



2024 Early Learning Centre Handbook



MOTTO

Make a difference,
be the difference.

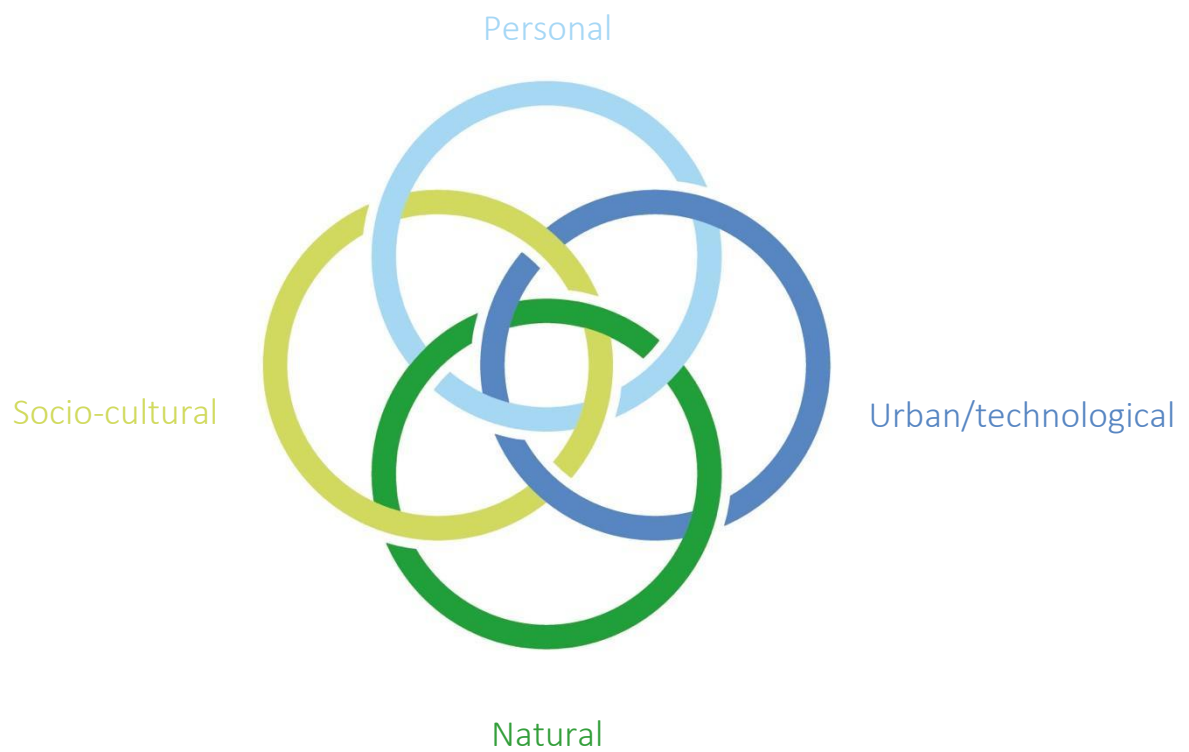
VISION

Education that makes a
difference today for a
sustainable and thriving
tomorrow.

VALUES

Compassion
Respect
Integrity
Creativity
... always with Courage

RINGS OF SUSTAINABILITY



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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Curriculum review and development is an essential part of Cornish College's commitment to continuous growth. To successfully engage students in authentic learning experiences that are meaningful for their current and future world and to ensure each student has the opportunity to attain personal academic excellence, our curriculum programs must respond to student developmental needs, interests and aspirations.

In reviewing the Cornish College curriculum and the needs of our students, it is clear – perhaps now more than ever – that young people require a curriculum that is future-focused to prepare them for what lies ahead, yet at the same time serves their current academic and wellbeing needs in a way that nurtures and cares for them.

Nicola Forrest
Principal



The Hundred Languages of Children

The child
is made of one hundred.
The child has
a hundred languages
a hundred hands
a hundred thoughts
a hundred ways of thinking
of playing, of speaking.

A hundred, always a hundred
ways of listening
of marvelling, of loving,
a hundred joys
for singing and understanding.
a hundred worlds
to discover,
a hundred worlds
to invent,
a hundred worlds
to dream.

