



LITTLE EXPLORERS



Guildford Grammar School
FOUNDED 1896





WELCOME TO LITTLE EXPLORERS

Welcome to Guildford Grammar School's three-year-old program, **Little Explorers**. We are proud to have created a very special place for our youngest students.

Little Explorers welcomes boys and girls from 3 years of age. The program operates from Woodgate House in the Preparatory School and is open from **8.30am – 2.45pm Monday to Friday**. We provide a Pre-Kindergarten program delivered in and around our Early Learning Centre.

Choice of fixed full days as follows:

2 Day – Thursday to Friday

3 Day – Monday to Wednesday

5 Day – Monday to Friday

Our stunning natural environment, sense of home, and talented educators combine to provide a program that will enhance your child's natural curiosity and learning, setting them up for a **life of discovery and wonder**.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Our program recognises the child as strong, capable and resilient, rich with wonder and knowledge. This mirrors our Shared Vision Statement for Early Learning here at Guildford Grammar School where we value the innate curiosity of children. We encourage the whys to help them to understand their world and who they are in it.

Play, child brain development research and student agency underpin all that we do in Little Explorers. We are inspired by several education theories which encourage children to explore, discover and learn in a supportive and rich environment. The indoor and outdoor learning environments are designed to be open and allow children to flow freely between spaces, enabling uninterrupted exploration, play and learning. Teachers design learning opportunities and provocations that are created around the children's interests and questions. We value the child as central to their own learning where they are supported to pursue their own interests and revisit and build upon ideas at their own pace.

We recognise that children have multiple ways of thinking, playing, exploring, speaking and doing and we provide them many ways to express themselves.

We have two Early Childhood Specialist Teachers and qualified Education Assistants who find it an absolute joy to support, observe, talk with, listen to and play purposefully with the children. This enables staff to have highly informed pedagogical conversations in collaborative and intentionally designed spaces, where children are stimulated through play-based experiences and explore concepts in a developmentally appropriate way. There is a strong focus on language development and building strong social and emotional skills and relationships. The opportunities provided encourage children to be curious and to have a sense of awe and wonder.

It is very much respected that parents are a child's first teachers, and as such we value your input and look forward to developing a close relationship with you to support your child's transition from home into this environment. We have an open-door policy where you are invited to be a part of your child's day as much as possible.



Inside Play

Our building is beautiful, light and welcoming with open-ended provocations reflecting the children's interests. In our art atelier, the children use a range of media and craft items, and our process art area may see them enjoying sensory experiences with clay or a

weaving project. Dramatic play, oral language and story-telling are encouraged and children can engage in small world play, mark-making opportunities, read books, complete puzzles, experiment with light tables and create with a range of recycled materials and natural loose parts.



Outside Play

We spend a great deal of time outdoors and often take 'indoor' items outside. We are fortunate to have two outdoor spaces. We share an adventure playground with the Kindergarten and Pre-Primary classes and the children have access to a range of activities that challenge them physically and encourage supported risk-taking. For example; climbing trees, riding tricycles, building and digging in sandpits, playing in puddles and constructing obstacle courses. This adventure playground incorporates natural woodchip, logs, trees and a

popular mud kitchen. There is also an enormous vegetable garden and an area for a fire pit, great for toasting marshmallows on a chilly day! The second outdoor area is just for Little Explorers. This grassed, fenced area is a wonderful place to set up our outdoor classroom and the wisteria fringed veranda provides shelter and an area to utilise, whether it be for finger painting, dress ups or a quiet reading nook in a tent.

The Little Explorers make the most of the beautiful campus with weekly Adventure Walks – perhaps to find some muddy puddles to jump in, to collect sticks to make a scarecrow for our vegetable garden, to have a picnic by the river at the rowing shed, or even to visit the Chapel.

We walk rain, hail or shine – fully believing that there is no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing! We often visit the Preparatory School Nature Playground, and enjoy whizzing down the slide to the playground and wading in the ponds. Trips to the Preparatory School Library are part of our adventuring and the children are welcome to go with their parents after school to borrow books.



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A LITTLE EXPLORER



We are fortunate to have flexibility within our timetable to allow for us to be responsive to the children and events happening in the classroom and wider school community.

