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The Early Years at Seymour
Handbook 2016
Welcome to the Early Years at Seymour College

Welcome to The Early Years at Seymour. I look forward to us building a strong partnership with your family as we work together to ensure that this very important step in your child’s learning journey is a successful and happy one.

At The Early Years at Seymour, we believe that each and every child is a unique and competent individual and that the first years of life are among the most important. Early learning experiences lay the foundations onto which all future endeavours rest, setting the course for lifelong learning. Early childhood is a time of curiosity, creativity, wonderment and awe. We believe this exciting time of dynamic growth and exploration should be celebrated, ensuring that these qualities continue to be fostered and utilised throughout childhood and into adulthood.

The Early Years at Seymour encourages every child to flourish, to develop self-confidence, resilience, social awareness and a lifelong love of learning. We are committed to nurturing every child’s individual talents and interests through high quality care, access to developmentally engaging resources and rich, meaningful learning experiences through play in our beautiful environment.

Welcome to our vibrant community. We look forward to working with you and watching your child thrive and grow at The Early Years at Seymour.

*Shelley Travers*  
*Head of Junior School*
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PEOPLE YOU WILL MEET

The Principal
The Principal is responsible for the program and well-being of all members of Seymour College staff.

Head of Junior School
Mrs Shelley Travers
Phone 8303 9001, email stravers@seymour.sa.edu.au

Director of the Early Years
Mrs Susan Lock
Phone 8303 9040, email sllock@seymour.sa.edu.au

Manager of the Early Years
Mrs Karen Orman
Phone 8303 9040, email korman@seymour.sa.edu.au

Our staff are always happy to discuss any questions or concerns you may have, so please do not hesitate to contact us.

All Early Years staff hold current First Aid Certificates and are mandated reporters.

At all times Seymour College complies with the required child/staff ratio.

SEYMOUR COLLEGE’S VISION
Fostering young women of strength, optimism and justice, contributing to an equitable world for all.

At Seymour we value:

- **Excellence**: we strive to provide opportunities for all students to attain personal excellence.
- **Respect**: we respect the humanity and rights of others, our Christian values and College traditions, our local and global environments.
- **Innovation**: as we live in a dynamic environment, we encourage initiative and creativity, divergent and lateral thinking, independence and flexibility.
THE EARLY YEARS AT SEYMOUR

The Early Years at Seymour is a unique offering. It provides a safe, happy and nurturing environment for children from 6 weeks to their transition to school. It is committed to fostering a love of learning in a supportive and play-based environment. It is a place for children to grow, explore and flourish.

Girls can continue their education throughout the primary, middle and secondary years at Seymour College – where they will enjoy having their individual character strengths recognised and encouraged during their academic journey.

Our Inspiration

Our early childhood educators provide opportunities for each child to play, explore and discover. We encourage them to make decisions, take risks, inquire and engage. We also help them to make connections with others and find meaning in relationships.

The principles behind the Reggio Emilia philosophy support children’s learning in powerful ways. We view children as active protagonists of the growth and development process.

We encourage children to explore and develop a hundred languages and a hundred ways of thinking, of expressing themselves, of understanding and relating to others and making connections.

The Lakes building has specially designed rooms where the environment, spaces and organisation are all optimised to promote learning. Each child’s sense of belonging, connectedness and wellbeing are nurtured throughout their personalised learning journey.

A day at the Early Years at Seymour will be at times energetic and lively, and at times reflective and quiet.

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)

The Early Years’ Learning Framework is based on the National Framework that guides our community on a developmental journey from birth to 5 years.

Each child’s sense of belonging, being and becoming are fully nurtured.

Our passionate early childhood educators will enable unique opportunities for the children to explore and discover, make decisions and take risks, in ways that relate to their own interests.

There are five learning outcomes encompassed in the curriculum.

Our children:

• have a strong sense of identity;
• are connected with and contribute to their world;
• have a positive sense of wellbeing;
• are confident and involved learners; and
• are effective communicators.
The National Quality Standards (NQS)

Seymour College is committed to providing a quality education and care service through the implementation of the National Quality Framework (NQF).

The seven Quality Areas of the NQF are:
1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Leadership and service management

The guiding principles of the NQF are underpinned by the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations and are as follows:
- that the rights and best interests of the child are paramount;
- that children are successful, competent and capable learners;
- that the principles of equity, inclusion and diversity underlie this Law;
- that Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are valued;
- that the role of parents and families is respected and supported; and
- that best practice is expected in the provision of education and care services.
Belonging
The learning spaces support the development of a strong sense of identity, wellbeing and a connection with the wider world.

