



Parent Handbook



The Hub: Preschool & Early Education Academy

www.thehubpreschool.com.au

Ph: 02 4967 2342

Open 6.30am – 6.30pm

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The Hub Preschool & Early Education Academy Pty Ltd

ABN 48 608 190 549 | ACN 608 190 549 158

P: 02 4967 2342

W: www.thehubpreschool.com.au

Approved Provider: The Hub: Preschool & Early Education Academy Pty Ltd

Centres:

Elmore Vale:

156 Lake Road, Elmore Vale NSW 2287

Mayfield:

121 Hanbury Street, Mayfield NSW 2304

Rutherford:

81-85 Weblands Street, Rutherford NSW 2320

Sandgate:

23 Rural Drive, Sandgate NSW 2304

Waratah:

39 Station Street, Waratah NSW 2289

Opening times: 6.30am to 6.30pm

Open 51 weeks a year

Fees are charged on Public Holidays

Regulatory Authorities

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

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

New South Wales

NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate
Department of Education and Communities

Locked Bag 5107

PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

P: 1800 619 113

E: ececd@det.nsw.edu.au

W: www.det.nsw.edu.au



Welcome to our Service

The Parent Handbook outlines important information you will need to be aware of while you are part of our Hub family.

It is important that you read this booklet and ask questions about matters you do not understand.

Our Service has an open door policy. You and your family are welcome to visit the service at any time.

Our Policies

All our policies are available in the policy folder located in the office. Please feel free to look and provide feedback on our policies at any time.

Introduction

Welcome to *The Hub* Preschool & Early Education Academy. Finding a new Education and Care Service for your child can be a daunting task. At *The Hub* Preschool & Early Education Academy our aim is to provide a secure and happy environment where children can develop their intellectual, social, emotional, physical and creative skills to become competent and confident individuals, and for you as a parent/guardian to feel safe knowing that your child is receiving the best possible care. We believe the best way to work with you and your child is by building a partnership of education and care.

We want you to feel:

- Welcomed, recognised, acknowledged and respected by all our educators.
- Your child is really known by, and really knows, the people who care for them.
- You are given lots of information about what is occurring and are asked for your views.
- You are involved in making decisions about your child's experiences.
- You and your child are received and greeted upon arrival.
- Your child is happy, secure and engaged.
- Your child is not just looked after, but really educated and cared for.



Education, Curriculum and Learning

We will be following the Early Years Learning Framework as per our Education, Curriculum and Learning Policy.

There is an dedicated Educational Leader in each of our services.

All educators at our services are trained and experienced in areas of early education and care.

Due to our high standard and commitment of our educators, we are able to provide developmental and educational curricula for each group of children.

We will use the relationships children have with their families and communities to build the curriculum, working in partnership with parents, to ensure each child's knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of our program.

Philosophy

Our Philosophy is guided by "Being, Belonging, Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework", the National Quality Framework and the National Quality Standards.

The philosophy and aims of our centres are enacted through The Hub's Policies and Procedures.

There are a number of key principles that inform the Hub's philosophy and aims in relation to:

- Families and community
- Children
- Educators
- The program
- The environment



In Relation to Families and Children

We acknowledge that *The Hub* has a strong Christian heritage and long-lasting partnership with the Mayfield Baptist Church and their community services due to the Mayfield Hub's beginnings. *The Hub* is in a unique position to provide effective care and support to families. *The Hub* will continue its heritage of celebrating important dates in the Christian calendar and demonstrating God's love in a practical way while welcoming and respecting the choices of all families, regardless of family structure, culture, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic circumstances or disability.

We will also be hoping to form strong partnerships with other local churches in each of our Centre's communities. We acknowledge as central to families as they partner with *The Hub* the principles of kindness, inclusion, respect, tolerance, friendship, self-control, joy, thankfulness, honesty, patience, thinking, investigating, exploring, problem solving, emotional resilience, a sense of self and love. We acknowledge that families are the most important people in their child's life and have valuable cultural distinctives and information to share with us. We value a supportive and welcoming environment for parents that seeks to make parents/carers feel welcome and that encourages them to become involved at their child's centre in whatever way they feel comfortable. *The Hub* also recognises that individual families have their own parenting and childcare practices, which the educators at our centres will recognise and respect.

