

PROSPECTUS



HAHNDORF – ADELAIDE HILLS

Welcome to little nook

Our vision

A place where children feel safe, secure and respected, enabling them to learn, explore and grow in confidence.

At little nook children and families are at the heart of everything we do, we are driven by integrity, and are locally owned and operated. We pride ourselves on providing a high standard of care and education for all children, and aim to have a solid reputation.

With the ever-growing industry being taken over by large corporate, interstate owned and multiple-site companies it was decided that our community deserved more. We live in the community, we believe in the community and we care about our community.

Little nook is a place where children can feel safe, secure and respected, enabling them to learn, explore and grow in confidence. We are passionate about providing a premium, nurturing learning environment where young minds grow.

Architecturally designed, our play spaces are divided into age appropriate nooks, filled with beauty, nature and order to inspire, engage and activate the child's own natural desire to learn through their own experience at their own pace.

Our unique learning approach is inspired by the world-renowned Montessori philosophy and principles in a child-centred environment, which embraces respect, independence, creativity, and discovery of the world around us.

We understand and respect the level of trust you place in us when enrolling your child, and we are ready to welcome you and your child, preparing them to build a solid foundation for life-long learning.

Our passionate qualified educators provide the children and families in our care with support and respect. We hope your time at little nook is a treasured memory in your child's formative years, and remember we are here to help you.

Please read on to see what makes little nook a wonderful place to be for your family.



Sandy and Richard Munro
Founders





"Play is the work of the child"

Maria Montessori



Our environments

Little nook is a purpose built early learning facility, architecturally designed to accommodate infants, toddlers, and preschool age children.

In collaboration with architects, engineers, interior designers, landscape architects and early childhood consultants every decision was led by putting children's needs first.

Functional yet aesthetically pleasing with a home like feel all materials have been selected with an understanding of the impact they have on a child's health and well-being.

- Our building is orientated to receive natural daylight minimising the need for lighting
- Passive ventilation methods to limit cross infection and reduce harmful CO2 build ups

- Bacteriostatic flooring specifically selected to minimise and destroy bacteria
- Acoustic ceilings to minimise noise
- Ease of indoor/outdoor play, creating freedom of movement
- Separate light filled dining room with child-sized kitchen opening to outdoor alfresco
- Environmental and sustainable outdoor nature play

Our modern play experiences are centred on engagement and intention, and void the typical overstimulating elements of children's play. Children can learn through their own experience at their own pace, responding to the natural curiosities that exist in all humans and build a solid foundation for life-long learning.



Sustainability

Maria Montessori was an early champion of global thinking and looking after the environment. Every day our children are discovering information about the world we live in and how to care for it. We are committed to making a positive contribution to our families, our community and our environment.

Significant consideration was spent with every aspect of the build; with the aim to complete it with the lowest possible VOC levels; from building materials, ceiling panels, paint on the walls, furnishings, and floor coverings.

We seek to purchase products and resources that have the least negative impact on the environment; selecting many second hand and repurposed items, natural materials, stone, metals, wood, clay and plants.

Our cleaning products and systems have been carefully considered to reduce the risk to toxins and chemicals where possible while being environmentally friendly.

Our children have a right to a sustainable future. They will be the policy-makers and leaders of the future, so what we teach them now about the environment will directly influence the long-term health of the planet.

We are on a journey together, learning to care for our planet.



The little nook way

We believe that each child is unique, and that all children have the right to reach their full potential. As educators we have a responsibility to enable each child to develop and learn through encouragement, respect and support in a caring and safe environment.

We believe that a child's environment is an important part of learning, and for children to learn, they need to feel safe and secure with freedom of choice to work in a child-centred environment. We recognise and provide an environment in which the children can flourish and grow with self-esteem. We apply methods of learning which involve: joy in learning, love of order, the need to be independent, the need to be respected and the need to be listened to.

We believe that children should be able to grow in knowledge through a creative learning framework that aims to meet the educational, developmental and emotional needs of each child.

We believe it is essential for children to use their imagination, to be curious, to be creative and to experience fun.

- This is enhanced with the support of warm, caring and well-trained educators.
- Children are stimulated by a well-prepared curriculum.
- A quality physical environment that allows children and educators to maximise play and "work".



Our inspiration is set by beliefs and principles:



The MONTESSORI approach

'Only through freedom and environmental experience is it practically possible for human development to occur'.

Maria Montessori



We are inspired by the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori, whose method builds a solid foundation for life-long learning. Montessori is a holistic, self-paced approach to learning based on a set of core principles. Montessori discovered that children absorb information from their surroundings, and if these surroundings provide opportunities for learning, children will readily teach themselves.