The child has a hundred languages
(and a hundred, hundred, hundred more)
but they steal ninety nine.
The school and the culture
separate the head from the body.

They tell the child:
to think without hands
to do without head
to listen and not speak
to understand without joy
love and marvelling
only at Easter and Christmas.

They tell the child:
to discover a world already there
and of the hundred
they steal ninety nine.
They tell the child:
that work and play
reality and fantasy,
science and imagination,
sky and earth,
reason and dream
are things
that do not belong together.

And thus they tell the child
that the hundred is not there.
The child says:
No way
The Hundred **is** there.

Loris Malaguzzi 1920 – 1994

Loris Malaguzzi was an early childhood educator who founded the educational philosophy known as the Reggio Emilia approach.



OUR EARLY LEARNING CENTRE PHILOSOPHY

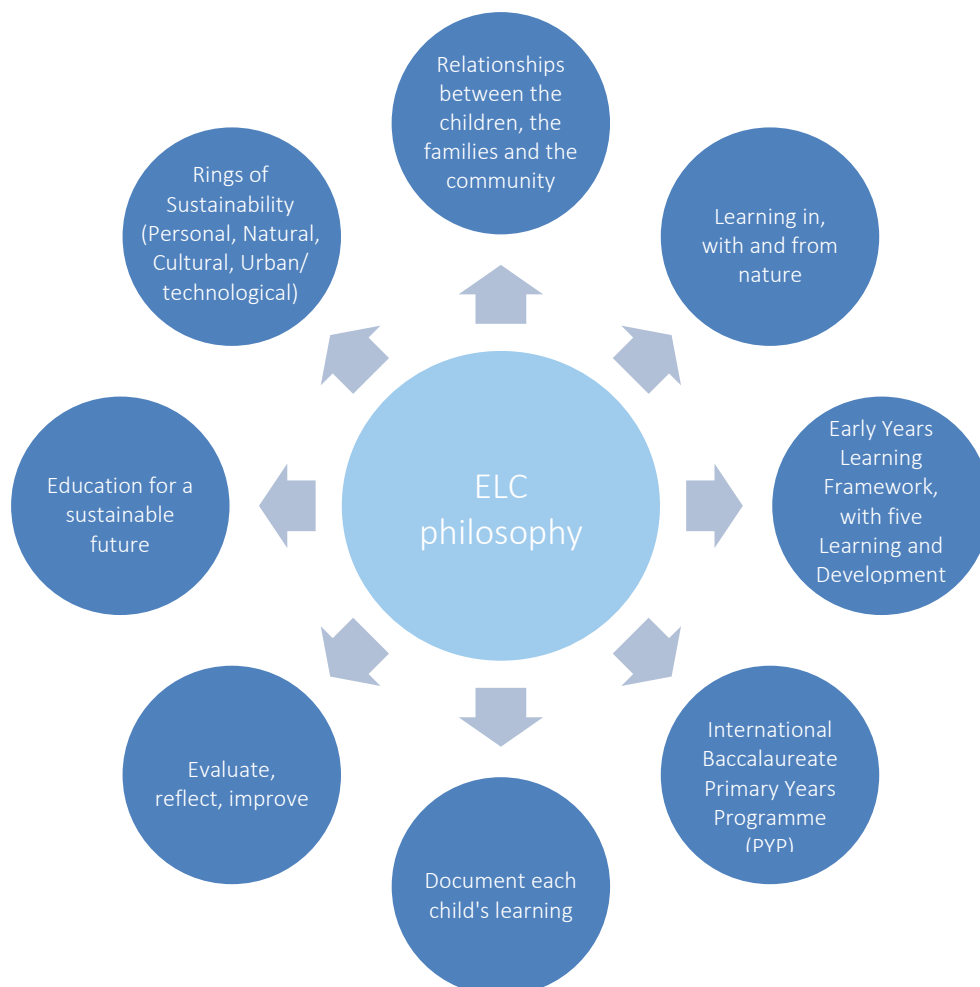
The Early Learning Centre (ELC) philosophy holds at its core the unique and important time that is childhood. Our priority is to ensure each child feels safe, secure and supported, fostering a sense of belonging and the opportunity to flourish.

We are committed to the development and nurturing of mutually respectful relationships with children and families within our diverse community of learners. We value children as unique individuals who are powerful contributors to their own learning as well as the learning encounters that are experienced as being part of a group.

