

Howlong Preschool Philosophy 2026



Reviewed by educators Feb 2026

Reviewed by Families March 2026

Howlong Preschool Philosophy

Environment and sustainability (Element 1.1.3, 3.2.3)

We are passionate and proactive about teaching the children about the environment and embedding sustainability practices. We believe the next generation needs to be socially and environmentally responsible and aware of the interdependence between humans and the natural environment. We do this by:

- Running a worm farm
- Teaching the children about recycling and waste management
- Re-use brown paper bags & Green waste bags as opposed to purchasing plastic

Creativity and imagination (Element 1.2.1, 1.2.3, 3.2.1, 3.2.2)

At Howlong Preschool, we understand that every child is creative and has a vivid imagination. In their own way, they create and discover in ways that are unique and personal to their life experiences and knowledge. We work to foster their creativity and imagination by:

- Offering a varied and interesting educational program
- Supplying open ended resources
- Taking time to listen to and explore with the children.

Enough time (Element 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 2.1.1, 5.1.1)

Time is a crucial element of deep learning. Children are offered the opportunity to engage deeply in activities and investigations that spark their interest. We allow children enough time to be, explore, investigate, rest and imagine. We do this by:

- Offering children flexible routine that allows them to investigate interests deeply
- Offering children an opportunity to revisit resources and activities until they are no longer interested in them.

Rest (Element 2.1.1, 3.1.1, 5.1.2, 6.2.2)

Rest is integral to health and wellbeing. We value and respect children's ability to recognise their need for rest and allow children downtime when they require it. We support children's need for rest by:

- Offering quiet areas inside and outside
- Teaching the children meditation and breathing techniques
- Providing a quiet time during the day, where children are encouraged to rest/relax ensuring their individual rest needs are met.

Acknowledging achievements (Element 1.1.2, 1.2.2, 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 6.1.1)

We value and recognise the achievements of all children in our care. It is important to us that each of the children feels as though they are a valued member of our service, and as such are recognised for their abilities and successes. We do this by:

- Giving each child the opportunity to share their thoughts, ideas, and personal experiences with the class.
- Maintain close relationships with parents and families, so they feel safe to share successes with educators
- Art gallery to display the hard work of children.

Regulation & Legislation (Element 1.1.1, 1.3.1, 4.1.1, 7.1.2, 7.2.1, 7.2.3)

The legislation, regulations, and child safe standards that govern Early Childhood Education are of the utmost importance. We recognise, adhere to, and embed the Early Years Learning Framework 2.0, National Law and Regulations, National Quality Standards, and the National Child Safe Standards into all aspects of our service.

We do this by:

- Linking all documentation to the learning outcomes, practices, and principles of the Early Years Learning Framework 2.0.
- Following the Code of Ethics, all legislation, regulations, and child safe standards in the operation of our service.
- Staying current through ongoing professional development and training to meet legislative and child safety requirements.

Safety

(Element 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 4.1.1)

At Howlong Preschool, the **safety and wellbeing of every child is our highest priority**. Our educators are trained in **child safe and child protection practices** to ensure all children feel secure, cared for, and supported in learning how to manage risk safely. Every decision we make is guided by the **paramountcy principle**, meaning the child's best interests come first.

We achieve this by:

- Following clear procedures for **illness and injury management**.
- Conducting **daily safety checks** of our environment.
- Responding to children with **care and empathy** if they feel unsafe.
- Using safety measures such as **frosted bathroom windows** to protect privacy while allowing supervision.
- Ensuring all educators undertake child safe and child protection training to maintain a safe environment for children.

Positive wellbeing, inclusion & celebrating diversity

(Element 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.2.1, 1.3.2, 2.1.1, 2.1.3, 2.2.3, 4.2.1, 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.2.2)

We believe that by recognising and celebrating the diversity of our community we will best meet the health and well-being needs of all people we serve including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; people with disability; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and gender diverse people; intersex people; asexual people; people experiencing health inequalities; and culturally and linguistically diverse people. We are aware that mental illness is a growing concern in our society. We work to prepare children to deal with the struggles of life by teaching them skills that will allow them to maintain positive wellbeing, ensuring they are included and active participants in the program. We do this by:

