



TRINITY
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Trinity Grammar School Preparatory School
**Pre-Kindergarten
Staff Philosophy Statement**



Trinity Preparatory School Pre-Kindergarten Philosophy Statement

At Trinity we hold firm to the belief that young learners are unique, capable, knowledgeable, curious and competent learners with a strong desire to connect with others.

Pre-Kindergarten is a place where this is fostered and developed. It is the beginning of a young man's learning journey at Trinity Grammar School as he grows and matures in Mind, Body and Spirit.

When considering Pre-Kindergarten it is important to think of it as an important year of laying the foundations for future learning, as well as a year of learning that should be embraced and celebrated in and of itself – young learners are only this age once! As such, Pre-Kindergarten is not merely preparation for Kindergarten, rather it supports children to develop a deep love of learning, to learn about themselves, and to explore their natural wonderings within a stimulating environment. Pre-Kindergarten provides our youngest learners with a place to feel safe and to develop a sense of belonging with those around them and within the wider Trinity learning community.

Pre-Kindergarten naturally prepares our young learners for the next step in their learning journey on a daily basis. The balance of child-initiated, and teacher-led play-based learning offers diverse opportunities to explore, discover and create, while fostering innate qualities such as curiosity, perseverance and risk-taking. These qualities along with the development of

social, self-management and communication skills are essential to ensure a smooth transition to Kindergarten.

Our context is unique, along with Trinity's approach to flexible personalised learning (FPL) and our Pre-Kindergarten curriculum which focuses on five core domains: physical development, social development, emotional development, cognitive development and language development. Our curriculum includes a balanced focus on developmental milestones, PYP outcomes and, as appropriate, a differentiated introduction to Early Stage One NESA outcomes. These five key domains are evident in our planning, documentation and learning environment, to ensure they guide and support student growth and the development of the PYP Approaches to Learning. This is facilitated through the use of a planning cycle that is responsive to student interest and consciously supports student agency.

(FPL is a Prep-wide pedagogy that seeks to support students through a flexible and personalised approach to learning and teaching that empowers them to take greater ownership and responsibility for their learning. Planning is collaborative in nature and incorporates effective teaching strategies to support each student's next steps in learning, within an inquiry-based framework. This includes the use of grouping and regrouping to support differentiation, and purposeful use of learning spaces, co-teaching, and assessment and reporting).

A quality early years curriculum draws on the principles of the Reggio Emilia philosophy and IB PYP framework. The Reggio philosophy shapes the way we view young learners as rich with wonder, curiosity and knowledge, and highlights the importance of children understanding their world and who they are in it. We feel that this complements the PYP framework, as together they honour and celebrate a student-centred, constructivist, and inquiry-based approach. At their core, they recognise learners as active participants in their own learning. This is captured in the diagram below which captures the central features of early learning in the PYP (The Learner – The Early Learner).

Pre-Kindergarten's physical proximity to Kindergarten highlights the important relationship between these two grade levels and speaks to the desire for there to be continuity in the learning experience for students, as well as connections between students and teachers. This is facilitated through a commitment to play as an integral and driving pedagogy.

Children are active participants in their learning as they engage in purposeful play experiences. Play provides "a context for learning through which children organise and make sense of their social worlds, as they engage actively with: people, objects and representations" (EYLF p.49). Through play, we believe that children can express their uniqueness, develop their dispositions for learning, such as curiosity and creativity, make connections between past experiences and new concepts, and they can enhance their sense of wellbeing. Literacy and numeracy are deeply connected as forms of symbolic language, and children can be provided with opportunities to explore them both within their play.

Authentically capturing and documenting student learning is critical to facilitate opportunities for children to develop as reflective learners as well as fostering a true sense of partnership with parents. These two audiences speak to the purpose and means of creating such documentation so as to honour student agency as well as providing an appropriate window into the learning space for parents.

We believe that the environment has a profound impact on young learners. The carefully curated learning spaces are filled with light, texture, nature and the busy sounds of children who are deeply engaged with carefully chosen resources. There are various spaces that invite different types of play, dialogue and exploration – which the children explore and flow through in the day. Educators are intentional in the use of learning spaces to promote a sense of being, belonging and becoming. Children's voices are valued and they are invited to take on the role of co-creator within the various learning spaces.

Pre-Kindergarten educators promote children's social and emotional development by establishing trusting relationships. This is created when teachers demonstrate warmth, affection, care and respect. Educators intentionally plan for structured and unstructured opportunities for students to develop their ability to self-regulate their emotions and respond appropriately to the feelings of others. This involves

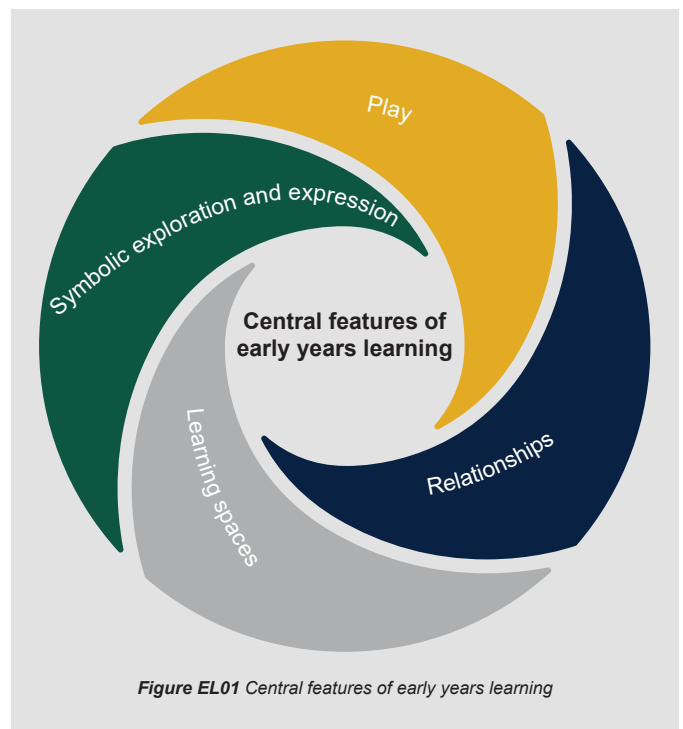


Figure EL01 Central features of early years learning

the use of explicit teaching as well as taking advantage of teachable moments that occur throughout everyday interactions. Active play opportunities should be plentiful within the daily programme.

It takes a village to raise a child – this is particularly true in Pre-Kindergarten where a range of people share the responsibility of educating each child as co-teachers. Specialist Teachers at Trinity play a critical role in introducing a range of provocations and experiences for young learners that enhance the Pre-Kindergarten environment throughout the year. They provide specialised learning experiences as well as working alongside class teachers in a co-teaching capacity to develop programmes that extend and support each child's individual development. Specialist Teachers work closely with the Pre-Kindergarten educators to ensure that there is a holistic approach to each individual boy's education journey that focuses on the development of gross motor skills, fine motor skills, communication skills, creative expression and social skills.

Co-educators (Teacher Aides) are actively involved in the programme by supporting learners and teachers. They are highly qualified and are familiar with best practice and child development. In addition to their support for the day to day teaching and learning programme, they contribute to the Pre-Kindergarten community through building effective relationships with all Pre-Kindergarten stakeholders. They are crucial and respected members of the Pre-Kindergarten teaching team.

Pre-Kindergarten is a place of great positive energy, creativity, and growth. It is a dynamic learning community which is flavoured by the previous experiences of each individual boy and where new learning and development is celebrated. It is the beginning of what is, for many, a 14-year journey of individual growth in Mind, Body and Spirit.



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