the beach EARLY LEARNING CENTRES

Parent Handbook Tuggerah

Welcome

Dear families

Welcome to our Centre!

Our Parent Handbook outlines important information you will need to be aware of while you are a part of our Centre. It is important that you read over this booklet and ask questions about matters you do not understand.

You will find a section at the back of the Child Enrolment Form which we ask you to sign to indicate that you have read the information in this booklet and your enrolment pack.

Our Centre has an Open Door Policy - You and your family are welcome to visit at any time. In addition to this all of our policies are available in the policy folder, located in the Centre's office. Please feel free to look and provide feedback on our policies at any time.

Kind regards

Adam Sharpe
Managing Director
Beach Early Learning Centres

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Our Centre

Finding a new Early Childhood Service for your child can be a daunting task. At The Beach Early Learning Centre Tumbi Road our aim is to provide a secure and happy environment where children can develop their intellectual, social, emotional, physical, aesthetic skills to become competent and confident individuals, and for you as a parent / guardian to feel safe knowing that your child is receiving the best possible care.

Our Contact details are:

Ph: 02 4388 4336

Email: director.tuggerah@thebeachearlylearningcentre.com.au

Website: www.thebeachearlylearningcentre.com.au

Opening Times: 7.00am - 6.00pm

51 weeks per year

the beach EARLY LEARNING CENTRES

Our Philosophy

The Beach Early Learning Centres promote the value of childhood at a time when children as capable learners and co-constructors continue their life journey. This is inclusive of respecting and embracing diversity and encouraging collaboration and belonging for all participants.

We believe that early childhood is a unique stage of life. We are committed to the care and individual interests of each child. We believe that we enable this by providing a safe, fun and friendly environment where children can foster and maintain friendships with each other and staff. Early childhood is a time for children to discover who they are and how they fit into the world. Essential to this, is the freedom to explore, to be a child and to be protected.

We also aim to provide children with opportunities to thrive and wholly participate in learning through guidance, relationships and resources, maximising every child's potential. This will be achieved through an inclusive and respectful framework and open learning environments.

The Beach Early Learning Centres aim for excellence in delivering early childhood education and the framework for this ongoing improvement is outlined in the Centre's Quality Improvement Plan. Underpinning this plan are our values as follows;

We Value Children and Childhood

We do this by;

:- Providing play as the most effective vehicle for discovery based learning in the early years. Therefore, providing activities, in response to the interests and strengths of children, where children play to learn as they create, construct, problem-solve practice, discover, improvise, imagine, experiment, research and hypothesise.

:- Providing a learning environment for children to engage in meaningful, respectful play, which is intriguing and aesthetically pleasing – one that invites and cultivates curiosity, imagination and confidence.

:- Providing a supported learning environment where the routines and the framework are flexible whilst allowing predictability. This will encourage children's autonomy and records of individual achievements and ensure access and participation by all children.

:- Presenting an educational curriculum, which fosters individual capabilities and potential.

:- Providing opportunities to engage and participate as co-constructors in play and learning experiences within a respectful social context.

:- Providing opportunities for children to be empowered as active and informed citizens, to embrace and respect diversity and individuality.

:- Provision of a framework, which is founded upon children's strengths. We value and build on each child's strengths, skills and knowledge to ensure their motivation and engagement in learning. Educators assess, anticipate and scaffold the child's learning through open-ended questioning, providing feedback, guidance, challenging their thinking and making use of spontaneous "teachable moments".

:- Providing a sense of belonging and comfort in a nurturing environment – providing children with consistent emotional support, trust and guidance to assist children to develop the skills and understandings they need to interact positively with others, to develop respectful, secure and reciprocal relationships, to learn to preserve, to take risks, empathise, value collaboration and teamwork and interdependence as learners.

:- We encourage children to express themselves, listen and communicate with others with respect and consideration.

We Value Families/Carers & Community

We do this by;

::- Parents are respected as the primary and most significant educator of the child. Therefore actively developing collaborative relationships with parents to ensure the educator / carer relationship is meaningful for each child. Positive relationships between educators and parents lead to more secure and effective relationships with the child.

:- As partners in providing the optimum care and education of children.

:- Providing opportunities for families to exchange relevant information pertinent to the care and education of their child.

:- Presenting opportunities to families and community to develop partnerships, which encourages and fosters collaboration.

:- Providing support for families, which encompasses and acknowledges respect for their values, beliefs and child-rearing practices.

:- Providing information about, and opportunities to collaborate in the development and review of the centre philosophy, learning curriculum, policies, procedures, practices and goals.

:- We work closely with our feeder schools to ensure our service compliments the school environment and maintains consistency with the schools and communities values.