Montessori principles:

- **Respect for the child**
Educators instill respect and kindness in children by showing it to each child. Respect is the foundation of the Montessori method.
- **Sensitive Periods**
Children pass through specific stages in their development when they are able to learn specific skills, this is called 'sensitive periods.' Educators support these periods by providing children with hands-on learning experiences that encourage repetition and problem solving to maximise learning during these windows of opportunity.

- **The Absorbent Mind**

Children learn from their environments and are always absorbing new information. The young mind is ready and eager to learn.

- **Role of the teacher**

Being mindful of children's changing interests, developmental needs, and emotions, the role of the teacher is to observe and guide.

- **Prepared Environment**

The prepared environment is designed to optimise learning. The materials within the environment encourage hands-on learning, independent problem solving, and analytical thinking. Each material is designed with a visual control of error, to isolate one skill or concept, child-sized furniture, freedom of movement, and freedom of choice.



The RIE approach



A place where children feel safe, secure and respected, enabling them to learn, explore and grow in confidence.

Magda Gerber



The RIE (resources for infants) principles are very important to us. We not only respect infants we value and demonstrate the importance of relationships and interactions between educator and child.



RIE approach encourages the following principles:

- **Trust in the infants competence**
We have trust in the infant to learn what they are ready for. We only provide enough help necessary to allow the child to master their own actions.
- **Sensitive observation**
We observe carefully to understand the infant's communication and needs, and respect their competence. Infants learn at a rapid speed in their first 2 years of life, we teach less and provide an environment for learning instead.
- **Involving the child**
It is important that during care activities that we are doing things 'with' children and not 'to' children (feeding, dressing, blowing nose and changing nappy etc.) We want to encourage babies no matter how big or how small to become active participants rather than a passive recipient.
- **A safe, challenging and predictable environment**
Our role is to create a safe environment with minimal clutter, beautifully designed for uninterrupted play and freedom for infants to explore. The more predictable the environment the easier it is for them to learn.
- **Time for uninterrupted play and freedom to explore**
Little nook is designed to encourage infants to explore and move freely, instead of trying to teach new skills, we allow them more time for uninterrupted play and admire what they are actually doing. Never put a baby in a position they cannot get themselves into.
- **Consistency**
Our educators will clearly define limits and expectations in a calm and peaceful way, which fosters trust, security and predictability.

National curriculum

The Early Years Learning Framework is the National Curriculum and covers children's learning about Being, Belonging and Becoming. Our educators will use this framework as a guide to develop detailed learning programs.

This is enhanced with the support of warm, caring and well-trained educators.

- **Belonging**

Belonging relates to knowing where and with whom you belong. Children belong first to a family, a cultural group, a neighbourhood and a wider community.

Belonging acknowledges children's interdependence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities. In early childhood and throughout life, relationships are crucial to a sense of belonging. Belonging is central to being and becoming in that it shapes who children are and who they can become.

- **Being**

Childhood is a time to be, to seek and make meaning of the world. Being recognises the significance of the here and now. It is about the present and children knowing themselves, building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging with life's joys and complexities, and meeting challenges in everyday life. The early childhood years are not solely preparation for the future but also about the present.

- **Becoming**

Children's identities, knowledge, understanding, capacities, skills and relationships change during childhood. Becoming reflects this process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years as young children learn and grow. It emphasises learning to participate fully and actively in society.

Together, these beliefs and principles form our curriculum delivery at little nook and ensures that your child has every opportunity to reach their full potential.



Our learning nooks



Nursery – The nest



*A place to shelter
and grow our young.*



A nurturing learning environment for infants

Our environment

Our nursery learning nook is designed to nurture the infant, to make them feel safe and support each child's unique learning opportunities as they form their personality and intelligence.

We support loving, respectful caregiving practices, believing that children are capable unique individuals.

The focus is to assist the infant as they take their first steps towards independence, and help them achieve milestones that support their natural development.

Our goals

- Provide a nurturing environment that promotes curiosity, discovery and engagement
- Foster language development through language enriched activities
- Offer opportunities to practice everyday tasks to gain independence
- Foster confidence in their emerging abilities
- Develop hand-eye coordination, visual discrimination, fine and gross motor skills
- Provide opportunities for practical life activities
- Foster social skills and exercises in grace and courtesy
- Introduce Montessori specific materials

Our Educators

In the nursery, we provide a ratio of one educator to four children.



