

Kindergarten



**stepping
forward**

THE FIRST STEP FORWARD . . .

Kindergarten is often the child's first experience of living outside the family, and is an outward extension of the home.

When a child first starts kindergarten he needs the reassurance of his parents' company to help feel secure in this new situation. Even when he has settled in his parent still brings him and sometimes stays to talk with the teacher. This forms a link between home and kindergarten, which is strengthened if the teacher calls to see him at home. The parents' understanding of the kindergarten is increased through active participation with children and staff.

To enable parents to meet each other and get to know the teacher better, Parents Meetings are held on topics of interest, including ones relating to kindergarten. Through these many contacts, the parents and teacher are able to share their knowledge of the child.

The Programme . . .

Each week a programme is planned to meet the children's needs and interests, and local happenings are included. This is an extract from a teacher's programme book, e.g.

- (1) Men laying water pipes.
- (2) Ian's new baby brother.
- (3) Tadpoles growing legs on the nature table.
- (4) Musical instruments, since visiting orchestral rehearsal.
- (5) Jenny is very timid.

Examples of ways to follow up these leads could include:—

- (a) Excursion to see pipe laying.
Play in sand pit, using pipes, water and shovels.
Discussion with small groups on "Where our water comes from".
Story about the "Steam Shovel".
- (b) Percussion instruments available for use outside, and a group time planned for the children to see the inside of a piano.
- (c) For Ian, a doll's bath, napkins and powder added to dolls' corner.
Story "Our Baby" for the group.
- (d) Jenny may enjoy picking flowers with a teacher and another child, and arranging them in a vase for the library corner.

Play . . .

The children are free to select where they will play, but limits are set on behaviour. The teacher needs to be aware of each child and what he is doing.

The various experiences available at kindergarten cover the different areas of the development of the child.

Socially the child is learning to live amongst others by:—

- sharing toys, ideas and experiences.
- being able to take the lead and also accept the leadership of others
- standing up for his rights and respecting rights of others.
- working with set limits.

Creative development is fostered by experimentation with paints, crayons, collage, clay, finger paint, sand, earth and water. The teacher shows interest in whatever a child produces because he has made it; and to her the standard achieved is not of prime importance. Imaginative play expresses his ideas and feelings about things and people he has seen. Equipment for this includes home corner, dressing — up clothes, boxes, ladders, steering wheels etc.

Physical skills are aided by the use of various types of equipment such as scissors, puzzles and construction sets, threading beads for the development of fine motor skills and climbing equipment wheeled toys and blocks for the development of large motor skills.

Intellectual growth is stimulated through problem solving during play, with all activities, puzzles, excursions, discussions, and also by the teacher increasing the children's knowledge around their interests as they arise.

The child's ability to express himself is increased through poetry, discussion conversation, stories, excursions, music etc.

He learns to appreciate nature and science

through caring for plants and animals, through watching insects and the changing weather, and through experimenting with water and weights and measures etc.

You may see.....

That the children's play is frequently noisy, young children cannot be quiet or still for long, as they need to talk and move about as they work.

Children are putting on their own overalls, shoes and socks. Perhaps it takes more time, but by doing these things themselves they are learning to be independent.

A child is just looking on; the teacher accepts this, as some children need to watch before they join in.

The teacher shows affection to the children. Young children need the support and approval of adults.

The children have frequent disputes. The teacher stands by to see if they can settle the problem themselves or if she needs to step in with a suggestion.

The children co-operate more willingly because the teacher gives positive directions, such as "Keep the sand in the sandpit" instead of "Don't throw sand". When a child is expected to pack away playthings the teacher says, "It is time to pack away now. How many blocks can you carry?" Then the child makes the decision himself, and is more co-operative.

ASK THE TEACHER . . .

The kindergarten teacher has specialized training in Early Childhood Education and welcomes any enquiries about your child and the kindergarten programme.



K.T.A.V.

This pamphlet has been prepared by the Kindergarten Teachers' of Victoria for parents of Children attending or about to enter Kindergarten.