We Value Staff

We do this by;

:- Reflective practice promotes ongoing learning. By gathering information we gain insights to support, inform and enrich decision making about children's learning. We continually seek ways to build professional knowledge and develop learning communities.

:- Respecting their professional skills, knowledge and experience.

:- Supporting and respecting their diverse values, beliefs and professional practices.

:- Providing support and opportunities to further develop and enhance skills and knowledge through professional development activities. In particular resourcing staff to ensure they are capable of delivering the Early Years Learning Framework.

:- Providing support, resources and opportunity for collaboration to enable the development and implementation of curriculum and care practices.

:- Engaging in an open and honest partnership between individual staff and teams, based on consultation, supportive professional relationships and interactions.

:- Following and keeping updated knowledge on best practice guidelines set down by governing bodies.

The philosophy of The Beach Early Learning Centres encompasses an adoption of the principles and values outlined in the Australian Early Childhood Association Code of Ethics.

The philosophy of The Beach Early Learning Centres encompasses the Early Years Learning Framework. The underlying principle of which is;

All children experience meaningful and joyful learning, enriching their childhood.

The Framework conveys high expectations for all children's play and leisure activities in early childhood. It communicates these expectations through the following five Outcomes:

:- 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

Cultural Diversity

The Beach Early Learning Centres recognises and respects the traditional custodians of Australia.

The importance of continuously developing and refining strategies to improve the connection with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities in the area of early childhood is embedded throughout the everyday at the Beach Early Learning Centres.

Our guiding statements that form the framework through which respect is shown are;

Statement 1
All children engage in culturally inclusive and safe early childhood education and experiences.

Statement 2
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are recognised within the broader The Beach Early Learning Centres culture.

Statement 3
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and contexts are considered by all The Beach Early Learning Centres staff.

Statement 4
All The Beach Early Learning Centre staff have access to training in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander understandings.

Our team of educators and staff are committed to providing children and families with a coordinated approach to a warm, nurturing and engaging environment that celebrates diversity and the right of every child to have access to high quality care regardless of their individual needs.

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)

We understand the important role the Centre plays in nurturing and educating the children in our care and through our staff development of loving relationships based on trust and security.

An emphasis is placed on children and families receiving greater individual attention through goal setting, child progress records and family involvement in centre planning and events.

We will be following the Early Years Learning Framework as per our Education, Curriculum and Learning Policy.
We have an identified Educational Leader who is responsible for overseeing the curriculum at our Centre.

All Educators at our Centre are trained and experienced in areas of early education and care. Due to our high standard and commitment of our Educators, we are able to provide developmental and educational curricula for each group of children. Information regarding our Education Team is on display in the centre foyer. We will use the relationships children have with their families and communities to build the curriculum, working in partnership with parents, to ensure each child's knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of our programs.

Early Years Learning Framework Learning (EYLF)
Learning Outcomes:

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity
Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world
Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners
Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

If your child's Educator feels there is an area of concern, they will inform you and advise where help may be sought, e.g. speech therapist. It is always your decision to follow this up. Educators are willing to discuss any aspect of a child's learning and development with parents.

Centre Goals

Principles and practices that best support our vision and the developmental needs of our children are:

:- Valuing the child as an individual within the context of the family and the community

:- Supporting parents in their role as primary caregivers and sharing information of importance to benefit the development of their child

:- Valuing play as a medium for all aspects of development and learning and acknowledging and supporting children's individual learning styles

:- Valuing the arts as symbol systems through which children discover and express meaning and make sense of themselves and their world. Providing opportunities for discovery, learning through self-selected activities, and encouraging the development of children's abilities to observe, perceive, explore, investigate, imagine and problem solve

:- Valuing positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviour, thereby allowing the child to develop self discipline and parent-supported value systems

:- Valuing daily routines such as eating, toileting, dressing and resting as opportunities for learning and social development, and therefore ensuring that these times are engaging and stimulating respecting the needs and rights of children to make choices and decisions by empowering them to take responsibility for the functioning of parts of the daily routines

;- Providing opportunities for children to develop responsibility by encouraging them in taking care of their environment and materials

:- Valuing the cultures of the children attending the Centre, through presentation of relevant cultural activities. Recognising the need for children to practice skills and consolidate their learning by providing opportunities for repetition of experiences and extension of their ideas. Designing and establishing an enriched environment that stimulates the imagination, promotes creativity and enhances aesthetic development and appreciation of nature

:- Valuing and supporting staff in their work with children and families and in their own professional development. Being responsive to the needs of the community and abiding by the relevant laws and policies that relate to the provision of quality children's services

Underlying these principles and practices is our understanding of the need to promote children's independence and their ability to work co-operatively with peers and adults within an environment free of cultural or gender bias.

