



**Welcome** | Thank you for choosing Alphabet Preschool for the most important years of your child's life. When we enrol a child, we enrol the whole family and we are so excited to begin this journey with you.

We are a boutique, family owned, early education centre welcoming all children from six weeks to six years. Our aim is to provide high quality early education programs that nurture each child's individual uniqueness. We are inspired by the best parts of Reggio Emilia, Maria Montessori & Rudolf Steiner's education philosophies.

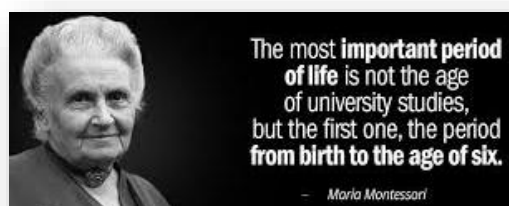
We believe that high quality education programs along with small group sizes are essential in early education and care, that's why our learning spaces are set up to facilitate this. We believe in educating children holistically; nourishing little bodies from the inside out with fresh foods, packed with nutrition, teamed with physical activity, mindfulness and yoga programs. Our team of professional and dedicated educators strive to engross your child in outdoor learning, where they will feed the chickens, pet the rabbits, grow and harvest herbs and vegetables, along with participating in structured learning programs focused on preparing children for school and beyond.

Children learn best when their teachers and families work in partnership and we seek to establish positive and reciprocal relationships with each family member.

If you have any questions, concerns or feedback please feel free to speak to me or directly to the team leader in your child's room. We are here for chats, advice, information and guidance on all areas of your child's learning and development.

Warm Regards,

Megan – Centre Director



# Enrolment information

Prior to commencing at our Service, you will be required to complete all enrolment documentation.

Please understand that it is essential we have up-to-date information in case of an emergency. You can update this information at any time in the office or via email. It is important that you notify the centre director of **any** changes relating to your enrolment information including:

- Address
- Health of your child including immunisation details, allergies etc.
- Telephone/mobile numbers
- Contact details
- Family changes
- Emergency contact information details etc.

It is essential that we have copies of your child's birth certificate and immunisation status before you enrol. We are also required to have certified copies of any court orders and/or allergy plans relating to your child.

You will need the following documents in order to enrol:

1. A completed Centrelink Child Care Subsidy Claim
2. The completed enrolment form
3. Completed information about your child's needs
4. Payment information
5. Immunisation certificate from Medicare - please note a copy of 'the green book' is no longer acceptable.
6. Birth certificate
7. Court orders
8. Medical management plans for asthma/anaphylaxis/allergies if required
9. Payment of \$45 booking fee PLUS 2 weeks payment of full fees (see page 4).

# Service Information

We are a privately owned 90 place centre consisting of 6 rooms. We pride ourselves on having small groupings of children as we believe this gives the children the opportunity to receive higher quality education and care. All rooms have their own fully fenced play yard, sand pit and age-appropriate equipment. The outdoor spaces can be fenced off, to ensure the safety of younger children, or they can be opened to allow children of nearing age groups the opportunity to play and learn from each other. We believe that families are our primary partners and the children's first teachers. Therefore, we have an **OPEN DOOR** policy, meaning families are welcome to come in and participate with their child's program at any time.

## **Children's room groupings**

*Nursery (12 place room) – 6 weeks to 12 months approximately*

*Toddler 1 (16 place room) – 12 months – 2 years approximately*

*Toddler 2 (16 place room) – 2 years – 3 years approximately*

*Pre-Kindergarten (12 place room) -2.5 years – 3.5 years approximately*

*3-year-old kinder (17 place room) – 3 years-4 years approximately*

*Kindergarten (17 place room) – 4-year-old fully structured and funded kindergarten program*

Please note the above ages to rooms are a guide and may change depending upon community demand, and child's developmental needs. The centre maintains current government legislated ratios with 1 educator per 4 children under 3 years of age, and 1 educator per 11 children over 3 years of age.

As our nursery room enrolls only 12 children to ensure the highest quality care, there can be limited vacancies. Please ensure you let us know as soon as possible if you are planning to enrol.

