



Parent Handbook

89 Lady Nelson Way, Keilor Downs | Ph: 9367 1114

Open 6:30 am to 6:00 pm - Monday to Friday

Centre Owner: Nicole White
Centre Management: Aristoula Pandazoglous

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Centre

1. Philosophy
2. Governance
3. Privacy

Attending the Centre

1. Enrolment Process
2. Orientation
3. Custody Orders
4. Immunisation
5. Concerns/Complaints
6. Parent Involvement

Fees & Assistance

1. Fees & CCS
2. Payment of Fees
3. Penalties
4. Holidays/Public Holidays/Sick Days
5. Termination of Placement

Daily Routines

1. Delivery and Collection of Children
2. Routines
3. Sleep and Rest
4. Birthdays
5. Excursions/ Regular Outings
6. What to Bring/What not to Bring
7. Clothing

Program & Curriculum

VELF Framework & Programming

Health & Safety

1. Hygiene
2. Sun Protection
3. Child Protection
4. Infectious Diseases and Illness
5. Accident/Injury
6. Administration of Medication
7. Smoking

THE CENTRE

1. Our Philosophy

“Inspiring Children to Grow, Learn and Develop”

Welcome to Small Steps Early Learning Centre where we inspire children to grow into confident, resilient individuals. They will be encouraged to learn new skills and achieve their goals through play and discovery. Our professional educators will be supportive in helping children develop the skills needed in life to succeed and take on new challenges.

We are committed to providing high quality care, which is flexible to individual children's needs. Our homelike environment provides a space where all children and their families feel safe, secure, and supported.

Curriculum

At Small Steps Early Learning Centre, we will provide professional qualified educators, who plan and implement an effective program developed to meet each child's individual needs. Our educators work collaboratively with children to gain their ideas and feelings which are then reflected into the program.

We focus on children's interests to further their development and build trust. When a child is interested and engaged, they are more likely to learn. The program cycle is constantly evolving through critical reflection and evaluation

Our curriculum is based on the Victorian Early Years Learning Framework and consists of the following learning and development 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

Through these outcomes we provide high quality programs that stimulate and inspire children. The environment is presented in a way that engages children to learn through play, encouraging collaboration and exploration.

Health and wellbeing

At Small Steps Early Learning Centre, we promote health and wellbeing within our everyday practices. We believe that it is an essential part of the program for children to understand health and wellbeing, including mental health, physical health, and social emotional wellbeing. Supporting children to take control of their own health and wellbeing promotes independence and gives children the skills to express their feelings and emotions. We believe it is an important tool in learning to cope with the challenges of everyday life.

We give children opportunities to learn self-regulation by embedding it into everyday practices and by helping children to reflect on behaviors and choices made.

We provide opportunity for children to learn about healthy eating habits, being sun smart, oral hygiene, building a healthy mind and keeping active.

We pride ourselves on hygiene and cleanliness as an important aspect of infection control. Always providing a hygienic space for children to play and engage in. We adhere to the highest standards of hygiene, with practices and procedures in place to eliminate and control the spread of germs and infectious diseases.

Culture and Inclusion

At Small Steps Early Learning Centre, we promote an environment that celebrates the importance of Indigenous culture, embedding it into everyday practices. We believe that it is important to teach the children respect and understanding for the traditional custodians of the land, the Aboriginals, and Torres Strait islanders.

We believe that it is important for children to value and appreciate differences amongst others to become respectful members of our society. We celebrate all cultures within our service and encourage inclusion of all cultural beliefs. Our families' values are respected and supported and celebrated within the service. We ensure that all children at Mandalay have equal opportunities to resources and learning, with no discrimination regardless of their Gender, Race, Ethnicity, Religion or Developmental needs.

Environment and sustainability

At Small Steps Early Learning Centre, we help children learn about and implement sustainable practices and foster respect and care for the living and non-living environment.

Children develop positive attitudes and values about sustainable practices by engaging in learning experiences, joining in discussions that explore solutions to environmental issues, and watching adults' model sustainable practices. Children learn to live interdependently within the environment. Our educators will promote a holistic, open ended curriculum which explores ideas and practices for environmental sustainability and helps children understand the interdependence between people and the environment

Community

At Small Steps Early Learning Centre Connecting with the local community is an important tool in promoting outcomes for children. The environment outside of the centre provides many learning opportunities, valuable to a child's all-round development. By implementing regular outings and visits to various facilities within the community, we connect children to the world around them.