We recognise that families are active members of the larger community and value their partnership with this larger community. Thus a key aim at *The Hub* is to establish and further develop our collaborative partnership with both families and their communities.

We value and encourage feedback suggestions and opinions from all members of *The Hub* community regarding each centre's procedures, policies and the general running of every centre.

Within the context of *The Hub* the aims are for:

- Families to feel secure in knowing that their child is cared for in a nurturing environment.
- Families have the right to confidentiality and respect for privacy.
- Families to have the right to access affordable, high quality care and education.



In Relation to Children

We acknowledge that all children are unique individuals with unique needs, interests and strengths. All children are given equal opportunities regardless of their gender, culture, ability and socio-economic background.

We recognise and value children's voices as the most important part of the program developed and implemented at *The Hub* and that their learning is central to all aspects of our centres.

We value play as the most important vehicle for learning in early childhood and seek to provide children who attend *The Hub* with experiences that are joy filled, fun, safe and stimulating.

It is acknowledged that children learn best through play and educators at *The Hub* will support each child's development by providing experiences that are meaningful to the children and, most importantly, reflect their interests. For example, your child's knowledge is valued and can be used as a tool for enhancing the knowledge of others.

Learning is valued and promoted through experimentation, problem solving, investigation and role play. Educators will follow children's interests and provide open ended play and creative experiences within a comfortable, relaxed, home like environment that encourages high but achievable expectations and provokes learning. *The Hub* recognises that children develop and learn at their own pace, and therefore, educators will ensure their expectations of children's development are specific to each child and their experiences.

The Hub values the social and emotional wellbeing of children and seeks to promote positive self-concept, high self-esteem and social competence as an integral basis for learning. Therefore, educators will ensure children are given meaningful praise for efforts, success and positive behaviour and will be supported to build positive relationships with their peers. Educators will support each child's social and emotional development through the Principles of "Belonging, Being and Becoming" and its' practices.

Educators at *The Hub* will support each child's background within a supportive environment, building on their experiences across all learning outcomes. These learning outcomes seek to encourage in children:



In Relation to Educators

We recognise and respect that every educator at *The Hub* is an individual with diverse needs, interests, skills, knowledge and experience. We seek to support and develop each educator's personal early childhood philosophy and value this within the broader shared philosophy of *The Hub*.

It is the aim of *The Hub* that the educators will work as a team by motivating and supporting each other and building an atmosphere of trust and respect through open communication that respects different points of view and maintains confidentiality.

The Policies and Procedures of *The Hub*, PIEC Principles of Attachment, AECA Code of Ethics, UN Conventions of the Rights of the Child and the National Quality Areas (NQF) are regarded as key documents guiding the practices of educators at *The Hub* and they will be expected to abide by, and implement these policies.

Evaluation is a valued component of *The Hub* in view of improved policy and practices and educators will be encouraged to engage in reflection and evaluation of their practices in view of continued improvement.

- A strong sense of identity.
- Connection and contribution to their world.
- A strong sense of wellbeing.
- To be active and involved learners; and
- Their ability as efficient communicators.

The Hub will support the inclusion of children with additional needs, working in conjunction with the family and other support services and agencies.



“*The Hub* recognises that children develop and learn at their own pace, and therefore educators will ensure their expectations of children’s development are specific to each child and their experiences.”

In Relation to the Program

The Hub values the interests of the child as central to the program developed and implemented at each centre. The program will seek to value the ability of a child to make choices and have control over their own learning through recognising individual interests and their ‘voices’. Short and long term projects will be developed in a flexible context that responds to the children’s interests. The program at *The Hub* recognises the principles provided by the Early Years Learning Framework (and other practices like the Reggio Emilia philosophies) where the children’s interests are the focus and staff work within these interests to assist with the child’s development.

These practices are complemented by Educators’ “Provocations” via intentional teaching, whereby the role of adults within the centre is to be facilitators that guide and encourage children’s learning at their level.