## **Leadership structure**

Owner/approved provider: Marek Morgan & Jan Morgan

Centre Director: Megan Hipkiss

Educational Leader: Sarah Wydro

## **Enrolment & fees**

Families are encouraged to take a tour of our preschool and ask as many questions as they like. Once the tour is completed, you will be asked to fill out an 'expression of interest' form where you will be added to our waitlist.

Please note that filling out our waitlist form does not guarantee a place.

Places will be offered for the following year in October. We offer places to current families first and then proceed to our waitlist. Siblings also get top priority. Children will need to start in January; fees will be due from 30<sup>th</sup> January or earlier.

I/We understand that if I/we do not wish to commence care until after this date, my child will be placed on a waiting list and Alphabet Preschool will not be able to guarantee my child's position. Alternatively, I/we may choose to pay full fees from 30<sup>th</sup> January in order to secure my child's place at the Centre.

If you are offered a place and wish to take this place, you will need to provide the completed enrolment form, the other documents listed on page 1, and you are asked to pay a deposit of two weeks of full fees PLUS the \$45 booking fee. Please note these fees are non-refundable. We can only confirm the place for your child four weeks before the start date. All children must start in within 4 weeks of a place becoming available (for a mid- year intake). Please note midyear intakes are unlikely.

To give our families the greatest benefit from the childcare subsidy, we have a session time fee structure in place. Please ask our centre director about our current fee structure.

Families will receive a statement via email every week/fortnight showing the dates and fee charged for the two weeks ahead. Families must ensure their account is paid up in full, two weeks in advance. Families MUST give two weeks' notice if they wish to change their start date or cancel their enrolment and two weeks of fees will still apply. If a child is absent for three days without explanation the enrolment will cease and be filled with a waitlist family.

Fees will be direct debited from your account on your nominated day on a weekly or fortnightly basis.

Families must let us know what time they will collect their children on the 'expected departure form' in the mornings. Please let us know if you will be any later than 15 mins beyond what is written on this form.

Families must comply with the times of their session otherwise a late fee of \$2 per minute per child will be charged.

Fees are charged whether a child attends on their nominated day or not. All sick days & public holidays are charged.

**Children need to be dropped off before 11am and never after 11.30am.**

### **CHILDCARE SUBSIDY (CCS)**

Child Care Subsidy is a means-tested subsidy paid directly to the Service as a fee reduction. There are 3 factors that will determine a family's level of Child Care Subsidy, which include:

1. Combined Family Income
2. Activity Test for both parents
3. Service Type

Child Care Subsidy requires families to provide information and confirm current details by using the Centrelink online account through [myGov](#). Here you will be asked to provide your combined family income estimate for the financial year, hours of recognised activity including work, training, study and volunteering and the type of childcare your family uses. Once approved, you will be allocated a percentage and the maximum number of fortnightly hours to use at the service.

### **Allowable absences**

You can be paid CCS for any absence from approved care your child attends for up to 42 days per child per financial year, however you will still be required to pay the 'gap' fee for any absence up to 42 days, and the entire daily fee will be payable for any absence beyond 42 days per year. Additional absences beyond 42 days for certain reasons may have CCS approved and paid. Please talk to us about the additional absences. Public holidays and sick days will be counted as an absence if the child would normally have attended the service on that day. You can access your child's absence record on your myGov 'View Child Care Details and Payments' on your Centrelink online account. You can also do this using the Express plus Families mobile app. Please ask your Centre director about swap days which are available subject to availability.

## **Session Times**

At Alphabet preschools we offer 3 different sessions with these time frames.

9hr: Times within 8:00am- 5:00pm

10hr: Times within 7:30am-5:30pm

12hr: Times within 6:30am-6:30pm

Families can drop off and pick up in between their selected session times but never outside these times without previous communication with us. During enrolment families are to communicate what hours they will be dropping off and picking their child up. It is important families stick to these times and update us if their hours will change.

## **After hours collection**

If a parent is running late and the centre is due to close, it is their responsibility to contact the centre to let them know the expected time of arrival. An additional charge will be payable onto to their next statement at the rate of \$2 per minute per child.

In the event the children are not collected by the centre's registered close time, and the staff have tried to call all the contacts on the child's enrolment form and the family has not notified the centre regarding being late or given the name and time of the person who will come and collect the child, then the centre is required by law to contact the Department of Children's Services. They will then instruct staff on the next action; the Department may even come and collect the children or notify the police and they may come and collect the children.