8.30am

Upon arrival the children are greeted by the teachers. They are encouraged to unpack their bags and move items into their lockers. The children reconnect with their friends and educators in a calm and relaxed manner, choosing to begin their day either inside, perhaps reading a book or completing a puzzle, or outside, perhaps in the sandpit or on the climbing frames. Parents are welcome to join them to perhaps do a puzzle, read a book or look at artwork and projects.

Morning Session A

The children gather for a Good Morning song, an Acknowledgement of Country and perhaps a discussion about what we have discovered during our inquiries. We use a visual timetable that provides the children with a daily overview to support independent movement and establishes an awareness if there are any special events happening that day. We often enjoy a Fingerplay or two before the children have a choice to play either indoors or outdoors.

Outside play is in the large playground and on the veranda. Provocations are set up to engage the children's curiosity and further develop concepts. Activities that develop both large muscle and gross motor activities and those requiring finer motor dexterity are provided. A cooking area is often set up on the veranda so the children can help make an early morning snack such as fruit kebabs or mashed banana pikelets.

We provide healthy snack options – fresh seasonal fruit at approximately 9.15am. This is provided in response to current research indicating that young children need to 'graze' over the course of the day and eat approximately every 90 minutes to maintain energy and focus for learning.



Morning Tea

Before morning tea, we will gather as a community and the children enjoy games, dancing or fine motor activities. We often have requests for 'The Freeze Game' or the 'Playdough Game'. They also like to dance to the 'Dino Stomp' or do the 'Finger Jive' song.

From here we move off together for morning tea on the veranda and the children have the choice of sitting on mats or at child sized tables. Some of their collaborative artwork is displayed on the veranda to make it an aesthetically pleasing area to eat in. The children are encouraged to chat with their friends and the educators.



Morning Session B

During this session, the children have access to both indoor and outdoor spaces. They have lots of time to create and continue with their projects. There may be experiments to try, new puzzles to challenge themselves with or a different medium to use for artwork. The educators interact with the children supporting and modelling as necessary, observing, talking with and listening to them. From these conversations and observations, we forward plan and incorporate the children's interests. The child's voice is important and valued and their agency is integral to this process.

Lunch

After tidying up resources and materials, the children gather for a story or a song and then eat lunch together on the veranda.

Rest

This is a quiet and relaxing time for the children where they may choose to lie down, listen to music, sit quietly with books and puzzles or perhaps we may do a mindfulness session or some child yoga.

Children need balance in their day – a mixture of both energetic and quiet periods to allow their minds and bodies to rest and recuperate. We have comfortable mats to lie upon and each child brings a pillow and small rug to Little Explorers.

Those who would need to sleep can do so.

Afternoon Session

The children move flexibly between the indoors and outdoors and a variety of active, calming and reflective activities are available. Learning experiences are set in response to the needs of the children during the afternoon.



Home Time

After tidying up the environment, packing bags and putting shoes on, the children gather together to perhaps play a collaborative game or listen to a story and reflect on their day.

For further information on our Little Explorers program, please contact our registrar on (08) 9377 9222 or email registrar@ggs.wa.edu.au.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is QikKids and why do I need to apply for it?

QikKids is the software package used by Guildford Grammar School to store family/student data and attendance for Centrelink. This package is also used to invoice the family. With regards to the subsidy, families need to communicate directly with Centrelink to check eligibility. This can be done online via your MyGov account or by phoning 136 150.

2. How do I set up QikKids?

Once placement has been offered and accepted, a staff member from Guildford Grammar School will contact you, six weeks prior to starting at the School, to provide you with a link which will enable you to confirm your enrolment details and set up your account.

3. When setting up my QikKids account, it asks me for a CRN number, what is that?

This is a government access number. The CRN number is a nine digit and 1 letter code that is your Centrelink Customer Reference Number, which you should already have. If you do not know your CRN number, you can call **Centrelink** on **136 150** between 8.00am and 8.00pm, Monday through to Friday, to access this.

4. What will my child be doing each day in the Little Explorers Program?

The Little Explorers Program is play-based with purposeful learning areas for the children to explore at a developmentally appropriate level. With lots of indoor and outdoor play, music and movement, the children are encouraged to be curious about their world.

5. What do I pack for my child to eat for the day?

The children will need to bring morning tea and lunch each day. We provide some fruit in the morning and cheese and crackers in the afternoon. Current research recommends children eat every 90 minutes.