We also work in collaboration with outside agencies and the community to foster continuity and consistency for children in the early years. We recognise that all families and children have individual needs and strive to support all families within our local community. By creating partnerships with professional services, we can achieve better outcomes and support for all children.

Partnerships with Families

At Small Steps Early Learning Centre respectful supportive relationships with families are developed and maintained. Our focus is on providing a flexible approach with families that promotes consistency between the home environment and care setting. We encourage open and positive communication, welcoming feedback, and input into the centre and its policies, procedures, and philosophy. Families have opportunities to be involved in the service and we welcome their contribution into to service decisions.

Relationships with children

At Small Steps Early Learning Centre our educators respond to children with consistency, warmth, respect, and professionalism. Each child's dignity and rights are respected with the understanding that every child is unique. Our educators interact and engage in a positive and meaningful way, this enables children to gain confidence to become active participants in their learning. By building strong, trusting relationships with children we can support their wellbeing, build resilience, and enhance their learning capabilities.

We respect a child's right to make their own decisions promoting independence and agency. We believe in the capability of children and their abilities even at a young age to make decisions and choices for themselves. All children are encouraged to take on responsibility, promoting a sense of achievement, contribution, and accomplishment.

We believe in promoting high expectations for each child, promoting resilience and willingness to work hard. By building up each child's strengths and setting high expectations, we give children the tools to achieve success.

2. Governance

Our Service is privately owned by NICWHITE PTY LTD trading as Small Steps Early Learning Centre. It is approved by the Department of Education and Early Childhood (DEECD) to provide care for 40 children, aged from birth to school age. Our service meets its legal and financial obligations by implementing appropriate governance practices that support our aim to provide high quality childcare that meets the objectives and principles of the National Quality Framework, the National Quality Standard and the Early Years Learning Framework.

Our responsible persons are as follows:

Approved Provider: Nicole White

Nominated Supervisors: Aristoula Pandazogous (Centre Manager)

2IC: Sarah Torney

Educational Leader: Kirsti Williams

In absence of the Approved Provider or a Nominated Supervisor a person in day to day charge of the service – Daniela Sekulovska, Jade Gattellaro, Ashley Azzopardi

The identity of the Responsible Person on duty is displayed in the centre foyer.

3. Privacy

Our service recognises that every individual has the right to ensure their personal information is accurate and secure, and only used or disclosed to achieve the outcomes for which it was initially collected. Personal information will be managed openly and transparently in a way that protects an individual's privacy and respects their rights under Australian privacy laws.

We collect personal information if it is necessary for us to carry out Service operations or to comply with our legal obligations. This includes information required to comply with the National Education and Care Law and Regulations and to promote learning under the Early Years Learning Framework. Information may also be collected to comply with other Laws including State or Territory Health Laws.

ATTENDING THE CENTRE

1. Enrolment Process

Our service accepts enrolments of children aged between 0-6 years. All enrolments are submitted via our online enrolment system.

Enrolments will be accepted providing:

- The maximum daily attendance does not exceed the approved number of places of the service.
- Child-educator ratios are maintained across the service
- A vacancy is available

Where limited vacancies are available, we may prioritise enrolling a child for the following reasons:

- is at risk of serious abuse or neglect or is in out of home care
- a sole parent or parents who both satisfy, the activity test through paid employment in line with the Federal Government's Priority of Access' guidelines.

Within these categories we may also prioritise children in:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- Children with a disability
- families on low income
- families from a non-English speaking background
- socially isolated families
- single parent families

Please see our full Enrolment Policy for more details on the enrolment process.

2. Orientation

When your child is offered a position at the service the Nominated Supervisor will arrange a time for you and your child to attend the service, meet the educators and spend some time getting familiar with the new environment.

We believe orientation is an important process where educators obtain important information about your child's needs and the specific needs of your family. The orientation process is designed to be flexible and meet the individual needs of your child. Some children will settle quickly while others may take a little longer to feel comfortable in their new surroundings. We will work closely with families throughout this process giving feedback on how your child is settling in.