# Preparing your child for pre-school

Orientation is an important start for your child and family to connect to our Service. Each child must complete three orientation sessions in the company of a family member before they start the day with us. This gives you and your child the opportunity to gain an understanding of our program, the layout of the room, where to find things, provide Educators with additional information about your child and how we can best support their transition and settling period.

If your child is reluctant to attend, please discuss this with their assigned Educator so that they can develop strategies with you to support the transition from home to the Service. Some children like to take a book from our library to read at home and return on the next visit.

We suggest reading the following books to your child regularly in the lead up to their first day and beyond. 'Maisy goes to Preschool' by Lucy Cousins, 'What to expect at Preschool' by Heidi Murkoff, 'I love you all day long' by Francesca Rusackas and 'I'm ready for preschool' by Jemma Robaard. A copy of each of these books is available for you to read to your child at our centre.

Communication between home and the Service must be open and happen often to best support your child during this time. There may be tears and extra tight hugs when saying goodbye for the first few weeks but there are always cuddles, reassurance and genuine care from Educators for both the children and their families. Sometimes this experience is upsetting more so for the family, not the child. We understand this and offer support through phone calls during the day, photos and open communication.

## Saying goodbye

Ideally, your child will be settled at an activity before you leave, however some children find it hard to settle until their parents have gone. What works best is a set routine so try to establish the care routine from the orientation process. Being well organised and avoiding a rush usually results in a calm start to the day.

Most children will want to have a look around first to see who else has arrived and to look at what activities are available. Please tell your child when you are leaving as they may become upset if they haven't had the opportunity to say goodbye. This will gain trust from the child, not only in you but in the Educator, who is reassuring your child about their day and when you will return. Rest assured, we'll contact you if your child becomes distressed. Please let us know if there is a particular activity your child will enjoy to help them settle; your suggestions are much appreciated.

## What to bring to the Service

### **Backpack**

For independence, we work towards all children being able to recognise and open their own bag. Let them be involved in selecting the bag and taking ownership of it. Please ensure it is large enough to hold all their belongings and is clearly labelled.

### **Drink bottle**

We work towards all children being able to recognise their own drink bottle. Please bring a drink bottle that your child is comfortable with and that you don't mind leaving at the centre. We will wash and refill your child's drink bottle for every attendance.

### **Sun smart hat**



All children must have a sun-smart wide brim hat when they attend the centre. The best type of hat for children is a wide brim hat with a cord for securing on their head as they play. Please note that caps are not considered sun smart.

### **Comfort items**

Please bring along any item that your child will use for comfort and sleep. Items such as: dummy, cuddly toy, special blanket, a family photograph, or sleeping bag are all items that might make your child feel more secure. Please label all items clearly.



### **A Wet bag**

Your child will most likely have wet clothes to bring home at the end of the day. Please provide a waterproof bag attached to your child's backpack so that we can place any dirty items straight into this bag.



### **Spare clothes**

Every now and then accidents occur and it may be necessary for your child to get changed into a fresh set. Please include a complete change of clothes every day which can stay in your child's bag...just in case!

### **Breastfeeding**

This Service supports breastfeeding. Families that are breastfeeding should speak to the Educator or Director to be aware of our policies on storing and serving breast milk. Families that are formula feeding should also consult our Educators to be aware of how we need the formula prepared and stored.

## Clothing

It is helpful to your child if they are dressed in non-restrictive, serviceable and easy to wash clothes so that they feel free to join in all the activities and to develop independence. Consider clothing that enables the child to move around easily and allows children to be independent in dressing. Clothing such as long dresses, overalls, braces, belts and stiff buttons can prove a problem for children who need to go to the toilet. We require all t-shirts to have sleeves (no mid-riff or strap tops).

Shoes need to allow children freedom to run, climb, hop & jump as well as being easy for the child to take off and put on by himself/herself.

*Unsuitable shoes* are thongs and open-toe sandals and we prefer that these be NOT worn to the Service. Lace up joggers or closed toe sandals are appropriate.