Toddlers – The hive

“
*A place to be
busy and curious.*
”

An active learning environment designed
for toddlers

- **Our environment**

Our toddler learning nooks are designed to support the holistic development of the toddler, and provide a safe, supportive and emotionally nurturing environment where children can thrive.

We continue to practice respectful relationships with the children in our care, when a toddler feels safe, secure and respected, the most exciting growth happens.

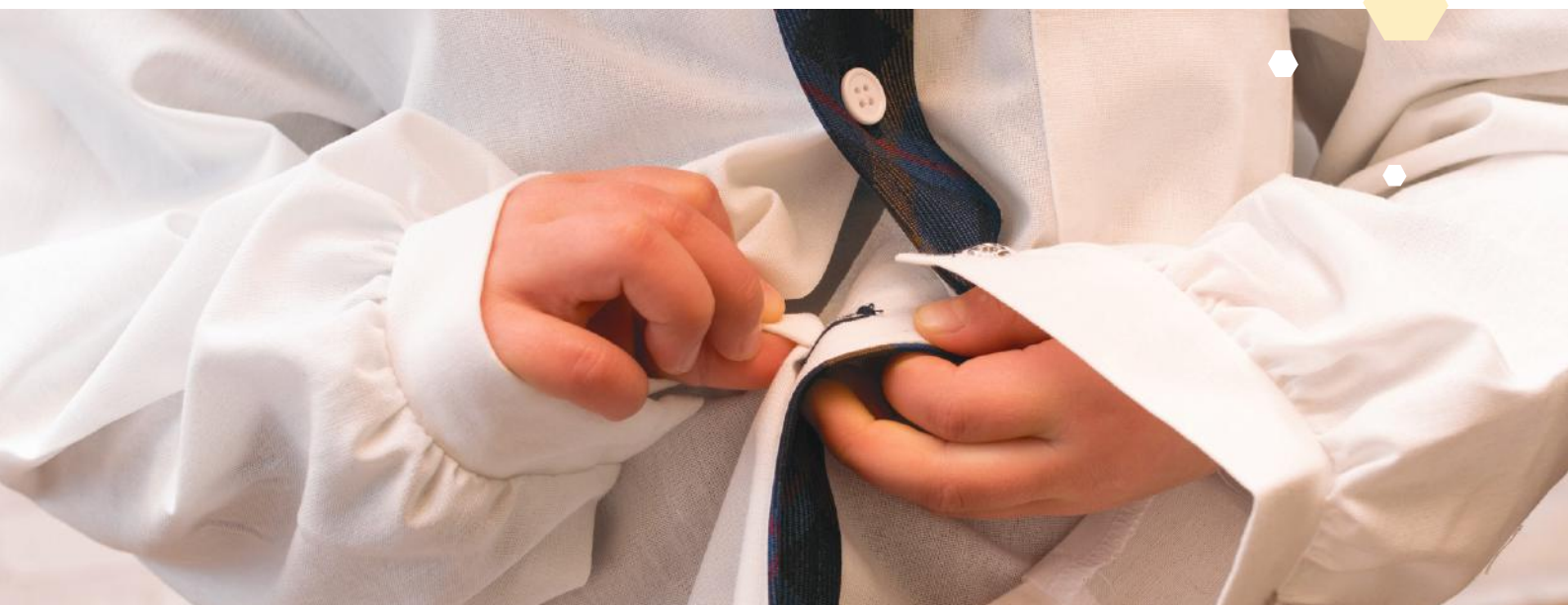
The focus is to nurture this age groups growing need for self-care, self-regulation, independence, order, sensory exploration, movement and language.

- **Our goals**

- Provide a safe and nurturing learning environment that promotes curiosity, discovery and engagement
- Provide clear and consistent boundaries in a calm and caring manner
- Foster self-help, independence, confidence and autonomy
- Develop a sense of self-identity, belonging and community
- Foster effective communication social skills and exercises in grace and courtesy
- Promote respect for diversity and care for their environment
- Introduce Montessori specific materials
- Refine gross motor coordination and fine motor skills
- Encourage children to develop skills and processes such as critical thinking and experimentation

- **Our Educators**

In our toddlers, we provide a ratio of one educator to five children.





Preschool – The burrow



*A place to investigate,
connect and thrive.*



A holistic learning environment
for **preschoolers**

- **Our environment**

Our preschool learning nook is designed to allow the child to figure out how their world works, they want to learn about themselves and the world around them. During this age the child's world expands, fulfilling their innate desire to learn through direct sensory experiences with self-teaching materials.

We continue to develop respectful relationships with the children in our care, providing a secure base that gives them the confidence to explore and learn independently.