3. Custody Orders

Biological parents have access to their child at any time unless there is a court order in place. If there is a court order regarding your child, the service must have a current copy of the order prior to the child starting care. If the centre does not have a current copy of the order, then staff are unable to deny either Biological Parent access.

It is the responsibility of the family to provide up to date details of any orders to the centre. All issues regarding custody and access orders will remain confidential and are protected under our confidentiality policy. For a copy of this policy please see the Nominated Supervisor.

4. Immunisation

In 2016 The Victorian Government bought out the No Jab, No Play Policy in an effect to improve vaccination rates and reduce the spread of preventable disease. This means that services cannot confirm enrolment of a child unless the parent/carer has provided relevant documentation. Parents who wish to enroll their child are required to provide a copy of a current Immunisation History Statement (from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)). It must not be more than 2 months old as at the date the child first attends the service.

AIR Immunisation History Statements are available on the Department of Human Services website <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/> . The AIR can be contacted on 1800 653 809 or email air@humanservices.gov.au

The service may enroll the following children without proof they are fully immunised under a grace period. The families of these children must act to fully vaccinate their children, and provide proof of immunisation status within 16 weeks of the child's first attendance at the service:

- children evacuated from their place of residence due to an emergency (e.g. bushfire)
- children in emergency care within meaning of section 3(1) of the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005
- children in the care of an adult who is not their parent due to exceptional circumstances
- Indigenous children
- children whose parents hold a health care card, pensioner concession card, Veteran's Affairs Gold or White card
- children from multiple births of triplets or more
- other circumstances specified in the guidelines made by the Secretary to the Department of Health and Human Services

5. Complaints/Concerns

Family feedback is a valuable tool, it provides valuable information that can be used to grow and improve all aspects of the service. All feedback and concerns will be taken seriously and if you would like to discuss any concerns regarding any aspects of your child's development or the operation of the centre please feel free to speak directly to centre staff as we operate with an Open-Door Policy. If families at any time have a complaint/concern, they are encouraged to follow the centres complaint procedure set out in our Grievance Policy.

6. Parent Involvement

Communication between family members and the Service are considered crucial for a child to reach their full development. Therefore, we aim to provide an environment where there is a strong emphasis on family/Service communication to allow consistency and continuity between the home and the Service environment. By encouraging family members to be involved in the service, we aim to provide a service that best meets the needs of our community.

Parent Communication:

Our Service aims to provide as many outlets as possible for family/service communication. These include:

- Face to face
- Newsletters posted on Storypark
- A communication books
- A notice board displaying upcoming events and notices
- Regular informal meetings with parents and the opportunity to plan formal meetings if necessary
- A suggestions box in the foyer where parents can anonymously (or give their names if desired) make suggestions to improve the service
- Short surveys regarding the service's philosophy and how you feel your child/ren feel about the service

If necessary, educators have support and access to translation services to provide this information for non-English speaking families.

Parental and Family Involvement:

- Families are welcome to visit at any time of the day. (The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and educators will not allow a parent to enter the service premises if they reasonably believe this would contravene a court order.)
- Families are encouraged to make suggestions and offer critique on our program, philosophy, management, and food menu.
- Families are encouraged to share aspects of their culture with the educators and children as well as appropriate experiences.
- Families are invited to participate in the service's daily routine by helping with activities such as craft, the preparation of morning tea, special activities and afternoon tea.

FEES & ASSISTANCE

1. Fees and CCS

Families are liable for fees charged for sessions of care as accepted in their Complying Written Agreement CWA. The CWA is digitally signed by families during the online enrolment process.

If the family is entitled to Child Care Subsidy (CCS), 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, and families confirm their enrolment information through their MyGov account. Until Child Care Subsidy details are available, families will need to pay full fees.

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 childcare service being used.

2. Payment of Fees

Our childcare fees are outlined in our fee schedule which is available from our office/administration area and also displayed on our website/Centre Foyer. Please note our fees may change from time to time but notice will be given to families for any increases that will occur. Fees must be paid on time and during the week of care. Fees must be paid via debit success and a Direct Debit Agreement must be completed upon enrolment.

The Nominated Supervisor will issue a **Friendly Fee Reminder** letter to any family who is one week late paying their fees. **If families are having difficulty making fee payments, they should immediately speak with the** approved provider or nominated supervisor to discuss fee payment arrangements. Information provided by families will be treated as strictly private and confidential.