The Early Years at Seymour offers 3 learning spaces:

Kady – for babies and toddlers from 6 weeks to 3 years
Kady is a Scottish name meaning ‘rhythmic flow of sounds’ – a safe and gentle space for children to flourish.

The Kady group caters for our youngest learners. Our aim is to create a learning space that is a continuation of the home environment, where children feel safe and are loved, cared for and nurtured. We believe that children learn from birth and our program continues their learning journey. It gently introduces relevant experiences.

Enya – 3 year olds
Enya is a Scottish name meaning ‘jewel’ – a child’s opportunity to sparkle.

The Enya program is a natural transition from the Kady group. Children in this group attend a minimum of two days a week. In this learning space children discover, explore and create as they develop friendships and learn to be independent.

Ainsley – 4 year olds (transitioning to school)
Ainsley is a Scottish name meaning ‘meadow’ – a time when children branch out further afield.

Prior to beginning school, our Ainsley group further develop their relationships and more complex thinking, communication and language skills. These children are developing a deeper understanding of their world and the impact they have upon it. Children in this group attend a minimum of three days per week.

Daily Routine
The centre is open weekdays from 7.00am to 6.00pm, 48 weeks of the year. The centre has an annual closure period of four weeks from late December to mid January. Families do not incur a fee during this closure period.

The daily routine for each learning space is displayed in the room. This routine needs to be flexible to meet the needs of the children, but it provides a framework for the learning program.

Arrival from 7.00am
Enya and Ainsley children arrive and after putting their personal items in their lockers commence the “Sunrise” program until 8.15am when they will enter their learning space. Children who arrive after 8.15am may move directly to their learning space.

Babies and Kady children can move directly to their learning space. All children will join together for quieter activities such as puzzles, stories and games.
Children are engaged in learning experiences and projects in their learning space. The educators guide the children, following their areas of interest in a play-based, hands-on program that embraces the Early Years Framework and is influenced by the Reggio Emilia approach. Children have the opportunity to explore, create, learn, discover, experiment and problem solve.

During the day each learning space has:

- group times – a special time where children come together for a variety of group experiences. This includes language, music and movement, literacy, numeracy and investigative activities;
- morning and afternoon tea – consisting of a variety of fruit, cheese and healthy snacks and milk (as appropriate for ages);
- lunch, a social opportunity, sharing nutritious meals prepared by our on-site cook. The children will also be directly involved in the growing and harvesting of foods to support the menu;
- music, yoga, Sportsplay sessions and Chinese are specialist learning experiences offered to all learning spaces (as age appropriate). At times the learning experiences may also include visiting the library and Junior school classrooms; and
- indoor and outdoor play.

After lunch, the Enya and Ainsley children may participate in quiet, restful activities or, if necessary, have a sleep. Rest and sleep time for our Kady children is integrated into the daily routine. For more information please refer to our Sleep and Rest Policy, available in our Policy and Procedure Folder in the Reception area.

Enya and Ainsley children come together in the outdoor environment and share time together. Children will engage in activities such as outdoor play, gardening, imaginative play and stories. They will also prepare the environment for the next day. At 5.00pm the children will pack their belongings and move into the community room for the “Sunset” program. This allows siblings to come together and share some quiet activities prior to heading home.

**Personal Belongings**

The following items are required each day. Please ensure all items are clearly named:

- backpack/bag
- sunhat
- roll-on sunscreen
- change of clothes/underwear
- a library bag (for those children who attend on Library day)
- formula/breast milk, bottles and all comforters required for settling and sleep (Kady group only)
- water bottle, refreshed daily

**Communication**

Communicating with our families and sharing information is an integral part of our program. We are child-centred and value the information that you share with us about your child.

Each child has their own learning journey folder. This includes information about their learning journey, photographic documentation, observations and conversations.

Staff also enjoy opportunities to share and talk with parents about the day. You are welcome to make a time to discuss any matters that may require more time or greater confidentiality.

Newsletters and notices are an important way that we communicate information to families. These are emailed to families regularly. Please remember to update all relevant information such as contact details and medical information, particularly regarding allergies.

We encourage families to look at parent information, programs and classroom displays in each learning space in the centre to be an active participant in your child’s learning.

