



Statement of Philosophy

Mater Dei Learn to Play Groups and Play to Learn Groups

Mater Dei Learn to Play Groups and Play to Learn Group educators and staff members acknowledge and pay our respects to the Dharawal people who are the Traditional Custodians of Country and the First People of the land on which we meet and work today. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging of the Dharawal nation. We acknowledge that **country** was, and always will be, integral to the spiritual and cultural identity of the Dharawal people.

Mater Dei Learn to Play Groups and Play to Learn Group Philosophy emerged from the ethos of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan who draw wisdom from The Rule of St Benedict and who have been inspired by the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37.) The Sisters take as their daily instruction, Jesus' command **to go and show compassion, to go and be neighbour to those most in need** and **to go and do likewise**.

In **Mater Dei Learn to Play Groups and Play to Learn Groups** we believe that doing likewise involves recognising our neighbour as anyone in need and responding to those needs with compassion and generosity.

The Statement of Philosophy for Mater Dei Learn to Play Groups and Play to Learn Groups is founded on the values, beliefs, principles and ideologies that are central to Mater Dei:

- **Peace**
- **Welcome**
- **Hospitality**
- **Stewardship**
- **Service**
- **Community**

The Mission of Mater Dei Learn to Play Groups and Play to Learn Groups is to provide high quality, developmentally appropriate, evidence-based early childhood education to all children from birth through to Preschool including typically developing children and children with profound, severe, moderate and mild developmental delay and/ or disability.

The Mission of Mater Dei Learn to Play Groups and Play to Learn Groups is to work in partnership with our children's parents, carers, guardians, families and advocates as we provide person-centred and family-focused assistance, guidance and pastoral support to

prepare all children to transition into the most appropriate Preschool setting where they begin their School readiness program prior to commencing their Kindergarten placement.

Peace

Each and every child:

- will be welcomed into a safe, supportive environment and will have the right to play and learn
- will realise their own dignity, worth and potential
- will be encouraged to show respect and empathy towards each other

Educators and staff members:

- will offer welcoming and calm learning environments
- will work collaboratively and harmoniously as a team
- will commit to pursue and work for peace and deepen their understanding that for peace to reign, justice is fundamental

Welcome

Each and every child:

- is unique
- is rich in possibility and potential
- has the right to be welcomed, to feel accepted and to develop a sense of belonging
- has the right to determine their own life as they grow and develop
- has the right to make safe choices and to accept responsibility for their choices
- has the right to develop appropriate and safe relationships

Educators and staff members:

- will welcome all children, their parents, carers, guardians and families with dignity and respect
- will ensure inclusion and participation of each and every child
- will address the holistic needs of each and every child, their parents, carers, guardians and families
- will build respectful partnerships with parents, carers, guardians, families, medical and allied health professionals and colleagues in early childhood education centres

Hospitality

Each and every child:

- has the right to receive appropriate support and guidance in a safe, caring, supportive, nurturing and well-balanced environment
- has the right to be included in their local community where each child has a place

Educators and staff members:

- will respect and value the knowledge of parents, carers and guardians as the primary educators of their children

- will promote opportunities for children to experience a sense of achievement whilst being stimulated and challenged to be successful, competent and capable life-long learners

Stewardship

Each and every child:

- will gain an understanding of their relationship with the land, water and air and the animals and plants that live and grow with them
- will respect and value their responsibility as stewards and caretakers of the world in which they live and play

Educators and staff members:

- will display a commitment to nurturing our planet, flora, fauna and the sustainability of our environment for future generations
- will demonstrate our understanding that everyday decision-making comes with both individual and collective responsibilities for each other and for our planet

Service

Each and every child:

- will be heard and understood
- will receive a nurturing program that supports their physical, emotional, social and cognitive development
- has the right to participate in quality learning experiences that are personalised and based on their age, stage of development, interests, talents, strengths and needs

Educators and staff members:

- will empower parents, carers, guardians and families to manage their own lives and to make decisions on behalf of their children
- will support each family's participation in collaboratively determining realistic short-term goals and long-term outcomes to be included in their child's Individual Learning Plan
- will provide a play-based and interest-based program in which children will grow, explore, learn and take safe risks
- will be informed by contemporary educational theory and pedagogy
- will embrace and promote the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics

Community

Each and every child:

- is born free and equal and will not be treated any differently to their peers
- has the same rights and will receive the same level of respect as their peers
- has the right to be included in their local community, activities and organisations

Educators and staff members:

- will welcome children, their parents, carers, guardians and families from all communities including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, religious and non-religious beliefs, all socio-economic levels and all family and/or carer cohorts
- will develop reciprocal relationships with parents, carers, guardians, families and advocates as well as with the Mater Dei organization and the wider community
- will work collaboratively with Agencies and our colleagues in the Camden, Campbelltown, Wollondilly and Wingecarribee local government areas