



FRENCH-AUSTRALIAN PRESCHOOL

INFORMATION HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

What service does the French Australian Preschool provide?

The French Australian preschool provides children with a unique experience of learning in both French and English. The curriculum taught is based on the French Model with regard to aims and syllabus content, however it is taught within the NSW Department of Community Services requirements.

Why is it important to attend the preschool before starting at the Lycée Condorcet?

The French Australian preschool provides children with the opportunity to complete the first of three cycles in the French education system. It has a vital role in providing the educational and pedagogical base for the knowledge that will become systematic at the primary school level.

More importantly, it provides local children who do not have French as their mother tongue the opportunity to learn how to speak the French Language. Children will not be able to enter into the Lycée Condorcet (except at IB level) unless they have passed through the preschool and so acquired sufficient French in the process.

Do you have to be French to attend the preschool?

Australian parents or parents of other nationalities wanting to provide their child with a bilingual education can enrol their child at the preschool, however experience shows that it requires a particular effort on both the children's and their families' part (extra curricular activities, practicing the language outside school hours). Therefore, the families' role is vital in organising such activities.

The French School of Sydney encourages parents to make an informed decision about their child's education by reading the literature provided by the school on the curriculum taught and the level of French required from children before enrolling their child.

What do I need to do to place my child's name on the French Australian Preschool waiting list?

- Obtain information regarding the French Australian Preschool and the French School of Sydney,
- Visit the French Australian Preschool and the French School of Sydney,
- Complete the application form and questionnaire and return it with the \$100 processing fee.

Are you guaranteed a position by completing the application form?

Completing the application form places your child's name on the preschool waiting list. It does not guarantee that a position will be offered. You will ONLY be contacted if a position becomes available for your child. You will be notified either by phone or in writing.

The preschool has a lengthy waiting list for both age groups, therefore parents that are interested in enrolling their child in the French School of Sydney from preschool need to ensure they visit the school and organise their application form to be processed as early as possible.

What are the admission guidelines?

The French School of Sydney has developed admission guidelines to ensure a fair enrolment process. The preschool has a responsibility to ensure that the admission guidelines set out by the Lycée Condorcet French School of Sydney are followed when offering a position to families.

Places are allocated according to the guidelines set out by the French School of Sydney. These include:

- Priority to children that already have siblings that attend the French School of Sydney. The French School of Sydney recognises the importance of keeping families together.
- Priority to children that have a parent employed by the French School of Sydney. The French School of Sydney recognises the importance of satisfactory child care/schooling in maintaining an employees commitment to their work. We therefore offer a position to our staff members where possible.
- The waiting list is maintained by the Director and is confidential. The centre allocates places according to position on the waiting list within the guidelines above. The preschool will not exceed its licence number.
- In February/March each year the preschool will write to each family with a child on the waiting list due to start in August in the petite section. Those wishing to remain on the list will be required to return a confirmation form in order to maintain their place on the waiting list. If this is not returned names will be removed from the list. The preschool will not be responsible if the confirmation form has not been returned due to change of address. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the information provided is current.

What do I need to know before accepting a position at the French Australian Preschool?

- If a position being offered is declined for any reason a position will then be offered ONLY if one becomes available.
- Children have to be three years of age to begin at the preschool. The preschool licence stipulates that the preschool only accept children on the day of their third birthday and after. In the event that a child turns three in the months following the beginning of the school year in August, parents will still be offered a position for their child. However the preschool is unable to reserve a position for children until they turn three without payment, as the preschool is required to operate at full capacity. Parents are required to commence payment of fees from the first day of first semester.
- Children have to be toilet trained before they begin preschool. Children need to be able to go to the toilet without assistance and be dry for most of the day. In the event that a child is not completely toilet trained and has three or more accidents in the one day, he/she will not be permitted to return until they are completely toilet trained. Parents are required to commence payment of fees from the first day of first semester, as the preschool is unable to reserve a position without payment for children until they are toilet trained.

- The preschool only enrolls children on a full-time basis Monday-Friday (5 days). There is an option for the 3-4 year old (Petite section) children to attend 4 days per week, taking ONLY WEDNESDAYS OFF, but without a special rate of fees.
- An acceptance fee of \$975 is payable upon acceptance of a place. This fee will be retained and credited against the 2nd semester of Year 2 school fees. Please note that the \$975 fee is not refunded if you decline the position after having previously accepted the position or if you withdraw your child before the end of 2nd semester of Year 2. Under circumstances related to interstate or overseas relocation a refund will be considered if the application is made at least four weeks before your child's last day. This request for a refund must be made to the treasurer. Please note that supporting travel or schooling documents will be required for your application to be considered.
- Parents must complete the preschool enrolment form and provide proof of age (Birth certificate OR Passport), a copy of the child's immunisation status and a copy of the parents visa if the child is not an Australian citizen or permanent resident. The information requested in the enrolment form is a Department of Community Services requirement and is confidential. Children will not be permitted to begin at the preschool if this information has not been provided.
- Parents are also required to familiarise themselves with the "Policies and Practices" document prior to their child commencing preschool.