Each week families receive a reflection page from the learning space sharing the highlights and current projects being investigated. The reflections are also on display in the learning space and create a wonderful record of the year together.
SOCS (Seymour College Online Collaboration System)

You will be given a code and password to access our online communication system. Here you will find photos, information and newsletters celebrating learning across the College.

To access SOCS, open your web browser and type in https://socs.seymour.sa.edu.au/

To find The Early Years at Seymour (TEYS) page, click onto McGregor Campus and then TEYS.

Enter your code and password.

Please contact Mrs Karen Orman, Manager of the Early Years if you are unable to access SOCS.

Operations

Arrival

On arrival parents and caregivers are asked to:

• Sign your child in by recording the time and signing the attendance sheet;
• Exchange important information with the staff, such as who will be collecting your child;
• On high UV rating days assist children to apply sunscreen;
• Pass on any medication required to be administered during the day and complete the Administration of Medication form; and
• Assist your child to place their bag and belongings in their locker.

Absence

If your child is unwell or is going to be absent for other reasons, please phone the Early Years on 8303 9040. If your child has not arrived by 10.00am and we are unaware of a reason for the absence, a confirmation phone call will be made or SMS text will be sent.

Additional Days

Additional, casual days at The Early Years are subject to availability. Requests must be made via an email to the Centre Manager korman@seymour.sa.edu.au. Confirmation must be received prior to bringing the child/ren in for an additional day.

Animals

Seymour College prohibits dogs in the grounds of the school unless visiting a class as part of the educational program, or in a controlled environment with permission from the teacher.
Authority to Collect

It is a legal requirement that each child must be signed in upon arrival and signed out at departure, and to receive access to the Child Care Benefit (CCB).
- Your child will only be allowed to leave with an adult listed on the Acceptance on Enrolment form;
- If the child has not been collected previously by this adult, photo ID will be necessary; and
- Children will not be released to anyone aged under 18 years of age.

These requirements are part of the new National Quality Standard and assist us to provide a safe environment for all children.

Birthdays

Birthdays are an important milestone in your child's life. We are not able to accept food and other birthday treats, however each learning space has a unique way to celebrate your child's special day. We also ask that parents post or email birthday invitations rather than handing them out in the centre.

Changing Permanent Bookings

Ten weeks notice is required for a change in a permanent session booking or a cancellation of a booking. Changes to permanent bookings are subject to availability and must be made via email to the Manager of The Early Years.

Child Care Benefit

The Australian Government provides the following payments to assist families with the cost of child care:
- Child Care Benefit (CCB) is available to all families who have a child in their care who is attending child care approved for the purposes of CCB by, or registered with, the Government. Child Care Benefit is a means-tested payment. Families can choose to allow a CCB approved childcare provider to receive CCB on their behalf which means only the net amount is due and payable by families.
- The Child Care Rebate (CCR) is additional assistance provided by the Government if you use Child Care Benefit approved child care, and both you and your partner had work, training, or study related commitments at some time during a week, or have an exemption. No minimum number of hours is required. The CCR covers 50% of out-of-pocket costs up to the annual cap. The CCR is a non-means-tested payment.

Families have the option to receive the Child Care Rebate by fortnightly, quarterly or an annual lump sum payment to a nominated bank account. Alternatively, families can have the CCR paid to the child care service provider and receive a fee reduction.

For information on your eligibility for CCB and CCR please contact the Australian Government on 13 61 50 or visit www.humanservices.gov.au

Absences – CCB and CCR payments

Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate are paid for 42 absence days per child each financial year. These can be for any reason, do not require proof and include public holidays. Additional absence days are available once the initial 42 absence days have been used. There are a number of reasons why additional absence days can be accessed, however documentation may be required to support these absences.

Please contact the Manager of The Early Years should you require further information regarding the Child Care Benefit, the Child Care Rebate or how to access additional absence days.
Departures

On departure parents and caregivers are asked to:

- Sign your child out by recording the time and signing the attendance sheet;
- Assist your child to collect their belongings;
- Check if there are any notices to take home;
- Sign the incident sheet if required; and
- Communicate with a staff member that you are leaving.

Please note that the centre closes at 6.00pm. All families are required to have collected their children prior to this time.

Emergency Drills

Regular evacuation and emergency drills assist staff and children to practise Emergency Procedures. In the event of an evacuation, children are moved to the Junior School tennis courts.

For further information, please refer to our Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy in our Policy and Procedure folder located in Reception.