Policies & Procedures

ABSENCES

Families are entitled to receive Child Care Subsidy for up to 42 days where their child is absent, for example due to illness, public holidays and parental leave. Evidence to support these absences is not required. Additional absence days may be available if they meet the situations outlines in the Family Assistance Law and there is evidence to support these.

As is the case with most childcare centres, sick days and public holidays must be paid for. You will however be entitled to a Make Up Day for any Public Holidays which can be used at a later date dependent on centre availability for that given day. Sick days do not attract a make-up day. Please note make-up days need to be used in the calendar year that they are accrued and can only be used if fees are up to date. Please ensure you inform the centre of all absences to remain eligible for the CCS and ensure fees are up to date to claim make-up days

ALLERGIES

For your child to receive the best possible care is it important to communicate to the centre any known allergies that your child suffers from. You will be provided with the opportunity to detail all allergies by way of an Allergy Plan that will be given on commencement. It is your responsibility to ensure that the information at the centre remains up-to-date at all times.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are an important time in a child's life and we welcome the opportunity to be a part of such a happy day. As well as people close to the child attending the centre to celebrate the day, please feel free to bring a birthday cake or individual cup cakes to the centre. Please inform the centre if you do intend to bring a cake along so we can ensure that all children are catered for, including those with allergies, special dietary requirements and cultural or religious beliefs.

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

Child Care Subsidy is available to all families who are Australian Residents if the child meets immunisation requirements and parents meet eligibility requirements. Entitlement is determined by an activity test which determines the number of hours of subsidised care to which families are entitled.

Hours of activity per fortnight
Maximum number of hours of subsidy per fortnight
8 hours to 16 hours - 36 hours
More than 16 hours to 48 hours - 72 hours
More than 48 hours - 100 hours

A broad range of activities meet the activity test requirements, including paid work, self-employment, unpaid work in a family business, active job hunting, volunteering or studying. You can also include reasonable travel time to and from a place of activity to the centre. In two parent families, both parents must meet the activity test, and subsidy hours are calculated on the lower number where parents have different levels of activity. There are exemptions for parents who legitimately cannot meet the activity test requirements. Low income families who do not meet the activity test can access 24 hours of subsidised care per fortnight.

The percentage of subsidy a family receives is based on their estimated combined annual income.
All families wishing to access Child Care Subsidy need to complete an online Child Care Subsidy assessment through their myGov account. Assessment asks families to provide information about their expected combined family income, activity level of parents and types of child care service being used.

The Additional Child Care Subsidy may be available to help support:
families needing help to support their children's safety and wellbeing
grandparents on income support who are primary child-carers
families in temporary financial hardship
families moving to work from income support

Policies & Procedures

Families can claim Child Care Subsidy or Additional Child Care Subsidy online by signing into their myGov and completing a Child Care Subsidy claim. If eligible, the Subsidy will be paid directly to the service on families' behalf and we will reduce the fees owed. This can occur after our service enters families' enrolment information online, families accept their CWA and confirm their enrolment information through their myGov account. Until Child Care Subsidy details are available, families will need to pay full fees.

For further details on Child Care Subsidy please speak to our Nominated Supervisor or contact Department of Human Services on
13 61 50.

CHILD PROTECTION INFORMATION

The centre's aim is to promote safety and well being of all the children within care, which is each child's "Human Right". The centre's staff will help children learn about self protection and to ask someone they trust for help if they feel unsafe, by carrying out protective behaviour programs. For more detailed information relating to child protection please refer to the centre's policy, 'Child Protection and Protective Behaviours Policy and Procedure' or the parent information section.

COMMUNICATING WITH STAFF

The centre has developed a communication plan which outlines the opportunities for you to share information about your child's health and development with educators and also outlines opportunity for input and feedback on centre activities. Through a partnership between families and the childcare centre we can all assist the children to receive the care and opportunities they require throughout their early years of development. The following outlines the way we communicate news and events at the centre:

:- Verbally at arrival and departure times

:- Via the Xplor app

:- Regular newsletters which will be sent home once a month or by email

:- A notice board where various messages and notices are displayed advertising current issues and upcoming events.

:- A suggestion/communication box allows parents to leave more detailed written messages if they have concerns or want to provide positive or negative feedback. These can be anonymous if desired.

Occasionally Educators will ask parents to complete short surveys in order to maintain up to date records and seek parent feedback on various topics. It is the parent's responsibility to read these notices and ensure they are aware of current issues and events in the Centre. Policies will be regularly reviewed in a variety of ways (displayed in foyer, newsletters for parent comment on centre practices).