Do I have to enrol my child in the French School of Sydney as well as the preschool?

If your child is enrolled at the preschool there is no need to enrol them in the main school as well. The waiting list at the preschool is used to enrol children for the Petite section and Moyenne section classes. It is also used to enrol children in Kindergarten if a position did not become available at the preschool.

Children in the Moyenne section will make up the Kindergarten classes the following year and any remaining places will be offered to children on the waiting list.

Parents of children in the Moyenne section will receive all the relevant paper work needed to formally enrol their child in kindergarten towards the end of the school year.

Who can answer my questions regarding the information I have just read?

Parents are encouraged to contact the Director of the French Australian Preschool for all matters related to children 3-5yrs and the French School of Sydney for all matters related to children in primary and secondary classes.

PHILOSOPHY

The preschool believes that the "first steps in learning" are chronologically the first challenges the young children have to face. They are the first steps because they allow the children to discover that learning is now a natural part of their daily life.

The preschool aims:

To introduce children to the first experience of learning and encourage children, without prejudice to the first steps of learning.

To provide the educational and pedagogical base for the knowledge that will become systematic at the primary school level.

CHILDREN

The preschool believes it is important to provide children with a happy, successful and positive school experience.

The preschool aims:

- To make the transition from the child's everyday life in his/her family into the schooling environment as easy as possible by providing children with support in the school environment and by taking into consideration their identity, rhythm and needs at this age-stage of development.
- To provide all possible opportunities for children to merge smoothly into the preschool setting by encouraging participation in the different activities and experiences and by providing withdrawal time and retreat as indicated by individual behaviour.
- To create for each child the conditions for harmonious advancement and to respect the rhythm of their individual development and personality.
- To provide an environment for children that encourages personal growth in their particular cultural universe, stimulates their curiosity and leads them to further their knowledge with total security.

PARENTS

The preschool believes that the quality of the relationship, the cooperation between the preschool and the family is the foundation that will guarantee the success for the educational partnership and consequent achievement of each individual child.

The preschool believes that the teachers share the task of educating children with parents.

The preschool aims:

- To provide an environment that encourages the exchange of information between the teachers and parents.
- To explain, justify and make parents understand all available choices.
- To provide adequate time to listen to each family and to advise them about the program and difficulties their child encounters.

PROGRAM

The preschool believes that the program should provide children with opportunities to explore a variety of situations, cultural worlds and use different tools and pieces of equipment.

The preschool aims:

- To provide children with opportunities to explore the world through play, leads to many sensory, motor, emotional and intellectual experiences.

- To structure their learning according to the five fields of activities:
 1. The language in the centre of education
The children will have the opportunity, through this field, to practice both the French and English written and spoken language.
 2. Living in community
The children will discover through this field how to live in a community, exchange and cooperate within it and its individual members and establish their place within the preschool, cooperatively and as individuals.
 3. Act and express oneself with one's body
The children will have the opportunity through this field to broaden the range of their experiences in their environment and space, which will help them get to know themselves better and to develop their physical capabilities.
 4. Discovering the world
The children will have the opportunity through this field to express their curiosity by discovering, beyond the immediate experience, some of the phenomena, which characterise their lives, the matter or man made objects. Activities related to this field will enable children to differentiate the physical world from the living world.
 5. Sensibility, imagination and creativity
The children will have the opportunity through this field to participate in creative and artistic activities that will not only be the means of expression and discovery, but will open ways to consolidate knowledge and to explore new interconnections. They will learn to search, invent, transform, express, experience the pleasure of creation.
 6. Cross competences
The five fields of activities, which aim at developing specific skills, also allow children to develop cross competences. They are able to develop and encourage curiosity, desire to know, assertion of self, the respect for others and autonomy.
- To provide continual evaluation to ensure that the needs and interests of the children are incorporated in the program.

STAFF

The preschool believes that in caring for young children it is essential that staff members are provided with a pleasant working environment and feel appreciated.

The preschool aims:

- To provide a pleasant environment for staff to work in and feel appreciated. To feel a sense of belonging which involves friendship, mutual respect and a shared sense of purpose.
- To employ well qualified and motivated staff.
- To provide staff with access to continuing education.