As advocates for the rights of young children we believe it is our responsibility to inspire and share with the wider community our innovative practice. Children are respected, with educators holding a strong image of the child, believing they are capable, competent, curious and full of potential.

A variety of experiences (indoors and outdoors) nurture children's spirit of inquiry, a lifelong love of learning and provides a foundation to becoming responsible citizens of the world, enabling them to make a difference. By providing periods of uninterrupted time to play children find inspiration, joy and gain a sense of wellbeing. Our engagement with the great outdoors empowers children to connect with nature facilitating their social, spiritual, physical, intellectual and emotional learning.

Environments are thoughtfully planned to be warm, inviting, family friendly and aesthetically beautiful spaces. They are designed to evoke and further develop connections, exploration, problem solving, thinking, wonder, creativity, imagination and 'supported risky play'.



CURRICULUM

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework

It identifies five Early Years Learning and Development Outcomes 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



International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme

The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP) builds on the use of an inquiry-based approach to learning. It promotes the development of the learner profile where students are actively encouraged to be inquirers, communicators, thinkers, open minded, balanced, risk takers, knowledgeable, principled, caring and reflective.

Nature Pedagogy

Nature Pedagogy is learning with nature, in nature and about nature. We know that being out in nature is important for the health and wellbeing of everyone, especially children. Spending long uninterrupted periods of time in nature provides opportunities for children to learn through play and exploration that leads to authentic inquiry and teaching opportunities.



Introduction to the Reggio Emilia approach

The Reggio Emilia approach was developed in the municipality of Reggio Emilia in Northern Italy after World War II. It was initially led and developed by Loris Malaguzzi, who saw children as strong, competent, full of resources and the constructor and co-constructor of their learning.

In collaboration with the Early Years Learning Framework and Primary Years Programme, our indoor and expansive outdoor learning environment is influenced strongly by the Reggio Emilia approach to education.

This is a brief summary of the fundamentals of this philosophy.

The educators in Reggio Emilia view:

The child as a protagonist.

The child as a collaborator.

The child as a communicator.

The environment as a third teacher.

The teacher as a partner, nurturer and guide.

The teacher as a researcher.

The documentation as communication.

The parent as partner.



Our Early Learning Centre offers the best of all worlds – a secure and creative space inside, a gently challenging outdoor investigative zone, which supports young children to develop emotional and physical confidence and skills, and then the wider property where they can feel the freedom of a fully natural environment

Specialist Subjects

Each week the Art, Creative Movement, Music and Library teachers work with the ELC staff to create experiences that support and enrich the children's learning program.

In ELC4, the children have the additional involvement of Japanese and Outdoor Education classes and a fortnightly visit to the Digital Technologies Futures Hub.



Buddies

Both ELC3 and ELC4 spend a session once a fortnight with their Year 8 buddies. The buddies program operates to give both age groups an opportunity to benefit from a relationship with an older or younger peer. The Year 8s enjoy their mentoring role as well as the chance to play in the ELC, and the ELC children count the days until their buddies come.

Environmental Awareness

Our program develops children's awareness around how we can reduce, recycle and reuse. We will encourage your children to consider various items, their possible future uses and/or most appropriate place of disposal i.e., compost, recycled glass and plastic items, rubbish. In line with the Cornish College environmental focus, we will concentrate on responsible use of our natural and finite resources. During summer the children engage in water play. A rainwater tank has been installed and children are encouraged to be mindful of how they are using the water in their play.

National Quality Rating and Assessment

Approved Services are assessed and rated against each of the seven Quality Areas of the National Quality Standard and the National Regulations. The Cornish College ELC was assessed in September 2022 and received a top rating of *Exceeding*.

ABOUT THE EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

Early Learning Centre Educators

Staff in the Early Learning Centre are qualified, having completed a tertiary qualification – Masters in Early Childhood Education, Bachelor of Education, or Graduate Diploma of Teaching Early Childhood. Co-educator staff have completed a Bachelor, Diploma or Certificate IV in Early Childhood Education.