In cases of non-payment of fees, where the service is unable to contact families about the debt, or families do not meet agreed arrangements for repayment of the debt and ongoing payment of fees, the Nominated Supervisor may immediately suspend or terminate the child's place at the service. Families will be advised of this action in writing.

Where families do not meet agreed payment plans, and an outstanding debt remains, the Nominated Supervisor may use their discretion to engage a third-party agency to recover the outstanding amount. The cost of this action may be added to the debt owed.

3. Penalties

Families who do not collect their child before 6.00pm for the day may be charged a late fee of \$15 for every 15 minutes or part thereof, they arrive past our closing time. This fee covers the cost of employing the staff required to supervise a child outside our operating hours. It may be waived at the discretion of the Nominated Supervisor.

4. Holidays/Public Holidays/Sick Days

Normal fees are charged for all absences that fall on a child's booked days including **sick days and public holidays.**

The centre is closed on public holidays with normal fees applied. Families can swap their child's day if it falls on a public holiday to another day within the same week. Please note this is subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed.

Families may apply for a 50% Holiday Reduction Fee (on full fees) for up to four (4) weeks per calendar. To receive this rate Families must apply at least 2 weeks in advance to the centre.

On any day your child is absent from the service you are still entitled to receive CCS up to 42 absence days in the financial year. If you exceed 42 days full fees will apply on any absent days thereafter. The government may continue to pay CCS on your behalf for additional days in specific circumstances. Please see the Nominated Supervisor if you require more information.

5. Termination of Placement

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.

Children must also be signed in and out by parents/guardians on the last scheduled day of their attendance for the Child Care Subsidy to apply. If this does not occur families are required to pay full fees.

DAILY ROUTINES

1. Delivery and Collection of Children

On arrival to the centre please make sure you sign your child into the service via the IPAD in the foyer. You can then take your child to their appropriate room. Please make sure to speak to a staff member so they know your child has arrived, and never leave your child in a room where an educator is not present.

Please make sure all doors are closed securely behind you for the protection of all the children.

Written or verbal consent must be given to the service if the person collecting your child differs from the enrolment record. Proof of identification may be required and only nominated people can collect your child.

Anybody collecting children must be 16 years or over unless special permission has been given by the Nominated Supervisor.

2. Routines

This is an example of our daily routine. All Routines are flexible and based on children's individual needs and parent requests. All home routines are followed for children in the Nursery room surrounding sleep and meals. Mealtimes are flexible and progressive to ensure children are given opportunity to eat and drink when they wish.

6.30am-8.00am Family Grouping – Children are grouped in various ages/with siblings to have breakfast and engage in morning activities.

8.00am-9.00am Children move to their own classrooms and are settled in for the day ahead. Morning program starts. Outdoor environments are set up and yard checks are conducted.

9.00am-9.30am Progressive morning teatime and indoor/outdoor programs commence

9.30am-10.30am Children engage in indoor/outdoor learning experiences and have a range of activities to participate in

10.30am-11.00am Children are encouraged to participate in a group activity or experience including Books, singing, puppets etc

11.00am- 12.00pm Progressive lunch and indoor/outdoor programs continue

12.00pm onwards sleep and rest time is provided for the children based on the families' requests and sleep routines. Comfort items are encouraged and recommended at this time for all children. Children in the older years take part in quiet time, including mediation and yoga sessions.

2.00pm-3.00pm Transition time from sleep and rest periods, waking up and preparing for afternoon activities

3.00pm Progressive afternoon teatime and indoor /outdoor programs continue

3.00pm-4.30pm Children engage in indoor/outdoor learning experiences and have a range of activities to participate in

5.00pm-6.00pm Family grouping commences between rooms for the end of the day preparation

3. Sleep and Rest

Most children benefit from periods of rest which help them grow and prepare them for meaningful learning experiences. Rest periods are included in all children's daily routine consistent with their developmental needs, including a short period of rest each day for older children.

Educators will take into account families' preferences about the amount of sleep their child has at the service and will accommodate any requests about their child's sleeping practices where these are not inconsistent with the safe sleeping practices discussed in the policy and meet a child's needs for sleep or rest.