The Hub acknowledges and supports the process of children’s play rather than focusing on a final product. Educators will use individual Learning Journeys (portfolios) to document children’s learning. As *The Hub* values parental awareness of their child’s learning, the portfolios will be made available to parents at all times. Children’s portfolios and the program will be made accessible for families to read, comment upon and offer feedback and suggestions.

The Hub values a program that provides children with the opportunities for indoor-outdoor play that promotes child initiated small group experiences and fosters nurturing and sibling relationships.



In Relation to the Environment

We recognise the importance of providing a safe, supportive, secure and consistent centre environment that promotes trust and familiarity as well as active exploration of learning. This active exploration will seek to value the centres' environment as part of a global environment. *The Hub* believes that environmental sustainability is our responsibility and we will endeavour to become active advocates of "Going Green" within the program and practices of each centre. We recognise that we are part of the world community as well as our local community and it is our role to support children to become environmentally responsible and contribute to a sustainable future.

The Hub values our Indigenous heritage and as such will acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of this land, the Awabakal and Worimi people.

We strongly believe in the principles of Respect and Responsibility as representing the foundation of our early childhood practices as we interact with others and our environment.



Grievances, Complaints and Feedback

If for any reason you are not happy with our level of education and care or our environment, we want to know immediately. You can discuss this with the Centre Director or email the director at your centre. When any matter is raised, the service will be following our Grievance Procedure. All service policies/procedures are available to parents and carers. Positive feedback is most welcome too.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

We are an approved care facility.

The Child Care Subsidy is paid directly to services to be passed onto families. Please go to the Department of Human Services website and search child Care Subsidy for more eligibility information.

What you need to do to apply for the Child Care Subsidy:

- Sign into your Centrelink online account through myGov.
- Select Make a claim, then start a new claim.
- Work through the steps to provide your current details.

For further details please contact FAO on 13 61 50 or speak to our family accounts team on 02 4967 2342 (Option 2).



The Daily Routine

We provide an environment where the children feel comfortable and secure at all times, and our rooms have daily routines that reflect this. Our routines are designed to maximise each child's opportunities to learn and develop.

Throughout the day, children will experience a number of different activities which are part of the educational and developmental curriculum operated by all of our educators. These will be based on the interests, skills and knowledge of the children and include aspects of their culture, family and community.

Each room will display their routine which parents may read, and Educators will be happy to answer any questions.

Services Offered

We cater for children 6 weeks to 6 years of age.

When your child turns the age appropriate to the next age group, please alert the director if you wish your child to be waitlisted for a spot in the older age group. Some parents may choose to wait until the next year to move their child up due to the relationships that have been formed.

Please discuss any concerns you have with the Director.

Meals Provided

- Breakfast (family grouping) 6.30am-7.30am.
- Morning and afternoon tea (always includes fresh fruit and vegetables).
- Chef prepared lunch.
- Late Snack (family grouping) (see Menu) 5.10pm-5.45pm.

Children

Those First Weeks

The introduction into education can be difficult for children and parents. Children's welfare and happiness are the priority for Educators when welcoming new children to the Service and when assisting the family to settle into the Service environment. It is recognised that families needs will vary greatly in the orientation process and individual needs will be addressed.

The following outlines some helpful hints for parents on settling their child into care:

- Talk to the educators about your child, for example, what they like to do, successful ways of settling them to rest, foods they like and dislike and so on. This helps educators to get to know your child.
- When leaving your child it is best to make sure that you say goodbye and then leave. Hesitating and not going after you have said your goodbye only confuses them, especially if they are upset. Reassure your child that everything is alright and you will return later. This can help them to settle.
- It sometimes helps to establish a routine when leaving. For example, giving your child a cuddle and then passing them to an educator, or sitting down with them to read a book or for a short play before leaving.
- At first some children protest strongly while others may take a day or two to realise that you are leaving them and begin to protest after several days. Children soon learn that you do return and in the meantime they are well cared for.
- Make sure you familiarise your child with the environment and the people in the environment (children and adults) by coming in for visits before commencing care.
- Ease your child into care with short stays to begin with.
- If your child is unsettled, short visits with you will help your child to gain trust with an unfamiliar environment. These visits can be made on a day when your child is not booked to attend.
- Your child will be reassured when they see positive interactions between educators and parents or educators and other children, and this will help them to establish trust in an unfamiliar setting.
- Try to talk at home about the centre. Mention the names of the educators and other children. Talk about the things the child will be able to do at child care that are fun and enjoyable.



