

**Service Context**

Virginia Preschool is a DfE school-based preschool and is co-located with Virginia Primary School. Virginia Preschool is a part of the DfE, Orion Partnership and is operational during school terms. Virginia Preschool is situated on Park Road at Virginia. Virginia is a semi-rural community located 29kms north of the GPO. The preschool is within walking distance to the local shopping centre, sporting facilities, local playground, post office, dentist and doctors’ surgery. Ample parking is available, 2 x school car parks for staff and 1 x local council car park serving as a dual car park, servicing both preschool and school families. All car parks can be accessed via Park Road. A broad representation of various cultural backgrounds attend Virginia Preschool, in 2023 8% identified as Aboriginal/ Torres Strait Islanders, 22% identified as Italian, 6% identified as Greek, 5% identified as Cambodian, 5% identified as Filipino, 9% identified as Vietnamese , 2% as Iranian and15% identified as Indian. 25% are children with English as an additional language/dialect (EALD). Approximately 95% of the preschool children continue on to Virginia Primary School and the other 5% attend local private schools. 75% of preschool children come from a two-parent home. On a needs basis the preschool in conjunction with the school provides classes in English language for parents and Kaurna cultural and language classes for Aboriginal families at no cost to families.

The preschool provides a sessional preschool program for eligible children - as per the Federal Government's Universal Access initiative children are entitled to 600 hours of preschool per year, 15 hours per week. Children attend 2 long day sessions per week (8.15am-3.45pm). There are two groups of children - Monday/Tuesday and Wednesday/Thursday. Where possible and within the site’s capacity children are grouped in accordance with their enrolment intake and support for those children with bilingual and additional needs is maximised.

At Virginia Preschool we recognise that all children are competent and capable learners and that play is the means by which young children learn. We aim to provide a high quality, inclusive educational program for children aged 3-5 years. Educators work closely with families and the wider community to provide a learning environment that is respectful, welcoming and engaging, where every child can thrive and reach their full potential.

The educational program at Virginia Preschool is designed to enhance each child’s learning and development and is inclusive of: the child’s voice, children’s current level of development, knowledge and skill, feedback from families and community, educator observations, analysis of teaching and learning, assessment data and is reflective of the ‘Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the DfE ‘Preschool Numeracy and Literacy Indicators’. Each child’s learning and development is assessed and evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysis of learning, documentation, implementation and reflection.

The values of caring, respect, fairness, achievement and diversity and the vision, “Learning Together, Learning for our Future” are shared by both the preschool and school. Virginia Preschool works closely with Virginia Primary School, the on-site OSHC service and has close links to local childcare centres. The preschool’s physical location and close working relationship with the school supports children's transition and provides a sustained connection with children and families over the long term. The educators are a dedicated, cohesive team led by the Virginia Primary School Principal and comprise of a full time facilitator, 2 full time teachers, an Aboriginal Community Education Officer, bilingual support educator and a curriculum support educator. The educators come from a variety of cultural backgrounds, comprising a wealth of knowledge and experience and are passionate about children’s well-being, learning and the service that they provide to the community. Our educators are local residents with strong links to the community. The positive work culture and mutual respect for colleagues is reflected by the length of time that educators have been employed by the service. With 3 educators employed by the service for more than 15 years and 2 educators employed by the service for more than 8 years. All educators are equally valued, participate in regular performance reviews and are encouraged to continually improve their practice and further develop their skills.

Virginia Preschool adopts a continuous improvement approach regarding all aspects of the service, including its educational program. A culture of shared learning, critical reflection and commitment to continuous quality improvement is displayed by the team. A rigorous 5-step improvement cycle is used to guide the development of the annual Preschool Quality Improvement Plan. Throughout 2023, the preschool team and Governing Council members participated in a significant review of our Quality Improvement Plan, our improvement goals, policies and procedures. This collaborative process has ensured that our preschool continues to provide a high quality service in line with community needs and expectations. The outcomes from this reflective process informed the development of the 2024 Quality Improvement Plan and improvement goals. A culmination of these results and information gathered from parents in relation to children’s learning was combined with results from previous years’ numeracy data to determine our goal of improving children’s number sense and is subsequently aligned with the Big Ideas in Number Framework which supports the conceptual development of number sense.