Educators have a legal obligation to ensure children are safe and are offered sleep or rest when they need it. If a child is displaying signs of tiredness, educators must allow the child to sleep or rest for a reasonable period of time. Where families are concerned that children's sleep at the service is impacting night sleep patterns, educators will discuss expected sleep patterns with families based on advice from recognised authorities and adjust a child's sleep time at the service if appropriate.

The Nominated Supervisor and educators, however, will make the final decision about the child's sleep and rest at the service to ensure they can meet their obligations. For example, if a resting child falls asleep without assistance in instances where families have requested the child not have naps, educators may allow the child to sleep for a period they believe is in the best interests of the child.

4. Birthdays

At Small Steps Early Learning Centre, we believe it is important to celebrate children's birthdays within the service. To keep all children with allergies safe, we do not allow cakes or food to be bought from home. If your child is having a birthday at the centre please let the staff know and they will make a cake with your child for their special day.

Alternatively, if a cake is not requested, we will endeavor to celebrate their special day with various activities and in other ways, to ensure all children feel valued and celebrated on their birthdays.

5. Excursions/Regular Outings

The service acknowledges the value of relevant excursions in allowing children to gain a greater insight of the society in which they live and learn from these experiences. Our service will actively seek to minimise any risks associated with excursions and respond promptly and appropriately to any emergency whilst on an excursion.

Educators will educate children and families regarding road safety (or other transport) and safe play practices whilst in the community.

We will conduct a risk assessment prior to any excursions or regular outings. We will consider the following as part of the risk assessment:

- Any risk that the excursion may pose to the safety, health and wellbeing of any child and identify how these risks will be managed and minimised
- Proposed route and destination
- Any water hazards
- Any risks associated with water-based activities
- Transportation (to and from)
- The ratio of educators and children which must comply as a minimum with the ratios in the Staffing Arrangements Policy
- Whether extra adults are required for supervision and safety
- Specialised skills required (such as life-saving skills)
- Proposed activities
- Proposed duration
- Any medical conditions that need to be considered and managed for each child with specific health needs
- Items that should be taken

A parent or authorised person must provide written authorisation for any excursion or regular outing.

6. What to Bring/What not to Bring

What to bring:

- Spare set of labelled clothes including underpants. If your child is toilet training, they will require an extra set of full clothing
- A warm hat and coat during the winter months and a sun hat in the warmer months. (see Physical Environment Policy). Hats and beanies are available for purchase at the service
- The centre provides disposable nappies.
- Bottles and formula. These must be clearly labelled with your child's name.
- Anything your child may need to make them feel comfortable e.g. Dummy, soft toy, sleeping bag

What NOT to bring:

- Any toy of importance or any special toys from home as they often go missing and the centre takes no responsibility for lost items. It is preferable that children do not bring toys from home unless they are a comfort item or for show and tell purposes.
- Any toys that encourage violent play such as guns or weapons
- Food from home especially nuts, peanut butter, Nutella, lollies, or any other unhealthy foods. This is to minimise the risk to our children that have severe allergies to these foods. If your child must bring food from home, parents are to sign it into the Food from Home Register outside the kitchen and hand it to the staff.
- Bags are accessible to children within the rooms, please make sure you do not leave any dangerous items in them such as lighters, matches, cigarettes, medication, or food.

7. Clothing

To ensure children's comfort and safety at the service, they must wear clothing that is suitable for the weather, lets them explore and play freely, and minimises the risk of injury. Some clothing items and jewellery, for example, can strangle or choke young children. Educators may remove jewellery and teething necklaces if children wear them to the service.

Amber Teething Necklaces and Bracelets

Based on Australian Government product safety warnings, we do not allow children to wear amber teething necklaces or bracelets at our service. This is to minimise the risk they may choke on the beads if the necklaces or bracelets break apart.

Educators and volunteers will encourage parents to dress their children in clothes that:

- are loose and cool in summer and warm enough for cold weather including outdoor play in winter
- protect them from the sun during outdoor play, no Singlets or spaghetti straps
- do not restrict them or compromise their safety when playing, sleeping or resting e.g. no hoods, cords, ties, ribbons or crocheted jackets that can pull tight around the neck, no hats with cords or strings that may get caught on equipment and furniture, footwear that is stable and supportive e.g. no thongs, clogs or backless shoes which can cause children to trip, and clothing that allows easy access for toileting e.g. elasticised trousers and track pants rather than buttons, zips, belts etc.
- can get dirty when children play i.e. children should not come in their best clothes
- Thongs or shoes that are dangerous during outdoor play such as climbing

Families must clearly label all clothing with the child's name.

