



# Early Learning Centre *Navigator* 2023

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**BUILDING FOUNDATIONS**



**KOROWA**  
ANGLICAN GIRLS' SCHOOL

# Welcome

## ELC MISSION

To create a social and physical environment that promotes the wonder of learning and its value as a lifelong pursuit. We appreciate and respect each individual child and the particular interests, skills and abilities they bring to the setting. Our aim is to create a learning environment which allows for rich play experiences that support the development of each child.

It is in our ELC where our youngest learners have the opportunity to explore the world. With an emphasis on play-based learning, Korowa's ELC fosters discovery at your child's pace, within a curriculum that is stimulating and informed by current research and frameworks. The environment challenges and provokes children's thinking. It reflects the interests of a community of learners and provides opportunities for exploring different learning styles. We acknowledge children as individuals, recognising and accepting differences of gender and cultural relevance. These differences are valued and celebrated. We view children as curious, capable inquirers who actively and collaboratively participate in their learning journey.

The School community plays an invaluable role at Korowa and time is taken to promote respectful partnerships. Collaboration and communication, with and between children, parents and staff, are vital to the learning process.

As an ELC to Year 12 campus, children can make use of facilities around the school including: art room, music facilities, the Sports and Wellbeing Centre and the library. Our ELC children also have access to dedicated classrooms and a playground.

Miss Joanne Barker  
Head of Junior School

At Korowa's ELC, children are the primary focus of what shapes our learning environment and programs. Korowa's passionate, creative and knowledgeable educators, work together cohesively to create a warm and inviting space for children to discover a deep love of learning.

Through a play-based program, children are encouraged and supported to develop valuable life skills such as emotional, social, physical, language and cognitive development. We love to utilise the world around us and often use and cherish natural resources while teaching the children about caring for their environment.

The flexibility of the program at Korowa, allows children to construct meaning from the world around them while drawing on and applying previous knowledge to new experiences within the environment.

We aspire to create a sense of belonging within the ELC and value the importance of a child's relationship with their family, peers and educators and acknowledge that each child's identity is made up of their own family values, history and culture.

Over the course of a year, it is truly rewarding to watch the children develop and grow, as they discover new concepts and interests in their own learning journey.

Ms Andréa Werkmeister  
ELC Coordinator and Lead Educator

# TRANSITIONING TO BELONGING, BEING, BECOMING.

## Joining ELC

Upon enrolment into the ELC, children and families are met with open arms. A child's first day at Korowa is a big deal for children and we acknowledge that a variety of emotions may be in play as they join us. Educators work closely with children's families to gain an understanding of how we can best support children as they enter our centre. Through parent sharing sessions and informal conversations, families are encouraged to share vital information with their child's educators to ensure their transition to the ELC is smooth. Educators spend the first few weeks of a child's journey into the ELC building meaningful relationships with them, ensuring the children feel safe, supported and comfortable within their environment. Ongoing communication between families and educators is a vital component of our ELC and we recognise the importance of honesty and consistency for the wellbeing of the children in our care.

### STEP INTO PREP

Korowa's ELC provides the ideal environment for transition into Junior School. With the ELC housed on the first level of the Junior School, children become familiar with a number of classrooms and spaces. ELC children learn that they are connected to the wider Korowa community and participate in Early Years' Assemblies and events. They also visit the Preps in both social settings and learning contexts, and have a Buddy class in the Junior School.

Beginning Prep is an exciting time for children. To support the transition from ELC and Kinder to school, students attend special mornings or afternoons in Prep during the second half of the year. Over several "Step into Prep" sessions the girls spend time getting to know each other and their educators. They begin to feel what life as a Prep student is like. They become familiar with their classroom and the playground. Parents have the opportunity to meet and get to know each other and attend an Information Session to find out ways they can support their daughter's transition to school. A highlight for the children is when they receive their Korowa bear.



### EARLY LEARNING CENTRE RECEIVES TOP RATING

In 2021 our Early Learning Centre was rated as 'Exceeding' National Quality Standards (NQS) for their Assessment and Rating from The Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACEQUA).

