

Welcome to SheOak Kinder and Gnarre Prep

The Freshwater Creek Steiner Kindergarten and Prep began in 2000. They grew from an impulse in 1996 in Geelong when the Friends in Hand Kindergarten was established. SheOak Kindergarten and Gnarre prep aim to provide a sanctuary of creative play for children. The children are nurtured by the daily and seasonal rhythms with a joyful flow of songs, stories and play. We listen to fairytales, nature stories, nursery rhymes and songs, participating in a time of activities and rituals which remain the same from week to week. Through these the child experiences the richness of folk wisdom, basic life truths and the comforting rhythms of life. During the first seven years the child's physical body is still forming, so it is important that they use their bodies to explore what they can do. The child learns through imitation and physical activity. SheOak Kinder and Gnarre Prep provide a home-like environment. During the day the children will be immersed in wet-on-wet painting, drawing, beeswax modelling, simple hand crafts using wool and other natural materials, baking, eurhythmy, puppetry, gardening, caring for animals and most importantly imaginative play. This not only nourishes the child, but helps to develop a true joy for life and nature.

TOYS

Natural play materials are provided for their inherent beauty and character. Off cut blocks, pine cones, shells, knitted and wooden animals provide a rich source for the child's creative play. Playstands with silk or cotton cloths offer scope for indoor cubbies and dress-ups. The forms of the simple toys and dolls give scope for imagination; for example, a doll might become a farmer, a baby or mother. This means that facial features should not be too pronounced. Many of today's toys rob the child of these imaginative opportunities.

SONGS

Songs are sung throughout the session, which aids in the transition from one activity to another, for the pure joy of singing and to nourish the soul within. Be encouraged to learn and sing our songs at home with your child.

STORIES

We tell nature, seasonal and festival stories, all of which express life in simple, rhythmic and artistic ways. When children are listening to stories being told they have to create their own pictures. They must bring together both their experience and imagination to make sense of the words and to actually create the pictures in their minds. Story time is a time that can enliven, inspire and deeply nourish their inner being.

CLOTHING

Just as we aim to provide wholesome natural toys, so too should our children be given the benefits of natural fibre clothing. The skin is an important sense organ, separating our body from the environment, yet at the same time relating us to it through the senses of touch and temperature. The life element (common to people, animals and plants) is lacking in synthetics. Natural fibres give a sense of soul comfort, while synthetics are foreign to human nature and should be avoided.

It is important that young children be kept warm. Woollen or cotton singlets, socks, vests, jumpers and hats worn in cold weather help to provide this essential warmth.

The Kindergarten is a place of active work and play, we encourage play in all weathers and ask for children to come dressed in clothes suitable for play. We do not have a uniform and solid colours without slogans are preferred.

FOOD

In keeping with a wholesome atmosphere, we make sure that the morning and afternoon tea we provide are of the highest quality. Where possible organic or biodynamic foods are used, eggs from the farm, local honey and so on. In 2007 we began a rubbish-free lunch policy. We encourage simple and nourishing lunches.

Early Childhood Education (0-7) based on the work of Rudolf Steiner

“The very young, Pre-school aged child comes to know the world and others through physical, sensory activity. This is an immediate, participative way of knowing, by which the child through physical activity, and above all through imitation, emulation and play, comes to know and make the world its own.” Rudolf Steiner

‘The first six or seven years are of vital importance to a child as they explore their world. Tremendous life forces are evident in this period, particularly in the area of the will which is the natural and dominant cognitive force at this stage.

In this phase, and at a very rapid pace, infants and young children master the skills of movement and coordination, speech, gesture, verbal and non-verbal communication, social interaction and many others. As we know, the young child mimics everything from physical movements through to attitudes and values-the latter forming the basis for future moral development. Formal literacy and numeracy skills are not taught at this age, but their future development is grounded in a rich experience of oral and practical learning experiences’ (Steiner Education Aust, RSSA).

The Kinder/Prep Environment

We strive to make the Kindergarten and Prep rooms a beautiful space. The forms of the buildings, the colour of the walls, the furnishings and toys, the quality of life which enters the rooms and the gardens themselves are all regarded as significant influences upon the children.

The World Today

In "The Right to Childhood-a Human Right" Neil Postman says that there is a danger of the "disappearance of childhood going under the cloak of modernity". Children and teens are often treated like adults and we need to ask if this prepares young people better for their future tasks within society? The conditions for childhood development need to be respected, protected and realized in an enduring way.

A Global Education

Rudolf Steiner established the first Steiner School in Stuttgart, Germany in 1919. Today there are around 1000 schools and 1600 Kinders in 60 countries, numerous special education centres and teacher training centres. UNESCO has recognised Steiner Education's strong humanitarian and non-discriminatory approach, crossing racial and cultural divides.

Steiner Education in Australia

The first Steiner school 'Gleneaon' began in Sydney in 1957 with three students. The Steiner movement has since grown to 44 schools and early childhood centres. All Steiner schools are registered and accredited with the relevant State educational Authority and meet all the State and Federal requirements.

Our journey....

Classes at the Geelong Rudolf Steiner School began in February 2000 and emerged from the culmination of ten years work of the Geelong Steiner Association. The Association was established in 1991 with family playgroups and in 1996 the Kindergarten commenced. In 2004 we relocated to Freshwater Creek thanks to a generous gift from our Patron and several other families. We have received Federal and State funding for our 'Big room', improvements to portables, water tanks and the Wet lands. In 2009 we received federal funding for an outdoor kitchen and two classrooms. The buildings and grounds you see today are the result of much good will, effort, devotion and care of our past and present teachers and families.

We currently offer Playgroups, Pre Kinder, Kindergarten, Prep and Classes 1-6. We have an active Community life with a Parent's choir, Gardening group, Parent's & Friends, & host workshops and conferences throughout the year.

FURTHER READING

You are your child's first teacher, R
Baldwin

Lifeways: working with family
questions G. Davy and B. Voors

A guide To Child Health Glockler and
Goebel

Who's Bringing them up? M. Large

The Incarnating Child J. Salter

The Education of the Child R. Steiner

All Year Round Druitt, Fynes-Clinton
& Rowling

Festivals Family and Food Carey &
Large

Seven Times the Sun guiding your
child through the rhythms of the day S.
Darlan

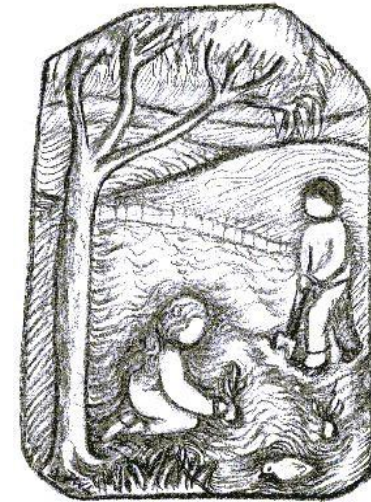
Natural Childhood A practical guide
to the first seven years J.B. Thomson

Free your child's true potential
M. Rawson

Mitten Strings for God - Reflections for
Mothers in a Hurry K. Kenison

Work and Play in Early Childhood.
Freya Jaffke

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