## Toys

The Service has an abundance of educational resources designed to enhance children's learning and development. We ask that children leave their personal toys at home. This eliminates toys getting lost, broken, disappointment for other children and responsibility on Educators to track numerous toys throughout the day. We will not be responsible for any lost or broken personal items that are brought in from home.

# What we provide

All meals including breakfast, morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea & late snack.

Disposable nappies

Disposable wipes

Cow's milk or alternative

All sheets & linen

Bibs

Sunscreen

Smocks

## Educational Program

We follow the Early Years Learning Framework as per our programming policy. This is Australia's national Early Years Learning Framework for early childhood educators. The aim of this document is to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to five years and through the transition to school.

We are committed to providing a developmental and educational program, which caters for each child's individual needs, abilities and interests. Our program will continue to develop as we use the relationships children have with their families and communities, working in partnership with parents, to ensure each child's knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of our programs.

We encourage children to be responsible for their own learning through choices in experiences, interests and routine. We use conversations, actions and play as the basis for teaching which involves the children being partners in teaching by seeking out ideas, opinions, thoughts and questions. We encourage children in promoting their independence and self-help skills by assisting within the routine and involving the children in interest based projects to further enhance their learning and

knowledge. We value children and family input and encourage family involvement in order to gather a comprehensive and holistic view of the child.

We know that children learn effectively through play and Educators who are diligent in their responsiveness to each child support this. Applying strong intentional teaching practices will provide the children with an authentic and meaningful learning environment that challenges, supports and nurtures a child's development.

If we as Educators have any areas of concern, we will inform you and advise where help may be pursued, e.g. speech therapist. We understand this is a sensitive topic and it is always your decision to follow this up. Educators are willing to discuss any aspect of learning and development with parents.

### **Our guiding philosophies**

We believe in taking snippets from the leaders in early childhood learning and development and creating our own education program. We are inspired by three teaching philosophies:

#### *Reggio Emilia*

The Reggio Emilia Philosophy is an innovative and inspiring approach to early childhood education, which values the child as strong, capable and resilient; rich with wonder and knowledge. The Philosophy rides on the coattails of the innate curiosity of children and aims to assist them with understanding their world and who they are in it. Children can explore and discover in a supportive and rich environment, where the curriculum is created around the children's interests.

#### *Maria Montessori*

The Montessori approach was developed by Maria Montessori. The approach is scientifically based and has been used for over 100 years. The fundamental principle of Maria Montessori's method is to value a child's naturally inquisitive and developing mind to foster learning in an intuitive and natural way. Montessori classrooms are prepared thoughtfully in a way that encourages learners to explore for themselves. Children in these classrooms are guided to make their own discoveries, as well as gain a sense of independence. The teacher is there to provide help along the way.

Waldorf education, also known as Steiner education, is based on the educational philosophy of Rudolf Steiner. Its pedagogy strives to develop pupils' intellectual, artistic, and practical skills in an integrated and holistic manner. The cultivation of pupils' imagination and creativity is a central focus.

## Early Years Learning Framework

Fundamental to the Framework is a view of children's lives as characterised by belonging, being and becoming. From before birth children are connected to family, community, culture and place. Their earliest development and learning takes place through these relationships, particularly within families, who are children's first and most influential educators. As children participate in everyday life, they develop interests and construct their own identities and understandings of the world.

### BELONGING

Experiencing belonging – knowing where and with whom you belong – is integral to human existence. Children belong first to a family, a cultural group, a neighbourhood and a wider community. Belonging acknowledges children's interdependence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities. In early childhood, and throughout life, relationships are crucial to a sense of belonging. Belonging is central to being and becoming in that it shapes who children are and who they can become.

### BEING

Childhood is a time to be, to seek and make meaning of the world. Being recognises the significance of the here and now in children's lives. It is about the present and them knowing themselves, building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging with life's joys and complexities, and meeting challenges in everyday life. The early childhood years are not solely preparation for the future but also about the present.

## BECOMING

Children's identities, knowledge, understandings, capacities, skills and relationships change during childhood. They are shaped by many different events and circumstances. Becoming reflects this process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years as young children learn and grow. It emphasises learning to participate fully and actively in society.

### Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

- Children feel safe, secure, and supported
- Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency
- Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities
- Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect

### Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

- Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation
- Children respond to diversity with respect
- Children become aware of fairness
- Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

### Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

- Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing
- Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

### Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

- Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity
- Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, enquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating
- Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another
- Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials

## Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

- Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes
- Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts
- Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media
- Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work
- Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking

## Goals for your child at our Service

*“We discovered that education is not something which the teacher does, but that it is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being.”*

*Maria Montessori*

Educators' practices and the relationships they form with children and families have a significant effect on children's involvement and success in learning. Children thrive when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children's learning. Children's early learning influences their life chances.

Wellbeing and a strong sense of connection, optimism and engagement enable children to develop a positive attitude to learning. (Early Years Learning Framework page 9).

We will create a range of short and long-term goals for your child that we will program to and observe on which will be based on the outcomes in the Early Years Learning Framework and include:

- Mutual respect and empathy
- Concern and responsibility for self and others
- A sense of self worth
- Social awareness
- Importance of sustainability
- Self-discipline
- Habits of initiative and persistence

- Creative intelligence and imagination
- Self-confidence as an independent learner
- A love of learning

We strongly encourage communication between families and educators to ensure continuity in what we are delivering to your child and acknowledge that the role of the Educator is to work in partnership with families; children's first and most influential educators.

## Parent Participation

The Service has an Open Door Policy and actively seeks and encourages families to be involved in the Service. This can range from evaluating and adding input to your child's program and observations, volunteering within the Service and sharing skills & experiences that the children and the program will benefit from.

Your involvement can be as formal or active as you like as time permits. We respect that time is limited for most families and we ask that you inform us as to your preferred way of communication. We can arrange meetings with your child's Educator at a time that suits you throughout the year, along with emails, our centre apps, our facebook page and newsletters. We pride ourselves on strong verbal communication on a daily basis. We seek input from families on all aspects of the Service but in particular, your child's goals, observations and program.

### FAMILY SKILLS, INTERESTS AND TALENTS

We welcome and encourage the involvement of all parents/families at our Service. Your ideas, experiences and skills are greatly valued and will enable us to extend each child's interests, abilities and knowledge. There are many ways for your family to be involved. We understand that our busy lives can't always afford the time, however any contribution no matter how big or small is much appreciated. Here are just a few ideas:

### YOUR OCCUPATION OR HOBBY

You are the most important person in your child's world. We welcome all parents to the Service to talk about their occupation or hobby (e.g. music, craft, cooking).

Everything parents do interests children and these talks are the best educational resources you can provide for the Service.

We use information that has come from discussions about occupations and hobbies in our program and the ideas explored which can turn into interest projects providing valuable learning.

## YOUR HOME CULTURE

Your home culture is most welcome in our Service. We would greatly appreciate if you were able to share with our Service aspects of your culture and family life. This would assist us to enrich the lives of all our families and children.

## READING (ESPECIALLY GOOD FOR GRANDPARENTS)

Children love to be read to. If you or your parents have the time please contact your room Educators to organise a day for reading.

## RECYCLABLE ITEMS

We are always on the lookout for recyclable items for the rooms. Empty food containers, ribbons, wrapping paper, towel tubes (not toilet or egg or milk because of hygiene and allergy issues), paper or anything interesting from your work is much appreciated.

## SUGGESTIONS

Parents are welcome to visit or call the Service at any time. If you have any suggestions or ideas on how we best can work together in the Service please let us know.

If you have any concerns, please see your child's educator or the centre director. We have a grievance procedure if you would like to formally raise any concerns.

# Communication

Everybody has a different communication style and time for communication. We understand that mornings and afternoons can be a little rushed, and not the best time to discuss your child's day.



We have many types of communication we use for families, which include:

- Newsletter
- Phone calls to your work
- Emails
- Face to face
- Daily reports via Storypark
- Mid-year interviews
- Formal meetings

## Confidentiality

We are committed to protecting your privacy. We support and are bound by privacy laws to ensure strict confidentiality is maintained.

To plan programs with you we need to collect information from you. This information helps us to assess and plan programs in partnership with you. We do not disclose personal information about you or your child to other people or organisations without your consent, unless we are required to do so by law. We do not ask for personal information about you or your child from other professionals or organisations without your consent. You can look at the information in your child's file at any time or request a copy of information in the file.