Hours

ELC3	Full-time, Monday – Friday (5 days)	Part-time, Monday – Thursday (4 days)	9.00am-3.00pm
ELC4	Full-time, only Monday – Friday		9.00am-3.00pm



Out of School Hours Care Program

The Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) program is located in the classroom closest to the Early Learning Centre gates. The College has engaged Extend to run our before and after school care programs. The programs have access to school facilities and are activity-based.

Your child must be registered with Extend in order to use the service casually. We recommend you do this in case of an emergency www.extend.com.au/school/cornish-college/

Early Learning Centre children who are attending Before School Care are brought to the Early Learning Centre at 8.30am and signed in by the Extend staff.

Early Learning Centre children attending After School Care are taken to the Extend room by 3.00pm by an Early Learning Centre staff member.

Before School Care Hours: 7.00am – 8.30am

After School Care Hours for Early Learning Centre children: 3.00pm – 6.00pm

Connection Time

The ELC program finishes at 3.00pm, however children with older siblings in the school can remain in the ELC and must be collected by 3.25pm. From 3.00pm to 3.25pm, these children will attend our Connection time in The Observatory. If you are not able to collect them by 3.25pm they will need to be booked into the Extend OSHC program.

National quality rating and assessment for OSHC

Approved Services are assessed and rated against each of the seven Quality Areas of the National Quality Standard and the National Regulations. The Cornish OSHC program was assessed in September 2022 and received a top rating of *Exceeding*.

Contact Details

Children must be booked into the Out of School Hours Care program in order to attend the program. Further information and registration forms are available at www.extend.com.au/school/cornish-college/ or by calling 1300 366 437.

Food/Nutrition

Morning Tea

Please provide your child with a healthy morning tea in a suitably named container. Options may include fruit, raw vegetables, dry biscuits, rye crackers or healthy popcorn.

Lunches

Parents are requested to send their child's lunch in a suitably named container. *Please do not send lollies or chocolate.* As early childhood educators, we are concerned with the health and welfare of all young children. We will be encouraging the children to develop awareness about food that is nutritious.

Morning tea and lunch are to be in separate containers.

As we will also be developing the children's awareness of the environment and teaching them to reuse and recycle we would prefer you to send the children's water in a drink bottle. We are a rubbish-free centre in the ELC which means no Glad Wrap, pre-packaged food etc. Please respect this policy as it is an important message that we give the children in terms of their environmental awareness. There are a number of different containers available.

Lunch orders from the canteen can be made online using the Flexischools website.

www.flexischools.com.au

Orders are then paid for online and are accepted up until 9.00am on the day of order.

Nut Guidelines

As some children in the Early Learning Centre may have life threatening allergies to nuts, we ask for your cooperation in keeping the classroom environment a safe one. Raw nuts or sandwiches that contain peanut butter or Nutella include ingredients that are a high risk for children with allergies and we ask that you do not include them in your child's school lunch.

Birthdays

We enjoy celebrating birthdays in the Early Learning Centre. Parents are welcome to send along a special treat for the class to share for morning tea. Cupcakes or individual treats are the most practical. Please send a list of ingredients along as well, as this enables staff to monitor children who may have allergies.



Food Allergies

If your child has any food intolerances or allergies, this will be discussed at the start of the year and relevant management plans will be put in place.

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is an integral component of our program and we welcome you to participate on a daily basis or join us on our weekly walks. This extended time out in nature provides an excellent opportunity for all family members, including younger siblings or grandparents to be actively involved in the children's learning.

All parents or grandparents who participate in our program require a current *Working with Children's Check* and the Volunteer registration form. The application process can be accessed online www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/individuals/applicants/how-to-apply

Events and Celebrations

We always encourage the active involvement of parents in the program and provide a number of events and celebrations throughout the year which family members will be invited to attend. At the beginning of the year we organise a sausage sizzle for families to get to know each other.

Class Representatives

Each group invites one or two parents to act on behalf of the Parents Association. This role is to support family connections and a sense of community, to be a conduit between staff and parents, in order to support strong communication and connection. Parents are welcome to participate throughout the program, provide feedback, help out with various projects and contribute ideas.



COMMENCING IN THE EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

Transition

To begin the school year, a transition program enables children to develop a sense of belonging by feeling secure in their environment and with their relationships with other children, families and educators.