Feedback

Positive and open communication is essential for our community. If you have an issue or suggestion, please take the time to contact the Director and discuss it or complete a feedback form at Reception. Please refer to our Grievance Policy in our Policy and Procedure folder located in Reception. If you have an issue regarding your child's learning space we also encourage you to speak to the learning space leader.

Fees

Fees are due and payable for 48 weeks of the year. Fees are payable for every day that your child is enrolled. This includes sick days, public holidays, family holidays and non-term time, but excludes periods when the service is closed. Additional days can be booked on a casual basis, over the minimum days your child is enrolled, subject to availability. Please contact the Manager to request additional days. A minimum 48 hours written notice is required to cancel a casual booking once made, otherwise fees will apply.

Fees are payable fortnightly in arrears. An invoice will be provided to families identifying the number of days of attendance and any childcare benefit and/or rebate received and the amount due and payable. Fees may be paid by direct debit or credit card only.

Invoices will be emailed to families. Parents have 7 days to contact the Manager to discuss a query with respect to their invoice. Families will be debited the amount due 7 days after the invoice has been emailed to parents.

Holiday Program

During non-term time, our Enya and Ainsley children are offered an alternative program.

Children are supervised by qualified staff in a program that will cater for the individual needs of the children. It provides continuity of care and education for our early learners in a relaxed format.

How Can Your Family Help?

We aim to foster sustainability and encourage families to reduce, reuse and recycle materials wherever possible. Our children enjoy creating and making with a variety of materials. We appreciate donations of the following materials, but not limited to: cereal, tissue and toothpaste boxes, corks, milk/juice carton lids, wool, washing powder scoops, material scraps and natural items such as gum nuts, pebbles and shells. We also encourage children to bring in any excess produce such as limes and lemons, oranges and mandarins to share with our community. Please note these must be whole produce to meet with our Food Safety Plan.

We cannot accept the following: toilet rolls, medication boxes, alcohol and cigarette packaging, matchboxes, egg and milk cartons, and containers or magazines with inappropriate graphics.

Illness

If your child is unwell please telephone the Early Years at Seymour on 8303 9040 before 9.30am.

All staff are trained to respond to and manage accidents, illness and emergencies. This is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, staff and visitors. If your child is injured during the day an Incident Report will be completed and shared with you at pick-up time. We ask parents to read and sign this form to acknowledge their understanding of the incident.

Our main objective is to create a safe and hygienic environment that will promote the health of all children in our centre. As an unwell child will always need the special comfort of his/her parents, we will contact parents during the day if we feel this is required.
Children must be kept at home until they are able to fully cope with the routines and activities of the centre. There is a 24 hour exclusion period after the symptoms cease for vomiting and diarrhoea.

The Early Years at Seymour follows the Australian Government guidelines for exclusion of children from the centre with infectious diseases. Please refer to our Infectious Diseases Policy or www.nhmce.gov.au for more information.

Immunisation
To promote a safe environment for all children and staff the Early Years at Seymour has a full Immunisation Policy. Parents who wish to enrol their child at The Early Years at Seymour are required to provide the child's Immunisation History Statement prior to or at the time of enrolment. Enrolment may proceed only after receipt of the immunisation record by the service but not before. The service expects the enrolled parents maintain their child's immunisation at each milestone in accordance with the National Immunisation Program. It is a requirement that a copy of the Immunisation History statement be received within 14 days in order to be able to continue enrolment at The Early Years at Seymour.

Exemption from immunisation is not provided for any reason, including conscientious reasons or medical grounds. Seymour College understands that this may cause inconvenience to some families, however, it has to be accountable to the wider College community and has a duty of care towards its babies who are too young to be immunised. The College has developed its policy on immunisation after thorough investigation and advice from medical and legal experts.

Late Collection
A fee of $50 for every 15 minute segment after 6.00pm will be charged for children who are collected late.

Medication
The centre will only administer medication or apply creams and lotions prescribed by a doctor. This needs to be in its original container, with the chemist label stating the child's name and dosage required. Children must have been taking the medication for 24 hours prior to returning to the centre.

Parents and guardians must fill in details of the Administering of Medication form on arrival at the centre, with the name of the medication, date, time to be administered and dosage required. Please ensure all medication is passed directly to a staff member so that it can be stored appropriately.

Long-term medication requires a doctor's letter stating its use and the period required. Action Plans for ongoing health conditions (such as asthma) must be provided to the centre and updated every 12 months.