Communication and Educators - What can you expect from Educators?

Educators will :

:- inform families promptly and sensitively of any out of the ordinary incidents affecting their child.

:- share with children's families some of the specific interactions they had with the children during the day.

:- provide information on children's eating and sleeping patterns through verbal communication.

:- keep an appropriate record of joint decisions made with families affecting children's progress, interests and experiences. (These may include new events like toilet training.)

:- Please feel free at any time in person, by phone or email to discuss your child's progress, relationship, interest and experiences.

Policies & Procedures

COMMUNITY LINKS (see back page for contact information)

The centre works closely with a number of organisations within the community. These include organisations that are set up to assist children and families such as Early Intervention, Speech Therapists and Community Health. In addition to this we also have contact with a number of service organisations which include some of the following; NSW Fire Brigade, Police, Ambulance and our local Hospital. These organisations provide valuable verbal and written information as well as guest speakers attending the centre to give specialised talks.

COURT ORDERS

The centre must be notified if there are any court orders is in place in relation to your child and the denial of access by a person or persons and/or the collection of your child, please provide the centre with a copy of documentation to allow for this to be implemented - Without a Court Order we cannot stop a parent collecting a child. The centre's privacy policy will be enforced in relation to all child information.

DELIVERY AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

This is an important and emotional time for all children. Handled correctly this can become a positive experience for both parent and child. We encourage families to stay for a period of time to settle your child into the centre and to stay at departure time so that staff can discuss with you any issues of your child's day. There are strict guidelines relating to the signing in and out of children for parents and relatives and must be adhered to so that an accurate record of attendance is maintained. Authorised collectors need to be specified on your enrolment form and must be over the age of 18yrs.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT AND PRACTICE

Positive guidance of behaviour is the teaching of what is a good thing to do and what is not, what is safe, what pleases, angers and hurts other people. It helps children understand the difference between what acceptable behaviour is and is not. When children are re-directed, stopped or reprimanded the reason is explained to the child which assist's them to make judgements about what he/she can and cannot do. All educators utilise a number of guidance strategies to promote positive behaviour including indirect, direct, verbal, emotional. Each of these strategies are detailed in the Positive Guidance of Behaviour Policy in the centres policy folder.

EMERGENCY / ACCIDENTS

Whilst every effort is made to provide children with a safe environment, accidents do occur. If this is the case and your child hurts themselves during the day, an Incident report will need to be signed by you. If your child needs to be collected a parent will be contacted. If you cannot be contacted and medical attention is necessary, staff will take the required steps. Any medical expenses incurred will be the parent's responsibility. As a matter of extreme importance, parents must ensure the Centre has up to date emergency contact numbers. An incident report will be filled out for all accidents, injuries and illnesses. This will contain details of the event, any first aid that was administered, and be signed an educator, the Nominated Supervisor and by the parent.

ENROLMENT PROCEDURE

The Centre Owners and/or responsible person will strive to ensure that the enrolment process is an easy an effective one for you and your child. On arrival at the centre the Owner / Director will orientate you and your child through the Centre and provide you with an enrolment package. We encourage you to complete the application form as soon as possible so that every effort can be made to satisfy requests for individual days. Your child's enrolment is confirmed after the centre receives the completed enrolment form and method of payment is determined.

EQUITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY

The Owners and staff of this centre endorse the concept of a cross-cultural and non-discriminatory curriculum, and believe that this perspective should be implemented throughout all centre programmes.They believe that educational programmes must support the child's self esteem and pride in family, community, ethnic and linguistic origins. For more information refer to the Inclusion Anti Bias and Promoting Equity Policy and Procedure.

EVACUATION PROCEDURE

Due to the age group of the children the importance of routine is essential in managing serious issues such as an evacuation. With this in mind quarterly evacuation and fire drills take place in the centre with an evaluation process identifying areas of improvement. Located throughout the centre at all exits is an evacuation procedure that is strictly followed by educators at all times.

EXCURSIONS

The aim of excursions is to extend the children's experiences beyond that are able to be offered at the centre. The objective is to offer children an extended experience in an enjoyable manner that is safe and as anxiety free for the children, adults and staff as possible. All excursions will be appropriate to children's age and stage of development and permission will be sought from all parents / guardians prior to the commencement date.

FEES

PLEASE SEE THE CHILD ENROLMENT FORM FOR DAILY FEE AMOUNT

It is our policy that all accounts are to be at a nil balance each week, ie: there should be no fees outstanding. Accounts in arrears will be subject to care being cancelled. On your first week at our Centre you will be required to pay your bond and you will receive a statement on the next billing cycle.

Any change of financial income will alter your fee structure. Please advise the Service and Department of Human Services (13 6150) if this occurs. Payments are made via Xplor using Paypal.

