health and hygiene skills during daily routines.