PRESCHOOL ROUTINE

PETITE'S DAILY ROUTINE

8.00 a.m. Children's reception (free activities)
(Indoor or outdoor depending on the season)

9.00	Roll call - Group time and programmed activity, according to children's interests. Set activities (pre-writing, reading, maths, arts & craft, construction and manipulative activities)
9.40	Pack away time and transition to the bathroom
9.45	Morning tea
10.00	Outdoor play
10.30	French lesson
11.00	Group time
11.20	Transition to bathroom for lunch
11.30	Lunch
12.15 p.m.	Wash hands and face after lunch
12.20	Music and movement, story and preparation for rest/sleep
12.45	Transition children for sleep/rest
2.00	Dressing and toileting children as they wake, quiet activities
2.30	Art and Craft activity
3.00	Language and literacy group
3.15	Prepare children for home time/aftercare
3.30-5.30	After school care

MOYENNE'S DAILY ROUTINE

8.00 a.m.	Children's reception (free activities) (Indoor or outdoor depending on the season)
9.00	Welcome the children, free play, and individual activities
9.20	Discussion: Date, presence, activities of the day, weather & "The book of life".
9.30	Gym activities (Dancing, running, jumping, collective games...)
9.50	Language activities & songs
10.15	Morning tea
10.30	Outdoor play
11.00	Graphism &/or Maths activities
11.30	English lesson
12.00	Toileting/Lunch
12.40 p.m.	Wash hands and face after lunch
12.45	Individual reading
1.00	Story reading
1.10	Toileting/Rest
2.10	Art activities (Friday: Maths games and activities)
2.45	Cognitive activities
3.00	Discussion: Review of the day
3.15	Afternoon tea
3.30-5.30	After school care

* Please note the above activities are conducted in both Moyenne and petite classes however the time of the day they are conducted may vary slightly.

ACTIVITIES ALL FOUR CLASSES PARTICIPATE IN THROUGHOUT THE WEEK:

- All four classes participate in an obstacle course set up outdoors once a week
- Children borrow a French book every week to take home
- The children in the Moyenne classes go to the main school gym once a week to participate in gross motor activities.

ALL ABOUT OUR BILINGUAL PRESCHOOL

PREMISES

The preschool is purpose built and has many unique structural attributes. It is made up of four large and spacious classrooms and the dining room, a main feature that encourages socialisation and positive eating practices. The preschool also has a large outdoor environment for children to get active.

STRUCTURE OF THE DAY

The day is organised to provide a balance between indoor and outdoor activities, organised activities and free play as well as times for retreat and sleep.

LANGUAGE

Children have the opportunity throughout the day to experience both the French and English languages in written and spoken texts. Children are exposed to both languages through formal teaching experiences, daily routines and interactions with French and English speaking staff and children.

LIVING IN A COMMUNITY

Children are provided with the opportunity to discover how to live in a community, exchange and cooperate within it and to establish their place within the preschool, cooperatively and as individuals through excursions, incursions and preschool functions.

SENSIBILITY, IMAGINATION AND CREATIVITY

Children are highly encouraged to participate in creative and artistic activities not only as a means of expression and discovery, but as a way of consolidating knowledge and exploring interconnections. They learn to search, invent, transform, express and experience the pleasure of creation.

ACT AND EXPRESS ONESELF WITH ONE'S BODY

The preschool program ensures children are provided with opportunities throughout the day to participate in physical experiences, both structured and child directed. Visits to the school gym, obstacle course day and outdoor play all ensure children are exploring their environment and space, helping them to get to know themselves better as well as to develop their physical capabilities.

STAFF

The preschool maintains a 1 to 10 ratio in the preschool and employs teachers that are highly qualified in the French and Australian systems. Your child will be cared by:

- 3 qualified Early Childhood Teachers
- 2 qualified French teachers
- 1 advanced childcare worker qualified
- 6 bi-lingual preschool assistants

HOURS OF OPERATION

The preschool operates Monday to Friday from 8.00 a.m to 5.30 p.m. - 36 weeks a year.

- Preschool hours 8.00 am to 3.25 p.m.
- After school care hours are 3.30 p.m. - 5.25 p.m.
- Preschool is closed on public holidays

HOLIDAYS

The holidays will include 2 pupil free days in August, 2 weeks in September/October, 2 pupil free days in November, 5 weeks at Christmas, 1 pupil free day in January, 2 weeks in April, 6 weeks Winter holidays, all inclusive 16 weeks holidays.

LUNCHES AND SNACKS

Parents need to provide nutritional morning and afternoon tea snacks from home. However, lunch can be sent from home or ordered from the school canteen at an extra cost.

PRESCHOOL FEES

Please refer to current Fee Policy and calendar schedule attached.

ILLNESS

Children with contagious illnesses will not be accepted at preschool until a doctor's certificate is issued.

Only specific prescription with the name of your child and the dosage will be administered at Preschool. A medication form must also be completed and signed at the preschool.

Should you have any further queries or wish to visit the preschool, please make an appointment or contact us on 9349 6714.

Thank you for your interest in the French Australian Preschool.

Katerin Bonatakis
Preschool Director