## Service Policies and Procedures

You will find a copy of our Service policies and procedures on our shared drive (Z:\) at the centre and on our website ([www.alphabet-preschools.com](http://www.alphabet-preschools.com)). We expect our staff and families to adhere to our policies and procedures at all times to ensure we maintain compliance and abide by the National Law and Regulations.

Educators cannot make exceptions for individuals unless Management do so on account of serious and/or unusual circumstances.

We are constantly reviewing our policies and procedures and ask for staff and family participation to ensure our policies and procedures adhere to family's needs and meet required regulations. Your involvement helps us to improve our Service and may lead us to change our policies and procedures.

# Grievances

We understand that from time to time a parent may become displeased with a particular aspect of our service. We believe in working with the families and that grievances should be dealt with promptly and as soon as possible. We feel that it is essential that this procedure is pro-active with positive outcomes for all concerned. We have in place a procedure which allows the service the opportunity to support families who may need to solve a grievance and also helps to develop positive growth and development of our service within the community.

Should anyone have a concern in relation to their experiences at our preschool, opportunities exist for them to have their concerns addressed by the Director or a senior member of staff.

## **Grievance procedure**

The centre fosters positive relations between all 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 wellbeing of the centre in a fair, prompt and positive manner. We ensure that:

- Every parent is provided with clear written guidelines detailing grievance procedures, included in this handbook.
- All confidential conversations/discussions with parents will take place in a quiet area away from children, other parents and staff who are not involved.
- The Complainants' names will remain confidential between involved parties where necessary.
- The name and phone number of Department of Human Services & Children's Regulation Services is included in the centre foyer. All complaints dealing with children's health and welfare will be reported to the Department of Children's Services within 24 hours
- A current copy of the Child Care Regulations is available in the centre for parents to read at any time or can be accessed online at <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/NQFRegs2011.pdf>

Grievance procedure is the process by which solutions are sought to resolve disputes in a fair, equitable and prompt manner. Grievances should be resolved as informally and quickly as possible by the parties involved. When grievances cannot be resolved informally by the persons directly involved, a formal grievance process should be provided. We deal with grievances in the following manner:

- The parent should discuss the problem with the relevant staff member concerned.
- If the parent still feels action is necessary after discussion with the relevant staff member they should take the matter up with the Director, or the authorised member of staff on duty.
- If the parent is still unhappy with the situation the Director can offer to take the matter to the owner of the service.
- If the parent is still unhappy, Management and /or the parent can seek guidance from the Department of Human Services.

We believe that it is important that concerns are dealt with as soon as possible and in an objective manner. If the person is still not satisfied with the outcome, they can put their complaint in writing to the proprietor's address. Parents, students, staff or members of the public wishing to raise a concern or make a complaint against a childcare centre, can contact:

Nominated supervisor: Megan Hipkiss

1 Regent Street

Whittington VIC 3219

Telephone: 03 5248 2522

Owner: Marek Morgan

1 Regent Street

Whittington VIC 3219

Telephone: 03 5248 2522

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Quality Assessment and Regulation Division

GPO Box 4367

Melbourne VIC 3001

Phone: 1300 307 415

Email: [licensed.childrens.services@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:licensed.childrens.services@edumail.vic.gov.au)

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Contact Person: Pre-School Adviser

Address: Level 2, 237 Ryrie Street,

Geelong VIC 3220

Telephone: 5225 1000

Fax: 5225 1099

Postal Address: PO Box 2086

Geelong VIC 3220

## Arrival and Departure

For safety and security reasons ALL children must be signed in on arrival and signed out on departure. Families will sign children in on our centre tablets and on the expected departure time form. This will tell us when your child is expected to be collected and by whom. Signing out will occur on the centre tablets.

No child will be allowed to leave our Service with a person who is not stated on the enrolment form, unless prior arrangements are made with the Nominated Supervisor.

## Behaviour Guidance

Educators follow a Behaviour Management Policy that extends across the whole Service giving consistency of expectation in all rooms. This policy allows children to develop self-discipline, a respect for others, for property and respect for self, whilst learning to regulate their behaviour. If you require further information on this policy, please ask Educators and refer to the Policy section on our website.