To ensure children's comfort educators and volunteers will:

- ensure children are appropriately dressed for the weather, play experiences, and rest and sleep
- provide clean spare clothing to children if needed encourage children to use aprons/art smocks for messy play and art experiences to protect their clothing.

PROGRAM & CURRICULUM

VELF Framework & Programming

Our service is committed to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and Victorian Early Years Framework (VELF).

VEYLF Learning Outcomes

The Learning Outcomes recognise the importance of literacy, numeracy, and social and emotional development.

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

Educators will:

- plan a curriculum based on children's interests, culture, language, ideas, play and everyday lives i.e. connections between children, families, and communities
- work in partnerships with families to achieve learning outcomes, and encourage families to contribute to the Curriculum by sharing information about their child or completing activities with children
- build connections between the service, schools, and the local community
- include children in decision making, including decisions about indoor and outdoor spaces, programming, routines and documenting their achievements, and give them appropriate levels of responsibility
- make use of spontaneous 'teachable moments' to scaffold children's learning
- engage in sustained shared conversations with children to extend their thinking
- support children's learning by participating in child led play
- provide a balance between child led, child initiated, and educator supported learning by creating learning environments and activities that stimulate children's imagination, creativity and curiosity and encourage children to investigate, experiment, explore, solve problems, create and construct
- use strategies like demonstrating, dramatic play, role play, open questioning, speculating, explaining, shared thinking and problem solving to promote and extend children's learning
- use resources (e.g. man- made and natural loose parts) and implement activities (e.g. dramatic play, visual arts, role play, games) to promote learning across all learning outcomes
- create outdoor learning spaces which invite open-ended interactions, spontaneity, risk-taking, exploration, discovery, and connection with nature
- create both indoor and outdoor spaces that stimulate children's imagination, creativity and curiosity and encourage children to investigate, experiment and solve problems
- regularly provide opportunities for children to learn individually and as part of a group
- regularly assess what each child knows, can do, and understands through an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluating, and then implement activities to help each child achieve all learning outcomes. Assessments will take into account the period of time each child spends at the service
- regularly add to a learning portfolio for each child through Storypark which includes written assessments of the child's learning
- plan the curriculum with each child and the learning outcomes in mind, and remember that learning is not always predictable and linear
- celebrate the achievements and learning of each child

- with parents' consent, liaise with external agencies and professionals to support children with additional needs
- regularly evaluate their practices and reflect on how well the curriculum is helping each child progress towards and achieve the learning outcomes
- share curriculum and encourage families to contribute, make suggestions or ask questions about children's learning at any time
- complete a Transition Learning and Development Statement through the Insight Assessment Platform for every Kindergarten child going to school in the following year, to provide schools with information about the child's capabilities and interests
- provide the following information to parents whenever requested:
 - the content and operation of the educational program
 - information about the child's participation in the program
 - assessments of the child's developmental needs, interests, experiences and progress against the learning outcomes.

HEALTH & SAFETY

1. Hygiene

Our service aims to promote and protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of all of children, educators and families using procedures and policies to maintain high standards of hygiene and provide safe food to children. We also aim to reduce the risk of infectious diseases and illnesses spreading by following appropriate OH&S standards. For more information on centre hygiene practices please see "Health, hygiene and Safe Food Policy".

2. Sun Protection

Implementing correct sun protection practices reduce a child's risk of skin cancer and eye damage and ensure they obtain enough vitamin D from the sun to allow for healthy bone development and maintenance.

Sun protection times are a forecast for the time of day UV levels will reach 3 or above. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types.

During these times we will:

- ALWAYS use sun protection measures during October to March (Daylight Savings)
- use a combination of sun protection measures whenever **UV levels reach 3 and above**. This will usually be from September to the end of April. UV levels are highest in the middle of the day between 10 am and 2pm (11am and 3pm daylight savings). Healthy sun exposure is encouraged when UV levels are below 3
- access the daily SunSmart UV Alert from the Bureau of Meteorology website www.bom.gov.au/uv or download Cancer Council Australia's SunSmart app to a Smartphone or widget available from the SunSmart home page to the service website to find out daily local sun protection times and UV index
- ensure protection measures are adequate for children with all skin types, including children with very fair skin
- Children will not be taken outdoors when the temperature reaches 29 degrees or higher or when the temperature is lower than 10 degrees if management give permission. This is to ensure the children do not become over-heated in the summer months and are not exposed to the elements of the cooler months.

