

# Forbes Preschool

'Growing Our Own'  
28<sup>th</sup> November 2023



# What does our Preschool look like?

- Started at FPS in 2009 – no Aboriginal children, no vulnerable families
- Preschool running at a loss, not many children attending – exclusive
- Reduced fees, employment of First Nations community people
- Building connections to our community
- Word of mouth
- Built a new preschool in 2016
- Pop Up preschool began
- We became NDIS providers in 2020
- Long waitlist today.





Forbes Preschool is a holistic hub for children and families to give them the best start in life.



We will achieve our vision by providing quality, inclusive play based early education in partnership with other providers and the broader community.

Our holistic approach is shaped by a multi-disciplinary model with embedded teamwork.



# Employment

- 27 employees
- 11 Bachelor of Teaching/Education or currently studying
- 2 Speech Pathologists
- 2 Occupational Therapist
- 1 Nurse audiologist
- 5 Diploma
- 3 Cert III
- 1 trainee, who is already planning and showing leadership skills to complete her Bachelor of Teaching
- 1 chartered accountant
- 1 business degree



# Our experience

- Positivity is infectious, so is the drive to learn when you are in a safe environment
- In this sector we talk about cultural safety for children, we should consider this for our adult learners
- Commitment to being an employer of choice
- Having an employment strategy, a clear induction process, and set expectations from the beginning
- Close working relationship with local schools and the wider community benefit us and the children
- Low staff turnover
- Stay in your own lane, do what we do well!



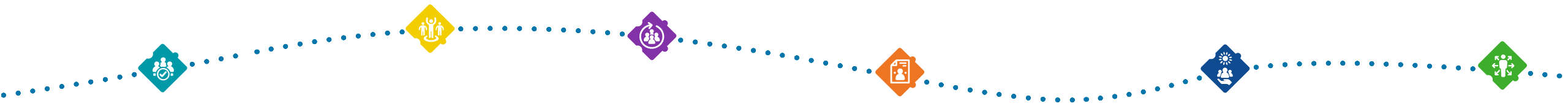
# Authentic values



**Inclusive Education**  
everyone is welcome,  
everyone belongs



**Equality**  
valuing and respecting  
the individual



# Position Vacant

We do find it hard to find staff, once upon a time we were flooded with applications, but not anymore.

Even for a Cert III or trainee role, to find a therapist is a whole other story!

We offer above award conditions, we are a preschool, i.e. school terms and hours.

I can only imagine how it must be for others.



# Affordability

- We have a clear vision and apply for external grants to support additional programs, and use our government funding to its full potential
- As we are well known in our community for the work we do, donations are given to support things like our food pantry
- Pop Up Preschool works closely with another local organisation, meaning we only send 1 staff member
- NDIS allows us to support individual needs
- Ninganah No More program is in place
- Local grants/donations received.







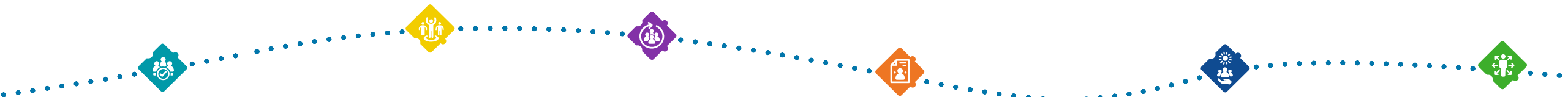
# Governance

- Management committee – low turnover, local expertise
- Reflective of our preschool community, 3 Aboriginal members, a solicitor, a housing support worker, a Director of Planning and Growth, a representative from each of the local schools
- Trusting relationships
- Robust conversations to reflect, resolve and implement innovative programs.



# How do we measure wellbeing?

- I think about the individual and the team's wellbeing? How can I measure their wellbeing, and what do we measure?
- We do know a child needs to feel safe to be able to learn, our educators also need to feel safe to not only continue learning but to teach our community of learners.
- We also know that for long-term positive outcomes, we need to provide quality early education. We need a quality workforce!



# Child safety

- Supervision is at the forefront of our sector
- If we are burnt out, we have staff shortages, unfortunately, that's when accidents happen
- Also, that's when quality is compromised
- And when people leave our sector



# How we support our team

- Monthly counselling (from the flood), why we don't have EAP
- Above ratio, the team can have a break when needed
- A purpose-built building – enables great for supervision
- Weekly staff meetings to check in on the small stuff and the bigger issues
- LOTS of Professional Development
- Trained and experienced team diverse team
- Strong leadership and governance
- Mentoring program





## What next...

- Leadership, including distributed leadership
- Grow our own
- Keep it real, stay positive and support each other
- Actions speak louder than words
- Trusting relationships
- Advocate for Early Education, work with the community



# Potential Opportunities

I would love to build another preschool in our community, but who will staff it?

We need more 0-3-year-old places in our community, people can't move to our town without care for their children.... That's a whole other conversation.



“If you care about someone, and you got a little love in your heart, there ain’t nothing you can’t get through together”

- Ted Lasso

And that’s it from me...





Thank you.