The NQS is informed by research around best practice, is designed to encourage ongoing quality improvement and includes assessment and rating of services in seven key areas.

Services are assessed against the seven quality areas of the National Quality Standard:

- Educational program and practice
- Children's health and safety
- Physical environment
- Staffing arrangements
- Relationships with children
- Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- Governance and Leadership

To be rated Exceeding NQS overall, all Quality Areas must at least meet NQS, and four or more Quality Areas must be Exceeding NQS.

For our families this means the ELC has been recognised for providing high quality individual care for children, and outstanding support for children's learning and development.

The report acknowledged our outstanding Educators and Community through comments such as, "Educators' commitment to reflective practice, continuous improvement, and supporting children to achieve the best possible outcomes was evident in the programs."

The ELC staff together with members of the Leadership team have been working towards quality improvement of the ELC over several years, particularly throughout 2021. With an updated service philosophy, Korowa's staff are committed to ensuring that the quality of programs being delivered to the children are of an exceptional standard. Staff recognise the importance of working closely with families to ensure children's needs are met.

# Wellbeing Ecosystem

Korowa's Wellbeing Program aligns with one of the outcomes of The Early Years Learning Framework, "Children have a strong sense of wellbeing". This includes good physical health, feelings of happiness, satisfaction and successful functioning. A strong sense of wellbeing provides children with confidence and optimism which maximises their learning potential. Wellbeing is correlated with resilience, providing children with the capacity to cope with day to day stress and challenges.

Through the development of nurturing relationships, educators and specialist teachers at Korowa promote your child's sense of belonging, connectedness and wellbeing. Our extensive understanding of child development supports the belief that children learn through play. With guidance from educators, children make connections through play that enable them to develop skills to become independent, creative, inquiring and reflective thinkers.

Through ongoing observations of children, educators provide a stimulating learning environment which caters for individual interests and needs. Parents have formal and informal opportunities to discuss their child's development with educators. Each child's learning journey can be documented in a variety of ways, including observations, discussions, reflective journals on Korowa's learning management system Konnect, creative expressions and photos.

Portfolios are a significant part of the documentation process and celebrate the individual learning journey.

# Mission and Values

Korowa students want to be prepared for their future, to be ready to thrive in an increasingly complex and challenging world. They want authentic learning experiences that will be relevant in the real world. They are curious and relentless in the pursuit of knowledge and want to make connections between school and life.

At Korowa, our Mission and Values provide the frame work to delivering students a holistic education where they are supported to explore their passions, try new things and achieve their best.

## MISSION

Our purpose is to develop self-aware, confident and capable young people who understand their responsibility and capacity to influence the world in a positive way.

## VALUES

At Korowa, we believe in the power of kindness and the values of courage, respect, integrity and service.

Be brave, respectful, honest, generous and above all, be kind.

## STRATEGY

Korowa's strategy provides the structure to support teaching and learning and the delivery of an outstanding education program.

Key elements:

- The place to connect
- The opportunity to excel
- The challenge to learn

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Underpinning all that we do are five overall guiding principles:

- A culture that encourages character and values that equip students to meet future opportunities and challenges.
- Academic excellence within a meaningful journey of rich, diverse, future-focused and holistic learning experiences.
- Staff are supported to develop their expertise and this commitment adds significantly to our students' capacity to enjoy learning and embark on their chosen pathways.
- A whole School community strengthened by enduring relationships of trust and a shared vision.
- Facilities that enhance the quality of our education and draw us together in celebration of our achievement.

## STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Korowa Anglican Girls' School, underpinned by Anglican values, is a community that recognises the importance of and celebrates in the rich diversity of our community.

Our School values of Courage, Respect, Integrity and Service allow for an environment in which the inclusion, safety and dignity of each member of the community is protected.

Our commitment to creating an inclusive and safe environment is the responsibility of all members of the Korowa community. We commit to ongoing whole-school education to ensure that we continue to demonstrate a mutual respect and acceptance of all individuals regardless of race, culture, gender, identity or sexual preference.