- Explicitly teaching relaxation techniques
- Teaching positive living skills through various programs and resources
- Encouraging children to take on challenges and seek solutions to problems.
- Maintaining staff wellbeing through a variety of programs and resources
- Supporting healthy eating and decisions making through a variety of programs and resources
- Recognise diversity by holding special days to raise awareness, providing resources that show case diversity.
- **A collaborative approach with educators, families and allied health professionals to ensure children's needs are communicated and met effectively. (Working Together Agreement and Team around the child meetings)**

Authentic, interest-based learning

(Element 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.2.3, 2.1.3, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.1)

We acknowledge that children learn best when they are able to follow their interests and explore topics that are relevant. We work to support authentic and interest-based learning in all aspects of our programming.

We do this by:

- Collecting detailed notes and reflecting on the children's interests,
- Allowing projects to develop from the interests of the children as they are relevant to their lives and current knowledge
- Plan intentional teaching experiences that are authentic and teach children real skills.
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Positive image of the child

(Element 1.1.2, 1.2.2, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.1)

At Howlong Preschool, we view the child as capable and independent. We respect their individual views and seek to support their growth, development and unique personalities. Our program reflects the abilities, strengths and interests of the children in our service. We do this by:

- Allowing the children to explore their limits through risky play activities
- Acknowledging the children's individual strengths and abilities and offering activities to further develop these
- Asking children's opinions and input on issues that affect them.

Cultural learning

(Element 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 5.2.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.2.1, 6.2.2)

We believe that all children have a unique cultural background, and that this informs and shapes the person that they are. We also acknowledge the rich cultural heritage of Australia's First People and work to embed their perspective into all aspects of our program. We do this by:

- Respect and implement strategies use in the home environment when teaching individual children's skills
- We are culturally responsive and ensure that we intentionally teach and learn about the cultures and ethnic backgrounds of the children in the class.
- Providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to see themselves, their identities and cultures reflected in their environment.
- -The history and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is respectfully and truthfully reflected through community involvement and culturally sensitive practices.
- Ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are embedded and present in all educators' philosophy and practice.

Critical Reflection & Continuous Improvement

(Element 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3, 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 7.2.2, 7.2.3)

Critical reflection is the cornerstone of our practice. To be continually improving, educators critically reflect on the program and their practice to ensure that the children are receiving the best quality of education. We are committed to lifelong learning and our educators seek out opportunities to strengthen our professional knowledge and skills to support continuous quality improvement in practice We do this by:

- Engaging in weekly reflection of programs
- Critically reflecting during staff meetings and through reflection activities
- Conversing and reflecting collaboratively throughout the day and with the children and sharing this information with families.

Respectful Partnerships, Connections & Relationships

(Element 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.3)

At Howlong Preschool, we believe that strong, respectful relationships are the foundation of children's learning, wellbeing, and sense of belonging. We value meaningful connections between children, educators, families, and the wider community, recognising that these partnerships enrich each child's experiences and support their development.

We are committed to fostering reciprocal, trusting, and authentic interactions with all stakeholders, and we actively seek to incorporate the voice of our preschool community into our educational program. Through warm, responsive interactions and inclusive practices, we create a safe and nurturing environment where every child feels seen, heard, and valued.

By embedding trust, collaboration, and mutual respect into everything we do, relationships remain at the heart of our preschool community.

We put this into practice by:

- Building and maintaining connections with Oolong Hostel.
- Listening to the children's voice when programming and displaying their ideas.
- Seeking family input during self-assessment processes.
- Sharing family stories alongside children's contributions to celebrate learning and experiences.

Skills for life/High Expectations

(Element 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 2.1.1, 2.1.3, 4.2.1, 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.1)

We value the importance of teaching children's skills that will serve them for the rest of their lives, not only in education, but in the real world too. It is important to us that the children learn skills such as patience, self-regulation, resilience, determination, sharing, negotiation, problem solving and conflict resolution. Educators view all children as competent and capable and hold high expectations for their learning. We have a strong focus on school readiness and ensuring children have learnt skills to support their academic career We support this by:

- Planning activities that require the use of life skills, such as, sharing and collaboration.
- Explicitly teaching skills such as identifying, reflecting, validating, and regulating their emotions, conflict resolution, sharing, and communication
- Lining up and eating together, waiting for others to finish before going to play.