Some children settle into an early learning program quickly and happily and some feel shy and may cry on their first days. As they get used to the program, their new surroundings and the staff, they will be eager to start each day's experiences. We will do everything we can to make your child feel secure and happy in what may be their first time away from their parents.

If you feel that your child requires more time to transition into the program, please discuss this with your class teacher.



Arrival/Departure

For safety and security reasons, parents are required to sign their child in and out of the centre. The arrival and departure time of the child must be documented and initialled. If someone other than the parent is collecting a child we require their name and contact details to be listed in your child's ELC enrolment forms. Please call or email if there are any changes for your child's pick up on the day.

Uniform

The children are required to wear the school sports uniform except on their class walk day when we encourage casual clothes that are suitable for exploring and climbing. Children are required to wear broad-brimmed hats during Terms 1 and 4 and at other times when the UV is rated over 3.

The College's official uniform supplier, Noone, will be conducting new student uniform fittings at their onsite uniform shop in December/January.

Full uniform will be available for immediate purchase, or alternatively, you are welcome to use their store's lay-by service.

For further information, please visit www.noone.com.au/school/cornish-college

Rear Car Park

When parking, please reverse into the car spaces. If you are joining us on a walk, or helping in the classroom, avoid parking in the yellow car park lines as these spaces are used by older students at recess and lunch times.



Spare Clothes

Children often require a change of clothes due to a toileting accident or getting wet when having fun playing, so it's essential to have a change of casual clothes kept in their locker. Please include several pairs of underpants and socks.

Dhumba-dha biik

On walk days, children are able to wear comfortable casual clothes that allow them to move freely as they engage in the natural world.



COMMUNICATION

There are a range of ways the Early Learning Centre and College communicate to parents. The most important is discussions with your child's teacher.

The Hive

Throughout the week the class teachers email parents a link to the school portal, The Hive. The Early Learning Centre portal contains all the information parents need, including calendar dates, policies, curriculum planning and the class learning reflections.

Portfolios

Each child in the Early Learning Centre will have an individual portfolio. The portfolio will be a collection of thoughts, images and photographs reflecting your child's development over the year. Parents are invited to create the first page for the portfolio, as you are the child's first teacher.

Academic Care and Progress Meetings

These formal meetings are scheduled twice a year and parents are welcome to arrange meetings with class teachers at times required.

Policies/Behaviour Management

All the Early Learning Centre policies are located on the school portal, The Hive.

School Stream App

Once you are a parent at Cornish you will be provided with access to school notices via the School Stream app. The app is used for all communication with families.



GENERAL ISSUES

If you have any concerns or queries, please make a time to discuss this with your child's teacher before or after school hours. If you have a serious concern, which cannot be addressed by the teacher, you will need to make an appointment with the Director of the Early Learning Centre. We also enjoy hearing the positives about the Centre, staff and program.

Health and Attendance

Regular attendance is important for all children, however children who are unwell recover best at home. Requests cannot be made for children to remain indoors for the day. Please also be considerate of the other children and staff.

Please do not send your child to the Early Learning Centre if they have a bad cold, as it is easily spread to other members of the group.

If your child has an infectious disease, please let us know, as we will inform you of the length of time your child is required to stay at home. If your child has an ongoing condition or allergy, it is important for us to be aware of this so as to provide the best possible care.

Immunisation

Under the "No Jab, No Play" legislation, all parents/guardians seeking to enrol their child at an early childhood service in Victoria will be required to provide evidence that the child is:

- Fully immunised for their age *or*
- On a vaccination catch-up program *or*
- Unable to be fully immunised for medical reasons

NB: *Conscientious Objection* will not be an exemption.

Homeopathic immunisation will not be recognised as a form of immunisation.



Medications

If your child requires medication during the Early Learning Centre day you are obliged to provide this medication and to give written permission in the *Accident/Illness/Medication Record*. If you do not sign the record, we will telephone you for verbal permission which will be verified by another staff member. We are otherwise legally unable to administer medication. The Early Learning Centre does not provide paracetamol for children. Please consider whether your child will be comfortable at the Early Learning Centre if they do require medication for illness.

If your child has any medical requirements, including anaphylaxis or asthma, an *Action Plan from the family doctor must be provided to the Centre* to be kept with the children's records and parents are required to meet with the child's teacher prior to attending to complete the risk management action and communication plans. This is a Department of Education and Early Childhood requirement.