Meals and Menus
Nutritionally balanced food is prepared by the on-site cook and will be shared with the children and staff during the day. Each day the children are offered morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. The menu is changed weekly and will be emailed to families and displayed in the centre. Children wash their hands before eating and will be seated and supervised at all times when food is served.

As this is a 'Nut Aware' zone and we do have children with food allergies, please refrain from bringing foods into the centre. It is vital that you provide the centre with medical authorisation from a medical practitioner regarding the details of food allergies and food intolerances.
Parent Participation

We value parental involvement in our program and encourage the sharing of skills and interests with the children. Sharing of cultural events and traditions enriches our children’s learning. Our children enjoy parents assisting in many learning experiences such as cooking, gardening or projects.

We welcome parents to attend excursions. All parents assisting with excursions are required to present a child-related employment screening prior to the event. This can be obtained through the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion (DSCI screening unit).

Parking and Safety

Parking is available in the main driveway of Seymour College. Be aware that this is a shared area as parents will be dropping off and picking up their children. Please be mindful of children walking in this area. In the interests and safety of the Seymour College community, the College driveway is not to be used as a roadway and the speed limit is 15km per hour. Parking is also available on Gilles Road.

Playgroup

Playgroup operates each Friday during term time from 9.00am–10.30am. It is open to families with children ages from 6 weeks to school age. Playgroup is held in The Early Years Community Room. Playgroup provides a stimulating and safe environment where children and their parents or carers have fun and play together. Cost is $5 per session.

Policies

The Early Years has a folder of policies that are available for parents to refer to with information regarding operational logistics of the centre. This folder is located in the foyer of the Centre.

Many children have allergies, to nuts in particular. Our centre is ‘nut aware’ and our cook ensures that all food is appropriate. If there is a change in your child’s eating requirements please speak to the Manager.

Please note that Seymour College is a non-smoking environment.

Priority of Access Guidelines

A requirement of being an approved child care service is that we follow the Australian Government’s Priority of Access Guidelines, when there is a waiting list or a number of parents are applying for a limited number of vacant places.

Every Child Care Benefit approved child care service has to abide by the guidelines and advise parents of the priority of access guidelines at the time of enrolment.

When required The Early Years at Seymour will allocate enrolments on the following basis:

• Priority 1 a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
• Priority 2 a child of a parent/s (who satisfies the Government’s work, training, study test for the purposes of the priority of access guidelines).
• Priority 3 any other child. Children in Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander families or families of single parents will be given priority.

For further details on the Priority of Access Guidelines please refer to the Policy and Procedure Folder located in the Reception area.
Nappies/Toilet Training
Nappies will be provided for all children as required.

We encourage children to have a spare set of clothes (named) in their bag in case of emergencies. When a child is ready for toilet training staff will support parents to implement this training. Be aware that some clothing can hamper easy undressing, especially when a child is in a hurry. If your child requires a pull up for this process these are to be supplied by families.

Sun Protection
Staff and children wear hats outdoors for protection from the sun. Seymour College has a sun protection policy which states that any child without a hat must play indoors or in a protected shady area on days when the UV reading is 3 or above. We ask parents to apply sunscreen prior to their child arriving each day and our staff will supervise and support the reapplying of sunscreen during the day. Please refer to our Sun Protection Policy in our Policy and Procedure folder located in Reception.

Transition
The Early Years program assists in the smooth transition from one learning space to another and eventually through to starting school. Open communication as well as identifying milestones in a child's development is considered in each transition. Availability of places will also be a consideration in this process. Families will be notified of transitions via a personal letter.

Uniform
The Enya and Ainsley children wear a comfortable uniform suitable for enjoying play. This is available from Seymour College's Uniform Shop located near the Barr Smith Campus. The Uniform Shop Manager, Mrs Deb Roach, and her team will be able to assist you with all your uniform needs.

Kady children do not wear a uniform.

The Early Years at Seymour uniform consists of the following and can be worn in any combination:

- Striped polo
- Green shorts
- Rugby top
- Track pants
- Wide brimmed hat

The Uniform Shop Trading Hours during the term are:

- Monday to Wednesday from 8.00am to 4.30pm; and
- Thursday from 1.00pm to 5.30pm.

You can contact the Uniform Shop on 8303 9016. They can advise of their opening hours in the holidays.

Sandshoes and sandals are appropriate footwear for our early learners. We ask that they do not wear thongs or crocs.

Please ensure all children's belongings are clearly named.
Seymour inspires within each student a passion for life-long learning, a celebration of community and a quest for personal excellence.