The focus is to prepare the child for life long learning, helping them to develop a strong sense of self, independence, self-motivation and the love of learning.

- **Our goals**

- Provide a safe, engaging and nurturing learning environment
- Introduce Montessori specific materials
- Foster independence, concentration, and self-correction
- Promote social development through respectful and clear communication
- Refine sensory perception and the development of literacy and mathematical understanding
- Foster the development of communication, creativity, collaboration and critical thinking skills
- Offer opportunities for imaginative exploration, leading to confident, creative self-expression
- Preparation for school and beyond

- **Our Educators**

We provide a ratio of one educator to ten children.



When children come
into contact with nature,
they reveal their strength

Maria Montessori

Group sizes

Our individual learning nooks are specifically designed for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

We understand the importance for siblings to be together, so have accommodated regular opportunities for all children to interact with other age groups.

- **Infants** – 12 – 16 children
(educator to child ratio of 1:4)
- **Toddlers** – 15 – 20 children in each nook
(educator to child ratio of 1:5)
- **Preschoolers** – 20 – 30 children
(educator to child ratio of 1:10)

Settling your child

Although new and exciting, a child's first day is a big step for you and your child. Some children take this step with confidence while others meet it with uncertainty.

Our experienced trained educators are there to assist you in settling your child into their new environment. We offer two transition visits with a parent, for the child to adapt to their new surroundings. The length of time and number of visits may vary, as this is not a process that can be hurried. If your child is in need of more than two visits, please discuss this further with the lead educator in the room in consultation with the director.

Some suggestions that can help your child with settling:

- Visit the centre before leaving your child there. Talk to your child about the centre and spend time familiarising yourself and your child with this new environment.
- Always reassure your child that you will be back to collect them.
- Always say goodbye to them every time you leave. If you suddenly leave your child may become more anxious about you leaving and not returning.
- Let them take a special toy or comforter so they feel more comfortable.
- Spend time with your child once you've picked them up asking about their day. Ask them who/what they played with and what made them happy, this will make them feel more comfortable.
- Try not to introduce too many changes at the same time.
- Make sure you provide our educators with all relevant information regarding your child and their individual needs, including routines and emotions.
- Call the centre often as you feel, very soon you will know that your child is absorbed in the daily activities and experiences of the centre and will feel like they belong.

Food and nutrition



We value the importance of food and nutrition and appreciate the impact we have in establishing healthy eating habits, helping to shape your child's attitude towards food, setting them up for life. Quality food that children eat significantly contributes to their growth and development and is vital for young bodies and minds.

Our carefully designed menu has been created in consultation with the nutritional requirements as per the Start Right Eat Right program – Department of Health SA. This ensures it is well-balanced, nutrient dense, high quality, and most importantly delicious to eat!

Our centre Chef provides 4 freshly prepared nutritional meals / snacks each day, morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and late snack.

Children are offered milk and water throughout the day.

We are a Food Safe premises and ask your cooperation in ensuring that NO FOOD is brought into the centre from home. This complies with our Food Safe Plan, as per the Food Safety Act –Department of Health SA.

** Please ensure that any special needs, allergies, medical conditions and dietary requirements your child might have are recorded on the enrolment form and discussed with the Director.*

Sample menu

- **Morning Tea** – Fresh fruit platters, date oatmeal & quinoa loaf, natural yoghurt. Water/Milk
- **Lunch** – Mixed grain wraps with salad & vegetable with or without protein. Water/Milk
- **Afternoon Tea** – Blueberry muffins, cheddar cheese and sultanas. Water/Milk
- **Late Snack** – Gluten free crackers with hummus or vegemite. Water
- **Infants** – Mashed seasonal vegetables with or without protein, pureed seasonal fruits. Water/Milk

Dining area

A beautiful light filled dining area has been designed in the centre of the building with children in mind, children can self regulate and come together for their mealtimes to learn and enjoy healthy eating while developing their self-help and practical life skills.



National Quality Standards

The National Quality Standard (NQS) sets the national benchmark for early childhood and care and out side school hours care services in Australia.

The NQS includes 7 quality areas that are important out comes for children.

Services are assessed and rated by the regulatory authority against the NQS, and given a rating for each of the 7 quality areas and an overall rating based on these results.

- **QUALITY AREA 1 – Educational program and practice**

Educational program and practice of educators are child-centred, stimulating and maximise opportunities for enhancing and extending each child's learning and development.

- **QUALITY AREA 2 – Children's health and safety**

Children have the right to experience quality education and care in an environment that safeguards and promotes their health, safety and wellbeing.