You know what your child likes best, and you keep track of what they eat each day. The lunch for school should complement what you are already offering at home. Please ensure that it is nutritious and that you pack enough for your child. You will be guided by your child, as they grow and as the seasons change you will need to adjust the food volume. A tip is to include a little more than usual for the first few days as they will be using a lot of energy. You can then adjust back, depending on what they are actually eating.

6. What if my child has allergies or has dietary requirements?

You will be able to give us those details as you progress through the QikKids registration process. We ask you to also discuss these requirements with your program teachers at the beginning of the year.

Please provide a current, colour copy of your Anaphylaxis Action Plan and Asthma Plan to the Admissions team if you haven't highlighted this with them already. It must also contain a recent photo of your child.

7. Other than morning tea, what other items do I pack in my child's bag daily?

Please ensure you have provided all items on the Clothing Requirements List enclosed. Please also provide two extra sets of clothing, including spare underwear, socks and shoes. Please ensure that the items of clothing supplied in the bag are easily manageable for your child, i.e. shoes with Velcro, no laces and clearly labelled. We also require one small pillow and a small towel, both clearly labelled, to be used during our rest/quiet time. These items will stay at school.

8. What happens if my child is sick and cannot make it for their scheduled day?

If your child is sick, please phone the centre on (08) 9377 9290 or email absentees to Preparatory Administration: Preparatory.SchoolAdmin@ggs.wa.edu.au with your child's full name.



9. What happens if my child is sick throughout the day?

The Centre staff will call you, requesting you come to collect your child as soon as you are able to. If they cannot reach you, the Centre will contact your emergency contacts that you have listed on your QikKids account.

10. If my child does not attend a scheduled day due to illness, will I be charged?

A full day rate is charged and the school notifies Centrelink of the absence.

11. Who do I contact if I have a concern or query?

If you have a concern about the program, you are welcome to discuss this with the class teacher or Early Learning Coordinator.

12. Children must be toileting independently to attend Little Explorers. What happens if my child isn't by commencement date?

Your child will not be able to commence in the program until they are toileting independently and comfortable using a different toilet from home. If your child is close to being trained, please discuss this with program teachers. Please refer to the Independent Toileting Guide in the following pages.

13. If my child lives across two households, can we have duplicate applications through QikKids and both have access to a childcare subsidy?

Yes, duplicate accounts for separated parents is possible however clarification regarding individual rebate eligibility is only able to be confirmed by Centrelink.

14. How are rebates determined for QikKids?

Your individual rebate is determined by Centrelink and is dependent upon your individual financial circumstances.

15. Can I find out what my subsidy is likely to look like now, prior to being given access to QikKids by the School?

To enquire about your eligibility for the New Child Subsidy, please contact Centrelink online via your MyGov account, or phone 136 150.

16. What happens if I need to drop off later or pick up earlier on my nominated day?

As always, good communication can help everyone to be very sure of what your arrangements are. When children are late, it can be difficult for them to settle in, so advance notice is appreciated so that we can take this into account. Late pick-ups are not possible at this time.

17. How can I find the term calendar dates and Out of School Care information for holiday programs?

The Calendar for School term dates is accessible via: www.ggs.wa.edu.au/community/calendar-events/ Information on the Out of School Care Program and information on how to book can be accessed via the website link: www.ggs.wa.edu.au/learning/preparatory-school/out-of-school-care/.

18. What are the hours of the Little Explorers Program?

Little Explorers runs from 8.30am to 2.45pm.

19. How much is the Little Explorers program?

The program costs \$88 per day.

20. Can a friend or family member (grandparent) drop off/collect my child?

Only the specific authorised contacts listed on your QikKids account will be able to collect your child. Unique pin codes will be available once you have created your QikKids account. This can be found under the Contacts tab.

Please be aware that you are not to share pin numbers amongst your support carers, they must have their own unique pin code which will be provided upon being registered through your QikKids account.

New collectors must provide photo ID when collecting your child, we must know they are coming, (phone, email or let us know on Seesaw) and they must also go on to the QikKids system as soon as possible. If we are not aware someone is collecting your child, we will not release your child until we have a clear directive from you.

21. There are many experiences within the Centre. How can I keep up to date on things happening throughout the Centre on a weekly basis?

The program and children's learning experiences are well documented and on display within Little Explorers House. In addition, you will be set up to use our communication App, SeeSaw, where you will be able to see messages and updates regarding your child. We will talk to you regularly about what is happening and you are very welcome to come in and look and ask questions.