Sun Protection Measures

1. Outdoor Activities

Educators and staff will ensure sun protection measures are considered when planning all outdoor activities including excursions. Active outdoor play is encouraged throughout the day all year provided sun protection measures are used when UV levels are 3 or above.

2. Shade

The service will provide and maintain adequate shade for outdoor play. Shade options can include a combination of portable, natural and built shade. Regular shade assessments will be conducted to monitor existing shade structures and assist in planning for additional shade.

Outdoor activities will be planned in shaded areas. Play activities will be set up in the shade and moved throughout the day to take advantage of shade patterns. Children will be directed to use available areas of shade when outside.

3. Hats

Educators, staff and children are required to wear sun safe hats that protect their face, neck and ears.

A sun safe hat is a:

- legionnaire hat
- bucket hat with a deep crown and brim size of at least 5cm (adults 6cm)
- broad brimmed hat with a brim size of at least 6cm (adults 7.5cm).

Children without a sun safe hat will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under shade, veranda or indoors) or can be provided with a spare hat.

Please note: Baseball caps or visors are not sun safe because they do not provide enough sun protection.

4. Clothing

When outdoors, educators, staff and children will wear sun safe clothing that covers as much of the skin (especially the shoulders, back and stomach) as possible. This includes wearing:

- loose fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered neckline
- longer style skirts, shorts and trousers
- dark coloured clothing that is made from cool, densely woven fabric

Children who are not wearing sun safe clothing will be provided with spare sun safe clothing or will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun.

Note children who are playing outside on days where surface temperatures are high must wear shoes to minimise the risk of burns.

Please note midriff, crop or singlet tops are not sun safe because they do not provide enough sun protection.

5. Sunscreen

All educators, staff and children will apply SPF30 or higher broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every 2 hours (or more often if washed or wiped off.) Educators will assist children to apply the sunscreen correctly if required. Sunscreen will be stored in a cool, dry place and the use-by-date monitored. **Authorisation to apply sunscreen will be obtained from parents.** Children and babies may not be able to play outside if we are not authorised to apply sunscreen.

Families are encouraged to put sunscreen on children before coming to the centre in the warmer months to ensure they can go straight outside to play on arrival. First application of sunscreen by the centre will take place at morning teatime. Sunscreen must be applied 20mins prior to exposure to the sun.

6. Babies (under 12 months)

Educators will ensure babies are not exposed to direct sunlight and are kept in dense shade at all times. Educators will also ensure babies' skin is well protected. They will wear sun safe hats and clothing and may have small amounts of SPF30 or higher broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen suitable for babies applied to their exposed skin.

The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months old is not recommended. Babies clothing, hat and location in the shade will be checked regularly to ensure they continue to be well protected from UV.

7. Role Modelling

Educators and staff will act as role models and demonstrate sun safe behaviour by:

- wearing a sun protective hats and clothing outside
- applying SPF30+ or higher broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen
- using and promoting shade

Families and visitors are encouraged to role model positive sun safe behaviour.

3. Child Protection

It is important that children are able to learn and develop in a safe and supportive environment. The safety, health and wellbeing of children is our number one priority. We have zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to acting in children's best interests. We will ensure our environment and practices are always safe, consistent with best practice and legislative requirements including the Child Safe Standards. All educators will undergo child safety and child protection training within the first three months of their employment. This will also be updated annually.

4. Infectious Diseases & Illness

As outlined in the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009 (Vic), a list of infectious diseases, their exclusion periods and procedures related to the illness. This has been provided as part of the enrolment pack and you can also find this schedule in the foyer and in our "Infectious Disease Policy".

Parents must advise educators as soon as possible if a child has an infectious disease and abide by any exclusion periods.

Approved providers or nominated supervisors must not allow a child who has been infected or had contact with the diseases to attend the service for the exclusion periods outlined.