Our childcare fees include all services including nappies, morning and afternoon tea. If you are eligible for the government's Child Care Subsidy your fees will be reduced dependent on the percentage assigned to you by the Department of Human Services which can be accessed through the local Centrelink office. Once you have been given a percentage please contact the centre for your approximate daily fee amount.

Two weeks written notice is required from the ending/terminating party. If you do not provide this notice, you will be charged 2 weeks fees. Accounts will not be be finalised or bond returned until 21 days after last day of enrolment, to ensure CCS is reconciled correctly and account is at a nil balance when exiting the service. If your child does not attend their last usual days, full fees will apply. This means that CCS will not be applied.

OVERDUE FEES

If there has been no request for an extension for the payment of fees and fees are overdue, the following procedure will be implemented:

:- 1 Week Overdue - A reminder letter issued requesting fees paid within 7 days.

:- 2 Weeks Overdue- A final notice posted to your home address requesting fees paid in full within 7 days or your child's position will be made vacant.

:- Fees not received - Legal action will be sought and all costs incurred will be added to the original fee account

GRIEVANCE WITH THE CENTRE

Our child care centre fosters positive relations between all management, parents and staff. Every parent has the right to a positive and sympathetic response to their concerns. Solutions are sought to resolve all disputes, issues or concerns that impact or affect the day-to-day well-being of the centre in a fair, prompt and positive manner. If for any reason you are not happy with our level of education and care or our environment we want to know immediately. You can discuss this with Educators, the Nominated Supervisor or write a formal letter. When any matter is raised the Service will follow our Grievance policy/procedure.

All Service policies/procedures are available to parents.

Positive feedback is most welcome.

For a full explanation of our Grievance Policy please refer to the centre policy folder.

If for any reason you are not happy with our resolution of your grievance or if there is a conflict of interest at centre level you can alternatively email, phone or complete a grievance lodgement form and send to Pilot Childcare Management, details are as follows:

Pilot Childcare Management contact details:

Phone: 02 6551 2713

Email: head.office@pilotchildcare.com.au

GUIDELINES FOR VISITORS

All visitors to the centre are required to report to the office for identification by the Nominated Supervisor / Admin Officer. Once identification has occurred the visitor's details and reason for the visit is logged into the visitor's book.

Policies & Procedures

Once completion of the visit has occurred they must be signed out and assisted off the premises by a member of staff. On occasions where the visitor will be interacting or observing the children they will be introduced to the children where opportunity will be given for any questions and discussion. These procedures are in place to ensure the utmost privacy and protection of the children.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Service is opened for 11 hours per day, 51 weeks per year and caters for children 0-6 years.

The Centre's licensed hours are 7.00am to 6.00pm. All children in the care of the centre are to be picked up and dropped off between these times.

HYGIENE

The Centre ensures that the highest levels of hygiene practices occur within the

Centre at all times. Food safety, storage practices, cleaning, hand washing and toileting are just some of the concerns for staff and procedures are in place and enforced daily. In addition to this educators sit with children and ask questions and prompt discussions relating to good self hygiene practices and also undergo in-service training in these areas to stay abreast of current information and trends.

ILLNESS - SYMPTOMS

Sometimes, children and adults need to be away from the centre for the safety of others. Excluding sick children and adults is an important way of preventing the introduction of infection into the centre. In general if a child is so sick that he/she:

:- Sleeps at unusual times

:- Has a fever of 38C or higher

:- Is crying constantly as a result of discomfort due to illness

:- Is reacting badly to medications

:- Is in need of constant one to one care

:- Is unable to actively participate in the centres program

Policies & Procedures

Parents will be contacted and asked to collect their child, as the Centre does not have the staff resources to adequately care for the children in these conditions. NO CHILD will be admitted with obvious signs of any contagious infection or illness. Our policy states the incubation period, symptoms and exclusion periods of such diseases. Staff reserve the right to request a doctors certificate before allowing a child to be signed in if they feel other children and staff could be at risk of being exposed to an infection.

IMMUNISATION

Immunisation is the safest and most effective way of providing protection against early child diseases. Upon enrolment all children will be required to provide a copy of their child's immunisation details to centre management. Any child who is not up to date with their immunisation will be considered not immunised. Non-immunised children will be excluded from the centre if an incidence of any communicable disease occurs for the period of time as recommended by the health department. Families who do not have their child immunised, or have out-of-date immunisation records will be asked to provide evident of an up to date immunisation before commencing care.