## Physical Play

Physical play includes activities that use physical movements to allow children to use their energy, enhance their concentration, motivation, learning and wellbeing. We feel physical play is a vital part of everyday life. We believe in providing children with a range of physical activities and experiences on a daily basis for them to challenge

their large and small muscles, allowing them to gain increasing control over their bodies as they learn the importance of physical play.

Physical play provides children with the opportunity to:

- Develop strong bones and muscles,
- Improve strength and balance
- Develop flexibility and coordination
- Develop fundamental movement skills
- Develop spatial awareness
- Develop mathematical concepts
- Be confident as they learn to control their bodies and understand their limits
- Learn to cooperate and share with others
- Promote healthy growth and development

## Sustainability

Our Service is passionate about sustainability. We believe in supporting children to appreciate and care for the environment by embedding sustainable practices into the daily operation of our Service, infrastructure and teaching.

In order to empower our sustainability program we emphasise children's ability to make a difference, enabling them to learn and appreciate their environment in an engaging, fun and exciting manner. We do this by engaging children in discussion about sustainable practice, encouraging them to participate in a recycling program, reducing energy and conserving water. We aim to provide children with the skills and knowledge required to become environmentally responsible.

## Rest and Sleep

Rest and sleep routine varies according to individual needs. We aim to make rest time a relaxed, pleasant time for all children. We provide stretcher beds for children and play soft music in the background. Your child may wish to bring a security item to have at rest time. Please feel free to discuss your child's rest or sleep needs with Educators.

# Birthdays

It is very exciting for a child to be having a birthday. Our centre cook will make an allergy-free cake for the child's birthday on request. Please note that food from home is not allowed at the centre due to allergies.

# Family Photo

We have a Family Wall in the foyer of our centre. This is a strong and valuable tool in our environment for your child to connect to, feel that they and their family are valued and that their family is as much a part of the Service, even if they are not always there. If you would like to bring in a photo, or a couple of photos that represent your family, we would love to add it to our wall.

# Sun Safety

Children and Educators will wear hats and appropriate clothing when outside. Staff will encourage children, including by way of modelling behaviour, to avoid excessive exposure to the sun and to wear suitable sunscreen (at least SPF 30+), which is reapplied according to the manufacturer's recommendations. We ask that children come to the Service with sunscreen already applied so they are able to participate in outdoor play immediately and not have to wait the 20 minutes after application.

# When should I keep my child home?

Our Service is a busy and demanding day for the bodies and minds of our children; we are not equipped to care for sick children, however we will do everything we can to comfort a child who has become sick whilst in our care.

To try and prevent the spread of disease, please monitor your child's health and watch for:

- A runny, green nose
- High temperature in the last 24 hours

- Diarrhoea
- Red, swollen or discharging eyes
- Vomiting
- Rashes
- Irritability, unusually tired or lethargic

Please do not bring your child to the Service if they display any of the above symptoms. If a child becomes ill whilst at the Service the child's parents or person responsible for the child will be contacted to organise collection of the child. If the child is unable to be collected, educators will contact the child's emergency contact for collection.

When the child is collected, the family will have the following information made available to them to present to their doctor: symptoms, date of onset, general behaviour of the child leading up to the illness and any action taken.

Your child should not attend the Service if they have had Panadol or Neurofen within 24 hours. It is extremely important that staff members are aware if a child has had either one of these medications so we do not re-administer in emergency situations and potentially overdose.

The other consideration is that medication of any type should not be added to a child's bottle. Children who are on antibiotics are to be kept away from the Service for the first 24 hours to allow the child to rest and the risk of spreading the infection to decrease.

If your child has been away due to illness, you will need to provide a clearance certificate from the doctor to ensure the child is fit to return to child care.