INDEPENDENT TOILETING GUIDELINES

We require that children are independent in toileting by the first day of the Little Explorers program.

What exactly does that mean?

Independence in toileting means:

1. Children can communicate their need to go to the bathroom in advance of having an accident
2. Children can pull down and pull up their own underwear and pants
3. They can seat themselves on the toilet and sit there comfortably
4. They can wipe their own bottom
5. They can wash their own hands
6. They can briefly postpone going to the bathroom if they must wait for another child to finish or if they are outside and need to walk in from the playground
7. Children who are independent in toileting do not wear nappies or pull-ups to school

- *Toilet training is a new skill for your child to learn*
- *Praise every little success and remain calm about accidents*
- *Your child might take years to reliably master night-time dryness. This is normal*

Preparation for toilet training:

1. Choose the toileting words you are going to use – for example poo, wee or pee
2. Start talking to your child about going to the toilet. It may help to talk about what you're doing on the toilet while your curious toddler watches
3. Tell them they won't have to wear nappies anymore if they go to the toilet. For some toddlers who are sick of wearing nappies, this may be all the motivation they need
4. If your child will be using a potty, encourage them to sit on it whenever you are sitting on the toilet
5. Work out the procedure together and make sure your child understands. For example, you might say: *'When you need to go to the toilet, come and tell me and I will help you'*

Signs your child is ready:

- **Age** - your child needs to be between the ages of 18 months and three years before they are mature enough to recognise the urge to go to the toilet
- **Interest** - your child is becoming interested in watching others go to the toilet – this can make you uncomfortable
- **Dryness** – their nappy stays dry for up to two hours, showing they can store urine in the bladder. For example, their nappy may be dry when they wake up from their afternoon nap
- **Disliking nappies** – they may tell you they hate wearing nappies, or try to take them off themselves, particularly after soiling them
- **Awareness** – your child can tell you they are pooing or weeing while they are doing it, or straight after. If they can tell you before it happens, they are ready for toilet training
- **Attention** – they can sit in one position for two to five minutes.





Accidents during toilet training:

- Expect accidents. Your child has been wearing nappies their whole life, so remembering to use the toilet will take practice
- Toddlers cannot hold on for long. At first, they may only have enough time to tell you they need to go to the toilet before they have an accident
- Give your child credit for trying, even when they don't make it to the toilet in time. Praise them for telling you they needed to go or for pulling their pants down
- Your child may become upset or discouraged by accidents. Reassure them that accidents don't matter, and that it takes time and practice to master toileting.

Avoiding stress over toilet training:

- Toilet training takes time. Try to keep a relaxed attitude. Toileting is not a reflection on your parenting. If you treat toileting as a matter of discipline and punish your child for accidents, you are starting a fight you cannot win. You will delay toilet training by making your child unhappy and anxious about going to the toilet
- Don't get angry. Your child isn't deliberately trying to annoy you. Avoid any sort of punishment, such as making them clean up their own mess. Stay calm and positive
- Your child may be feeling too pressured to succeed. Forget about toilet training for a week or two and give them time to relax
- Make sure your child feels supported in their efforts to master toileting
- It may help to try and make toileting 'fun' for a while. For example, you might sing songs together or read a book to them while they are sitting on the toilet, but don't overdo it.

**Information sourced from
[Betterhealth.vic.gov.au](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au) channel**

LITTLE EXPLORERS EQUIPMENT LIST

Please ensure that your child begins Little Explorers with all of the below items. Each will need to be named/labeled:

- Guildford Grammar School Little Explorers Polo Shirt
- Guildford Grammar School Sun hat
- Small towel or rug for rest time and small pillow
- Water bottle
- School bag (of your own choice, doesn't have to be a school bag)
- Lunch box - ensure your child can open and close the lunchbox before purchasing
- Two changes of clothes, including underwear and socks.
- Raincoat
- Gumboots
- Bag to put wet or dirty clothes in (to fit inside the school bag)



The Clothing Shop at Guildford Grammar School is open for set hours during term with special opening hours during the school holidays. Please make an appointment for your child by contacting the Clothing Shop via email Clothing.Shop@ggs.wa.edu.au or telephone (08) 9377 9209.



FIND OUT MORE:

TAKE A TOUR



We hold four school tours each year, where you are invited to visit the Centre and see the **Little Explorers** program in action.

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