# Learning Experiences

The ELC is a stimulating learning environment with a curriculum that prepares children for school. The curriculum is designed to help children discover their abilities, grow their confidence and develop the foundations of learning. We view children as curious, capable inquirers who actively and collaboratively participate in their learning journey. Each day they foster skills that develop independence and encourage decision making about their learning. Our collaboration and communication, with and between children, parents and staff, are vital to the overall learning process.

The Early Years Learning Framework describes the principles, practices and outcomes essential to support and enhance young children's learning as well as their transition to school. The Framework has a strong emphasis on play-based learning, as play is the best vehicle for young children's learning and provides the most appropriate stimulus for brain development. The Framework also recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy), social and emotional development.

## BELONGING

Belonging describes the children's place in the world. They feel valued and important because they belong to a family, a group, a school, a community and a culture.

Educators are guided by the following outcomes that convey the highest expectations for all children:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators

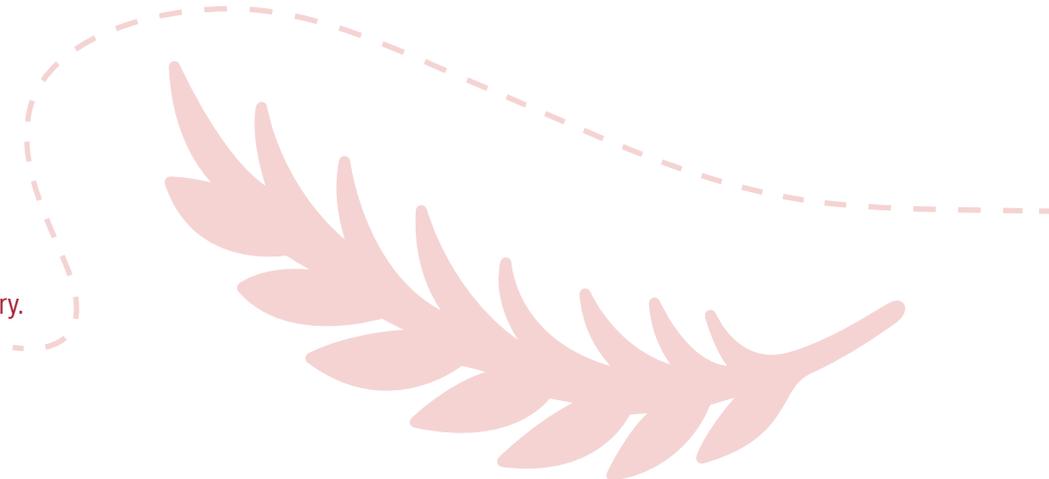
Each week, children participate in specialist programs including Art, Music, Physical Education and Library. Specialist subjects introduce children to new disciplines, vital components of the curriculum at Korowa.

## BEING

Being is about treasuring the present. Childhood is a time for children to just 'be'. This is the time for play and discovery and not to be rushed.

## BECOMING

Becoming describes the everyday experiences that come together to construct the child's sense of identity and that will ultimately shape their view of themselves and of the world.



## 3 YEAR OLD

Our 3 Year old program focuses on helping young children develop independence and social skills while finding their place in the world. Educators support children to work with others, extending their language and problem solving skills. The program encourages children to make decisions and ask questions. Children are introduced to specialist subjects and intentional teaching experiences both indoors and outdoors. During our afternoon program, children are able to rest if they wish to do so.

*Belonging. Being.  
Becoming*

## 4 YEAR OLD

Our 4 Year old program provides a rich learning experience where children form strong connections; are introduced to the foundations for Literacy and Numeracy; learn to work together and independently, and investigate and problem solve through developing critical and creative thinking skills. The program focuses on developing a greater sense of personal responsibility; developing an area of interest and investigating it in greater depth; participating in specialist classes; and intentional teaching experiences both indoors and outdoors. Children are encouraged to take initiative, make decisions and reflect on their learning throughout the year.

# Express Yourself!

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## ART

In ELC, we emphasise joyful exploration and discovery. Each week students attend art with a primary specialist art teacher who encourages the children to explore art in the world around them and develop the ability to see their immediate environment through visual images. Students are introduced to and learn to use a variety of art tools, materials and equipment, and engage in painting, drawing and printmaking. They learn about the art elements and principles, and begin to develop visual ideas, using imagination and observation.