LATE POLICY

Collection of all children is to be completed by 6.00pm on any given day. If an approved collector of the child has not arrived by this time a phone call will be placed to the parents and if unsuccessful the emergency contacts will be phoned. Late fees will apply at a rate of $15 for the first 15 minutes or part thereof and then $1.00 per minute to recover additional staff costs.

If either the parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached the Department of Community Services and Police will be contacted 1 hour after closing time. Failure to collect your child is classified as a Critical Incident by the Department of Community Services and will be treated as such.

MEALS AND NUTRITION

Childhood is a time of growth and activity, which results in increased nutritional needs. It is also a time to form life-long habits of good nutrition and healthy eating. The amount of food required each day varies with age, size and activity level of the child and a good diet is important for the normal growth and development. It is important for staff and families to work co-operatively to ensure the centre plays a part in meeting each child's nutritional needs.

The centre provides both morning and afternoon tea which normally consists of fruit and vegetable platters.

A menu is posted detailing meals for that week, the menu is varied and includes morning tea and afternoon tea and reflects the cultural diversity of Australia and its seasonal variations.

We are happy to cater for special diets, eg wheat free, dairy free, etc. If your child does have special dietary requirements, please provide a detailed health management report from your child's doctor or nutritionist prior to commencing care. Please remember that parents must take the responsibility of informing us of any changes to these requirements.

We encourage all parents to follow the centre policy and information provided at the parent library when providing lunch for your child. The staff are always available to assist with ideas for healthy nutritious lunches.

A menu is posted detailing meals for that week, the menu is varied and includes morning tea and afternoon tea and/or lunch (centre specific) and reflects the cultural diversity of Australia and its seasonal variations. We are happy to cater for special diets, eg wheat free, dairy free, etc. If your child does have special dietary requirements, please provide a detailed health management report from your child's doctor or nutritionist prior to commencing care. Please remember that parents must take the responsibility of informing us of any changes to these requirements.

MEDICATION

Educators will be able to administer medication to children who are recovering from illness if a medication form has been completed and signed by parents before the medication is given. The nominated supervisor or an educator can assist you to complete the form. Medication must be in date, in it's original container with the original label, have the child's name on the label, and have any instructions about the medication (including those from a GP) attached to the medication.

Policies & Procedures

Our service does not administer over the counter medication unless it has been prescribed by a medical practitioner and there is a letter from the doctor explaining the purpose of the medication. Medication may mask the symptoms of other, more serious illnesses and our educators are not qualified medical professionals.

Medication must be handed to an Educator for appropriate storage. Please DO NOT leave medication in your child's bag. Any child who has commenced an antibiotic must not attend the Service for 24 hours from commencement. Parents must inform staff if a child has been given paracetamol within 4 hours of arrival.

WHS ISSUES

This Centre protects the health and safety of children, staff, parents and visitors by keeping informed about the Workplace Health and Safety Act and ensuring appropriate codes of practices are followed. We welcome all feedback regarding the safety of our Centre. If you see something that concerns you regarding safe work practices, the safety of the building and equipment or general Workplace Health and Safety, please contact the Nominated Supervisor immediately.

ORIENTATION

All families are encouraged to use the orientation period before commencing at the Centre, which consists of visiting the centre for short periods of time and helping to familiarise you and your child with the centre's surroundings (parents are to remain with their child at the centre). On arrival at the centre the Nominated Supervisor and educators will explain the importance of this time and the benefit it will give to you and your child. Every effort will be made to show parents every aspect of the centre's operations and answer all your questions. You will also be asked to complete a survey which will be used to provide us with things such as additional information about your child and the effectiveness of our orientation system.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

In Australia today, infants and young children are spending more time than ever before in non-parental care. We believe the best way to work with you and your child is by building a partnership of care. This centre aims to communicate regularly with families to share information about each child's health and development; strengthen the partnership between staff and families; increase the opportunities where staff and families can communicate and share information.

All parents are encouraged to contact the centre in person or over the phone at anytime to speak with your child's educators.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS / TOYS

Families are encouraged to leave children's toys and valuable belongings at home unless they are being used for news or special events. With children wanting to show friends, toys can become broken or lost which inevitably results in your child becoming upset. Although comfort toys are more than welcome we ultimately want children to understand that there are home toys and centre toys. Staff will be asking that all toys brought to the centre will be given back to Mum or Dad on departing. We seek your assistance with this matter. Please ensure all belongings are clearly labelled including dummies, clothes etc. Lost property will be displayed for parent collection in your child's room. Parent co-operation in labelling assists the Centre in keeping your child's belongings together.