- **QUALITY AREA 3 – Physical environment**

Physical environment is safe, suitable and provides a rich and diverse range of experiences that promote children's learning and development.

- **QUALITY AREA 4 – Staffing arrangements**

Qualified and experienced educators, who develop warm, respectful relationships with children, create predictable environments and encourage children's active engagement in the learning program.

- **QUALITY AREA 5 – Relationships with children**

Relationships with children are responsive, respectful and promote children's sense of security and belonging.

- **QUALITY AREA 6 – Collaborative partnerships with families and communities**

Collaborative relationships with families are fundamental to achieving quality outcomes for children, and community partnerships based on active communication, consultation and collaboration are essential.

- **QUALITY AREA 7 – Governance and leadership**

Effective leadership and governance of the service contributes to quality environments for children's learning and development. Effective leaders establish shared values for the service and set clear direction for the service's continuous improvement.



Enrolment information

Operating hours

Open 52 weeks of the year
Monday to Friday 6.30 am – 6.30 pm
Closed ALL public holidays
(normal fees still apply)

Priority of access guidelines

New enrolments are taken based on the Enrolment Priority and Access guidelines set by the Commonwealth Family Assistance Office (FAO). They set out the following three levels of priority, which child care services must follow when filling vacant places:

- **PRIORITY 1** – A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- **PRIORITY 2** – A child of single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work, training, study test under Section 14 of a New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999.
- **PRIORITY 3** – Any other child

Within each category, the following children are to be given priority:

- Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families

- Children in families which include a disabled person
- Children in families which include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold or who or whose partner are on income support
- Children in families with a non-English speaking background
- Children in socially isolated families

Fees, sessions and bookings

The booked session is charged in full, even if your child has only been present for part of it or even if they are absent.

Full day session	6.30 am – 6.30 pm
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Full-time session	6.30 am – 6.30 pm
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Casual session	(families with non-permanent bookings)
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Once enrolled, you are charged as a permanent position at the centre for the required days of care booked. You are guaranteed your position at the centre on a weekly basis. If your child is unwell or will not be able to attend childcare for any reason, you will be charged as normal.



Enrolment information ... continued

Child Care Subsidy

Little nook early learning is an approved provider; The Commonwealth Government provides Child Care Subsidy via Family Assistance Office. This subsidy is used to reduce the amount that parents are required to pay to the centre. Parents may apply for Child Care Subsidy through their local FAO. Child Care Subsidy is based on each family's income and the onus is on each family to ensure that they have a current assessment notice in order to

receive benefits. It is also up to the family to notify the department of any income changes. Please contact your local FAO to organise your Child Care Subsidy before commencement of care.

Please be advised that children must attend on their first and last day of care to be eligible for reduced fee. *If they do not attend, you will be charged full fee.*



Enrolment information ... continued

Immunisation

Your child must meet the immunisation requirements if they are under the age of 7 to be eligible for Child Care Subsidy. To meet the requirements, your child must be fully immunised according to the Australian Standard Vaccination Schedule unless approved documentation has been provided.

Families must provide the centre with a copy of their child's updated ACIR (Australian Immunisation Register) history statement and ensure that the records maintained by the centre are up to date as required.

Non-immunised children in the event of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease at the centre, unimmunised children will be required to remain at home for the duration of the outbreak. Fees are still payable during this time.

** All parents will be notified of infectious diseases.*

Policies and procedures

Policies and procedures are developed, implemented and reviewed on a regular basis to reflect the NQS and requirements.

It is imperative that we meet all Legislative requirements to assist in providing consistent quality care, our policies and procedures cover operational processes; children's learning & educational programs, nutrition, health & hygiene, visitors, staff management and safety.

Readily available for viewing, our policies are reviewed annually; we encourage families to participate in the evaluative process, which improves our service. If you have any questions or concerns regarding them please direct them to the Director.

Family involvement

Parent and family involvement is welcomed at little nook.

Family holds the most important influence on the way your child grows. Working together in partnership with our educators enables us to develop a better understanding of your child and respect them as unique individuals.

Siblings are welcome at little nook when children are being dropped off or collected, however our educators cannot assume responsibility for them and we would appreciate their respect while in our environment.



Final words

First impressions are the most important aspect when choosing quality care and education for your child. We can only recommend that you go with that inner feeling, and assure you that being locally owned and operated is what makes the difference with little nook.

Our industry is one of the most challenging yet rewarding careers that we can think of. Together with you, we are involved in developing the future generation of Australia, and we never take it for granted...