Children might suddenly while in care develop an illness that has not been diagnosed by a doctor, and that might be potentially infectious or potentially life-threatening for the child. Symptoms may not clearly fit those listed in exclusion diseases making it difficult for educators to decide whether to accept or exclude the child. **If educators suspect a child may have an infectious disease, they will exclude the child until they receive a medical certificate stating the child is not contagious and is okay to attend the Service.**

Parents must advise educators on arrival verbally or in writing of any symptoms requiring administration of medication to their child in the past **48** hours and the cause of the symptoms if known. This advice must be provided the first time the child attends after the medication has been administered

Many illnesses, while not fitting exclusion criteria, can transmit disease to other children in care, and can make a child too ill to participate in normal activities. All children who are unwell should not attend the Service and educators will ask parents of children who are unwell to collect the child from the centre or to make alternative arrangements for their child's care.

If children become ill at the service, educators or staff members may request parents or authorised nominees to collect children depending on the situation. This is up to management discretion and the individual child's situation.

Unwell children include those with fevers. Fevers refer to temperatures above 38°C and are usually a sign of infection (e.g. virus). When children develop a fever at the service, educators and staff will:

- contact parents and ask them to collect the child unless we have written advice from a medical practitioner that the fever is not caused by an infectious disease (e.g. teething)
- administer first aid if required in line with service procedures. This may include calling an ambulance. Educators and staff will be especially vigilant caring for babies less than 3 months old with fevers
- if the child is distressed, bathe their face in lukewarm water and administer paracetamol if parents have given written permission
- Paracetamol will only be administered to a child for temperatures, teething and obvious signs of pain displayed by a child with authorised consent. Only 1 does will be given at the centre. If a

temperature does not come down after administering Paracetamol, then the child must be collected.

- offer water to the child and ensure they are not overdressed, and their clothing is comfortable
- monitor the child's behaviour, alertness and any other symptoms that could indicate serious infection including rash, stiffness, vomiting, coughing or convulsions

5. Accident/Injury

If a child injures themselves at the service and require immediate medical attention, parents will be contacted and requested to take their child to the doctor. If parents cannot be contacted, then the emergency contacts will be notified.

If the situation is deemed to be an emergency and requires hospital treatment, an ambulance will be called. Parents will be notified immediately or emergency contacts if parents are uncontactable. Any ambulance or medical expenses will be the responsibility of the parent.

All information relating to the incident will be recorded using our Accident/Illness report which must be signed by the parent.

We have at least one qualified first aid trained educator (with asthma and anaphylaxis training) present at all times at the service and first aid kits are available and maintained throughout the service.

6. Administration of Medication

Our service and educators will only administer medication to children if it is authorised by parents or another authorised person named on the enrolment form. This excludes an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency where we can administer medication without first receiving authorisation.

If your child requires medication during the day, all the details must be recorded on an illness form. Educators will only administer medication to a child if the medication is authorised in writing by a parent or another authorised person and:

- is the original container
- has not expired
- has an original label and instructions that can be clearly read and, if prescribed by a doctor has the child's name
- is administered in accordance with any instructions on the label or from the doctor.

Centre Paracetamol can be administered by educators with verbal consent from a child's authorised person. In the case of an emergency and to prevent convulsions, Paracetamol will be administered with written agreement as per the child's enrolment form. An illness form will be completed in this situation and signed by the parent on collection of the child. Only one dose will be given at the centre.

Anyone delivering a child to the service must not leave medication in the child's bag or locker. Medication must be given directly to an educator on arrival for appropriate storage. Auto injection devices (e.g. EpiPens) and asthma puffers will be stored up high in rooms, so they are inaccessible to children. All other medication will be stored in accordance with the storage instructions on the medication in labelled container out of reach of children or in the fridge. Non-refrigerated medication will be kept away from direct sources of heat

7.Smoking

Our service is strictly tobacco, drug and alcohol free

To keep children, educators, families and visitors free from the dangers of drugs, including illegal substances, alcohol and tobacco, the following rules apply. The consumption of tobacco, drugs and alcohol is prohibited in all areas of the service including:

- Inside
- Outside in the playground
- Outside in the car-park

Smoking and the consumption of alcohol is also prohibited:

- On incursions or excursions at any point during the event
- While travelling with a child
- At parent meetings
- In any areas which can be viewed by our service children and families

Please note it is illegal to smoke at our service or within four metres of any part of a pedestrian access point (entrance or exit) to the service while the service is providing education and care to children.