PRIORITY OF ACCESS

The Government Child Care Subsidy Scheme has strict guidelines in relation to Priority of Access for children attending all childcare centres. Please refer to our Enrolment Policy for more information about the Family Law and Department of Education and Training requirements for Priority of Access.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

We meet all legal requirements in relation to child to educator ratios and the qualifications of our educators. All Educators hold First Aid qualifications, have Working with Children Checks and attend monthly Educators' meetings. Our Educators are continually evaluating how our curriculum meets the education needs of our children and reflecting on ways to improve children's learning and development and are encouraged to attend further professional training. For further details on the qualifications of the Educators, please see our Nominated Supervisor.

PROGRAMMING

We provide an environment where the children feel comfortable and secure at all times, and all our rooms have daily routines that reflect this. Our routines are designed to maximise each child's opportunities to learn and develop. Throughout the day the children will experience a number of different activities which are part

of the developmental curriculum operated by all of our Educators. These will be based on the interests, skills and knowledge of the children and include aspects of their culture, family and community. Each room will display their routine which parents may read, and educators will be happy to answer any questions. There are summer and winter routines which are adapted to the weather conditions. Your child's development is directly linked to the effectiveness of the centre's program. Staff are continually evaluating and observing the effectiveness of the program and linking these findings to each child in the centre. All activities and experiences are linked to centre goals, group goals, individual goals, philosophy, group and individual evaluations. Parents are encouraged to comment on and provide ideas to enhance the program based on their child's current interests.

REST AND SLEEP PROCEDURE

Time to rest is extremely important to young children who are exposed to a very full and busy day. Sleep and rest periods are adapted to meet the individual needs of the children and their families and are put in place in consultation with parents. Staff are sensitive to children's needs and identify when children are tired. For children who do not sleep quiet activities such as reading a book, puzzles or drawing are made available. Children are fully supervised when resting or doing quiet activities.

SUN PROTECTION

Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. The damage occurs during childhood and adolescence, research suggests that sunburn is a contributor to skin cancer and other forms of skin damage such as wrinkles, sun spots, blemishes, and premature ageing. Most skin damage and skin cancer is, therefore, preventable. The aims of the Sun Protection Policy are to promote among children, staff and parents:

:- Positive attitudes towards skin protection

:- Lifestyle practices which can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths.

:- Personal responsibility for and decision-making about skin protection.

:- Awareness of the need for environmental changes in schools to reduce the level of exposure to the sun.

:- General protection strategies include protective clothing, 30+ sunscreen, play in shaded areas and play in cooler parts of the day.

TERMINATION OF CARE

Should you wish to end your child's place at the service or should management make the decision to terminate your child's place, 2 weeks written notice is required from the ending/terminating party. If you do not provide this notice, you will be charged 2 weeks fees. Accounts will not be be finalised or bond returned until 21 days after last day of enrolment, to ensure CCS is reconciled correctly and account is at a nil balance when exiting the service. If your child does not attend their last usual days, full fees will apply. This means that CCS will not be applied.

TRANSITIONS

When children are due to progress into the next age group, this will be carried out with minimal stress to the child, family and staff. Discussion will take place between families and the centre in relation to the readiness of the child and their age. Each day the child will spend a small amount of time in the next room, with this time frame being gradually increased depending on the child's mood and reaction to the new room. By the end of the orientation the child should have completed activities, eaten lunch and rested in their new room.

WAITING LISTS

A waiting list for positions will occur when licensed places are filled for each given day. Upon availability arising the position will be offered based on the Priority of Access Guidelines and this process will occur until the position is filled.

WHAT TO BRING

To assist with your child's first day there are a number of items your child will need. Please include the following:

:- School Bag - a backpack that will be big enough to hold the following items
:- Spare set of clothes - in the case of an accident or if they get wet during play
:- Drink bottle - water
:- Hat - will be required for children all year round. Those children who do not have a hat will not be allowed to play in unshaded areas (sunscreen is provided)
:- Shoes - are to be comfortable and supportive suitable for running and climbing.
:- Bedding - if your child requires a sleep during the day please supply cot size sheets, blankets for the cooler months, pillow, comforter (if required). We suggest placing all items into a draw string bag.
:- Bottles of baby formula if required

CLOTHING

Parents are advised to send their children to the Centre in comfortable, inexpensive clothing. The children need to be able to move around during play and should be unimpaired by clothing. While paints etc will come out in the wash, accidents do happen so please don't send your child in expensive or designer clothing. Young children enjoy and need "messy" play with paint, clay, sand, water and mud. The Centre only has a limited supply of spare clothing. Please supply at least one change of clothing and underwear (for those children out of nappies) in case of accidents. Toddlers should have about three complete changes of clothing and plenty of training pants.

Please label your child's clothing and replace name tags if they fade in the wash. Ensure clothing is suitable for the weather.