## Infectious Diseases

The National Health and Medical Research Council has supplied the following information regarding: Exclusion from the Service of a child suffering with the following diseases/ailments. Please inform staff if your child has any of the following so that we can let families and Health Department know if something is going around and avoid an epidemic. (Confidentiality is always maintained).

| CONDITION   | EXCLUSION  |
|---|--|
| HAND, FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE                      | Until all blisters have dried.   |
| A TEMPERATURE (37.5 DEGREES OR ABOVE)             | Exclude for 24 hours after normal temp   |
| VOMITING  | Exclude for 48 hours after last vomit episode  |
| STARTED A COURSE OF ANTIBIOTIC                    | Exclude for 24 hours after first dose then a medication form can be filled out for doses whilst in care.   |
| A DOSE OF PANADOL                                 | To reduce cases of masking serious illness, children must be excluded for 24 hours after a dose of Panadol.  |
| HIB   | Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received.   |
| HEPATITIS A                                       | Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness.                                     |
| HERPES – COLD SORES                               | Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing, where possible. |
| INFLUENZA AND FLU-LIKE ILLNESSES                  | Exclude until well.  |
| MEASLES   | Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash.   |
| MENINGITIS (BACTERIAL)                            | Exclude until well.  |
| MENINGOCOCCAL INFECTION                           | Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed.   |
| MUMPS   | Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner).  |
| POLIOMYELITIS                                     | Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Readmit after receiving medical certificate of recovery.  |
| RUBELLA (GERMAN MEASLES)                          | Exclude until fully recovered or for at least 4 days after the onset of rash.  |
| SALMONELLA, SHIGELLA                              | Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.  |
| STREPTOCOCCAL INFECTION (INCLUDING SCARLET FEVER) | Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well.  |
| TUBERCULOSIS                                      | Exclude until a medical certificate from an appropriate health authority is received.  |
| WHOOPING COUGH                                    | Exclude the child for 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment.  |
| WORMS (INTESTINAL)                                | Exclude if diarrhoea present.  |
| HEADLICE  | Until treated  |



# Immunisation

From 1 January 2018, children who are unvaccinated due to their parent's conscientious objection can no longer be enrolled in childcare. The Public Health Act 2010 prevents childcare centres from enrolling children unless approved documentation is provided that indicates that the child:

- Is fully immunised for their age
- Has a medical reason not be vaccinated
- Is on a recognised catch up schedule
- Is facing certain vulnerabilities.

The relevant vaccinations are those under the National Immunisation Program (NIP), which covers the vaccines usually administered before age five. These vaccinations must be recorded on the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR).

# Medication

Educators can only administer medication prescribed by a doctor. They cannot administer non-prescription drugs or dietary supplements unless a doctor provides the Service with written authorisation.

Educators can only administer medication to a child from its original packaging with pharmacy instruction sticker.

On arrival at the Service families, must give medication to Educators for safe storage and complete a medication authorisation form. Under no circumstances should medication be left in children's bags.

# Allergies or Asthma

It is vital that we are aware of any allergies or asthma. Families are required to explain any allergy or asthma on the enrolment form as well as provide us with the diagnosis from the doctor. The Service has a procedure the staff follow to minimise allergic reactions.

The Service requires an Action Plan filled in by your Doctor to assist in managing your child's needs. The Action Plan is to be updated every 12 months.

# Accidents

The parents of a child will be contacted immediately if a child is involved in a serious accident at the Service. As a matter of extreme importance parents must ensure that the Service 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 accident/injury/illness, any first aid that was administered, and be signed an educator, the Nominated Supervisor and by the parent.

# Emergency Drills

Throughout the year the Service will hold emergency drills, which occur at any given time throughout the day. These are carried out in a well-organised and orderly manner. Educators will be trained in using the fire extinguishers that are in the Service. An emergency evacuation plan will be displayed in every room.

# Children's Safety

- Never leave children unattended in cars while collecting children from the Service.
- Cars parks are dangerous places for children. Always hold children's hands when arriving and leaving the Service.
- Never leave a door or gate open or allow children to press the 'exit' buttons.
- Never leave your children unattended in a room.
- Always acknowledge the educator in the room during dropping off and picking up your child so we are aware of who is in the rooms.

# Parent Acknowledgement

*I/We have read this handbook carefully. I/We understand the commitment that I am/we are undertaking and my/our responsibilities to the Service.*

*I have completed the enrolment form at the Service. I have read and agree to comply with the requirements set out in this handbook and in the Service's policies.*

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| FAMILY NAME      |  |
| PARENT NAME      |  |
| CHILD/REN'S NAME |  |
| PARENT SIGNATURE |  |

*Please list any skills, talents, interests and culture that you and your family (not forgetting grandparents) are able to share with the Service.*

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**Please return this page, along with your orientation evaluation form, to your centre director.**