Independent Toileting

At the ELC we encourage independent toileting.

Our definition of independent toileting is:

- Children who recognise when they need to go to the toilet and do so. If your child has frequently occurring accidents, an action plan will be decided upon between the classroom teacher and the parents (the Centre is not equipped with changing or bathing facilities)
- Children who can wipe their bottom independently. Staff are not expected to do this for children

Toileting accidents do happen on occasion. Children will be supported and made to feel comfortable if this occurs.

Relaxing/Quiet Time

The children have a designated *relaxing time* during each day.

It involves children relaxing on a bed, reading or listening to stories. Children are not expected to sleep, but this quiet time is encouraged as part of children's wellbeing allowing time for children to process the day's learning and gather energy for the rest of the day.



Parents Association

The Cornish College Parents Association (PA) actively supports the Cornish community through a range of social events and fundraising activities offered throughout the year.

It funds projects to improve the learning environment for students and endeavours to support the efforts of staff and the College as a whole.

Five office bearers and a general committee, elected annually, lead the Parents Association and every parent at Cornish College is automatically a member.

The Parents Association's focus is to maintain and support the wonderful sense of community so that new and existing families understand the importance and significance of being a member of our community.

The PA strives to provide as many opportunities as possible for parents and families to connect through a variety of social events.

The PA has also assisted with funding a number of school projects.



Meetings

A monthly meeting is held on the last Tuesday of each month at Cornish College or online, commencing at 7.30pm. All parents are warmly invited to attend these monthly meetings, which are a great opportunity to find out about the latest projects and events, hear from the President of the Parents Association and other office bearers, and from the Principal.

More information on meeting dates and past meeting minutes including PA contact information can be found on The Hive. The PA sends out a meeting reminder newsletter to the school community each month and upcoming meeting reminders are posted on the PA Facebook page. If you would like to attend a meeting, please email pa.secretary@cornishcollege.vic.edu.au

Class Representatives

Being a Class Representative is another wonderful way in which parents can support the community. Ideally, each year level will have Class Representatives. This network of parent support communication with families about activities, source volunteers as needed and organise social events for their respective classes.

Volunteering

The PA welcomes any parent who would like to volunteer for events or projects, no matter how big or small. These events are not possible without the time, effort, and enthusiasm of many volunteers and we greatly value and appreciate all our volunteers. If you like to find out more or volunteer for any upcoming events please email pa.president@cornishcollege.vic.edu.au

Social Media

The Parents Association has its own Facebook page Cornish College Parents Association Events.

All families are warmly invited and encouraged to join this Facebook page to stay connected with latest news and events.

Year Level Facebook Pages

Each year level also has its own Facebook page to communicate, organise social events and provide another way to keep in touch with parents in that year level. Class Representatives invite families to join their respective year-level Facebook pages, which follow each child as they move to the next year.

The PA sends out a communication calling for Class Representatives at the start of each year.

If you would like to find out more about being a Class Representative, volunteering for events or projects or you are unable to find your year level Facebook page, please email pa.president@cornishcollege.vic.edu.au

We look forward to welcoming you to Cornish College and to the Parents Association.

CONTACT US

For more information about the Early Learning Centre, please contact:

Jeanette Russell

Director of the Early Learning Centre

jeanette.russell@cornishcollege.vic.edu.au

Telephone: 03 9781 9000

For information about Admissions, please contact:

Admissions

admissions@cornishcollege.vic.edu.au

Telephone: 03 9781 9008



If I can
ask my own questions,
try out my ideas,
experience what's around me,
share what I find;



If I have
plenty of time for
my special pace,
a nourishing space,
things to transform;



If you'll be
my patient friend,
trusted guide,
fellow investigator,
partner in learning;

Then I will
explore the world,
discover my voice,
and tell you what I know
in a hundred languages.



Pamela Houk

This poem, first used as an introduction to *The Hundred Languages of Children* exhibit at the Dayton Art Institute, was meant to alert viewers to aspects of the Reggio Emilia approach, as well as to the dialogues of the children printed on many panels.

It was written by Pamela Houk with valuable suggestions from Leila Gandini and the late Loris Malaguzzi.