CLOTHING SAFETY

Please do not dress your child in clothing with cords e.g. shorts, hats, as these have the potential to become caught on equipment and may cause serious harm to your child.

TIPS FOR PARENTS FIRST DAYS

It is not unusual for children to cry when their parents leave them at pre-school for the first few weeks. Settling in time is different for all children. Below are some vital tips to help your child settle into pre-school life;

:- Take your child to staff in the morning and say hello

:- Have your child put their bag and belongings in the locker

:- Take a few minutes to show your child around and for them to choose an activity to play at either indoors or outdoors

:- When your child is playing well, tell them you must leave but you will be back in the afternoon to pick them up

:- Smile (even though you may feel like crying yourself) and confidently give your child a hug and a kiss, say goodbye and leave.

:- If your child becomes upset, take them to a staff member to say goodbye.

:- We will cheer your child up! We will not let them cry all day.

:- Telephone the Centre at anytime to check how your child is doing. Staff will call you if we are unable to settle your child.

:- NEVER LEAVE WITHOUT SAYING GOODBYE

Age Appropriate Table

Milestones Age	Motor	Speech	Vision & Hearing	Social / Emotional
4-6 Weeks				Smiles at parent
6-8 Weeks		Vocalise		
3 Months	Prone: head held up for prolonged periods. No grasp reflex.	Makes vowel noises	Follows dangling toy from side to side. Turns head round to sound.	Squeals with pleasure appropriately. Discriminates smile.
5 Months	Holds head steady. Goes for objects and gets them. Objects taken to mouth.	Enjoys vocal play		
6 Months	Transfers objects from one hand to the other. Pulls self up to sit and sits erect with supports. Rolls over prone to supine. Palmar grasp of cube.	Double syllable sounds such as 'mumum' and 'dada'	Localises sound 45cm lateral to either ear	May show 'stranger shyness'
9-10 Months	Wiggles and crawls. Sits unsupported. Picks up objects with pincer grip.	Babbles tunefully	Looks for toys dropped	Apprehensive about strangers
1 Year	Stands holding furniture. Stands alone for a second or two, then collapses with a bump	Babbles 2 or 3 words	Drops toys, and watches where they go	Cooperates with dressing, waves goodbye, understands simple commands
18 Months	Can walk alone. Picks up toy without falling over. Gets up/down stairs holding onto rail. Begins to jump with both feet. Can build a tower of 3 or 4 cubes and throw a ball.	Jargon'. Many intelligible words		Demands constant mothering. Drinks from a cup with both hands. Feeds self with a spoon
2 Years	Able to run. Walks up and down stairs 2 feet per step. Builds tower of 6 cubes.	Joins 2-3 words in sentences		Parallel play. Dry by day.
3 Years	Goes up stairs 1 foot per step and downstairs 2 feet per step. Copies circle, imitates cross and draws man on request. Builds tower of 9 cubes.	Constantly asks questions. Speaks in sentences		Cooperative play. Undresses with assistance. Imaginery companions.

Regulatory Authorities

Our Centre complies with the National Quality Framework (NQF) including the National Quality Standard (NQS), the Early Years Learning Framework and the National Regulations (Education and Care Services National Regulations).

Our Service is regulated by the new national body for early education and care – the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) as well as the state licensing department in our State / Territory. To contact our Regulatory Authority, please refer to the contact details below;

New South Wales
NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate
Department of Education and Communities www.det.nsw.edu.au
1800 619 113, ececd@det.nsw.edu.au, Locked Bag 5107 PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

Important Contacts and Information for Families
The Service provides families with current information on child and family resources and services accessible in the local community. Our Service has a parent library with resources you may find helpful.

ACECQA is the new national body ensuring early childhood education and care across Australia is high quality.
Address: Level 15, 255 Elizabeth Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000
Postal Address: PO Box A292, Sydney, NSW 2000
Email: enquiries@acecqa.gov.au
Phone: 1800 181 088

Family Assistance Office Phone: 13 6150

Australian Childhood Immunisation Register Phone: 1800 653 809

Poisons Information Centre - 24 Hour Phone: 131126

Local Contacts

Community Health and Resource Service

Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children
Melinda Lloyd 02 9872 0826

Emergency Services
Police, Fire, Ambulance 000

Hospital
02 4394 8000

Fire Station
02 4389 2194

Informative Websites For Parents
We have a list of useful websites for parents. Please ask educators for a copy.

Raising Children Network
The Australian parenting website: comprehensive, practical, expert child health and parenting information and activities covering children aged 0-8 years.
www.raisingchildren.net.au

Better Health Channel
Quality consumer health information quality-assured, regularly reviewed, health and wellbeing information and services. This site is sponsored by the State Government of Victoria
www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au