## MUSIC

In ELC Music, we love to sing, move, dance, perform, make and experiment with music. With a specialist primary music teacher, students explore a wide range of repertoire in our lessons, including songs from all over the world. The primary focus, however, is on songs and rhymes that are appropriate to their developmental stage and are songs they naturally sing in the playground. Songs like these are sung and performed in repetition, where new skills are taught and pre-existing skills built upon.



# STEAM - Future Builders

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## SCIENCE

Children in the ELC learn through play. Korowa's added Science component fosters children's curiosity and interest in the world around them in a fun, hands on way. Children are encouraged to explore, question and make discoveries in a safe learning environment through experiments such as cooking and trial and error, working individually and with their peers and educators.

# A Lifetime of Wellness

With the opening of the new Sports and Wellbeing Centre in 2022 the opportunities and programs available to our ELC students has been expanded with all programs offered on site.

## SWIMMING

Our ELC 4 students participate in fortnightly swimming lessons. Recent studies suggest that water survival skills training and swimming lessons can significantly help reduce the risk of drowning for children aged between one and four years. Being able to swim is an important life skill.

This program develops children's independence and confidence. Swimming in small groups with our swimming instructors, they will develop a range of skills including; how to enter and exit the water safely, torpedo gliding, strong kicking legs and floating whilst wearing a life jacket.

## PERCEPTUAL MOTOR PROGRAM

In our new purpose built PMP space, ELC 3 to Year 2 students are involved in a movement-based program which helps younger students improve their eye-hand and eye-foot coordination, fitness, balance, locomotion and eye-tracking skills. Instructed by our trained PE staff, students are given the opportunity to develop in the following areas:

- Gross motor activities
- Visual motor activities
- Auditory motor activities
- Tactile activities
- Lateralisation activities
- Body awareness
- Spatial awareness

## YOGA

As part of our ELC students' wellbeing, children participate in regular online Yoga sessions using an online program called 'Cosmic Kids Yoga.' These sessions assist children in building up strength within their bodies while also finding a calm sense of selves through breathing and focus. Children enjoy taking some time out for themselves to wind down in a calm environment while listening to a story as they move their body.

# Signature Programs



## EARLY YEARS' ASSEMBLIES

At Korowa, we take pride in our achievements regardless of how big or small they may be. These learning experiences are shared, showcased and celebrated in our monthly assembly. Students from ELC 4 through to Year 2 have the opportunity to present their learning and explorations to their peers and other members of the community. The Early Years' Assemblies are an excellent way for our youngest students to develop their skills and confidence in public speaking. Musical performances, both group and solo, are also heavily featured in the assemblies and are a wonderful performance opportunity for students.

## EARLY YEARS – YEAR 2 SPORTS DAY

A fun celebration showcasing both children's participation and enjoyment of physical activity. Students are involved in a modified athletics circuit and are able to display their development of fundamental motor skills and new learned abilities across the different activities.

## JUNIOR SCHOOL LEARNING COMMONS

The Junior School Learning Commons caters to ELC through to Year 6 students, in a warm and welcoming agile space. Staff ensure that carefully curated collections are current, age specific, align with curriculum, accessible and meet the needs of staff and students. A focus on reading to foster a lifelong love of reading is permeated throughout Library classes and Learning Commons activities. The Junior School Learning Commons hosts many activities ably assisted by the Library Captains and Committee. Throughout the year fun and engaging activities include Book Week, National Simultaneous Storytime, and the Premiers' Reading Challenge to name but a few!

## ELC ART SHOW

Each year, Korowa's ELC students hold an Art Show. Fostering each child's sense of agency, educators work one-on-one with the children to create a piece that they envision. Children are the decision makers in this process and decide what type of material and art techniques they need to use to create their masterpiece with educators assisting when necessary. Children in each room also have the opportunity to work collaboratively with their peers to create group pieces from their class. These pieces are inspired from the children's interests and produced over a period of time, allowing all children to contribute as much or as little as they wish. Children are thrilled each year showing their family their individual and group art pieces.