What to Bring

6 weeks-2 year old Rooms

- Numerous changes of clothing that are weather appropriate
- A hat – a full brimmed wide hat
- Bottles and sippy cups
- Comforters (clearly labelled). Dummies must have caps and be placed in your child's locker
- Asthma puffers/epi-pens/medication (clearly labelled)
- Formula
- No amber beads please

2-3 year old Rooms

- Several changes of clothing that are weather appropriate
- A hat – a full brimmed wide hat
- A drink bottle
- Pull-ups (we like children in this room to wear pull-ups if they are not toilet trained, these are not provided)
- Asthma puffers/epi-pens/medication (clearly labelled)

3-5 year old Rooms

- Two changes of clothing that are weather appropriate
- A hat – a full brimmed wide hat
- A drink bottle
- Asthma puffers/epi-pens/medication (clearly labelled)

Birthdays

Your child's birthday is a special event in his/her life. To celebrate your child's birthday, we will provide a 'mock' cake with candles and they can choose a gift from our 'birthday box'.

We are unable to allow parents to provide cakes or other food due to possible food allergies or special dietary requirements of other children.



Show Time

Showtime is our show and tell which we do in our Preschool rooms in Term 2 and Term 3. Your child may bring a special item to show to their peers (we discourage weapons).

They will be encouraged to discuss their item with their peers with the help of their teacher. Do not panic if your child forgets their Showtime they can just “tell” something to the group. Please place your child’s Showtime in the Showtime Bag in the room. By placing it in the bag it will stay safe until home time. Please remember to collect it from the show-time bag on the way home. Showtime that is left behind will be taken to the office to collect.

Clothing

Parents are advised to send their children to the Service in comfortable inexpensive clothing. The children need to be able to move around during play and should be unimpaired by clothing. While paints, etc will come out in the wash, accidents do happen so please don’t send your child in expensive or designer clothing. Young children enjoy and need ‘messy’ play with paint, clay, sand, water and mud. Shoes, when worn, must be supportive and safe, ie. NO THONGS.

The Service only has a limited supply of spare clothing. Please supply at least two changes of clothing and underwear in case of accidents.

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

Clothing Safety

Please do not dress your child in clothing with cords eg. shorts, hats, as these have the potential to become caught on equipment and may cause serious harm to your child. Please refer to ‘Sun Protection’ on page 27 for more information on clothing safety.



Belongings

Please ensure all belongings are clearly labelled. Lost property will be displayed for parent collection at reception. Parent cooperation in labelling assists the Service in keeping your child's belongings together.

It is appreciated if personal possessions are not brought to the Service eg. toys, etc. Any possessions brought must come entirely at the parents own risk with regard to breakage or loss. A soft toy or security item for rest time is acceptable.

Lockers

Each child/parent chooses a personal locker daily using a name tag (provided). Please remove all items from your child's locker DAILY and replace their name tag back on the board at the end of each day.

Guidance and Discipline

Educators follow a Behaviour Guidance Policy which extends across the whole Service giving consistency of expectation in all groups. This policy allows children to develop self-discipline, a respect for others, for property and respect for self (age-appropriate).

The policy aims are:

- To give all children the opportunity to expand their experiences of life in a productive, safe environment that allows individuals the right to safety, tolerance, self-expression, cultural identity, dignity and the worth of the individual, along with honesty in dealing with peers and caregivers.
- To be taught to respect the rights and needs of others by foreseeing the outcome of their behaviour and the consequences of their behaviour (age-appropriate).
- To encourage the individual social development of each child.

If you require further information on this policy please see the Director and refer to the policy folder.



Rest and Sleep

In our Baby rooms

Sleep times are based according to individual needs. Please notify staff on arrival of the expected care routine for your child for the day.

All sleep will be documented as will food intake and daily activities (for each individual child).

In the 2-3 year old rooms

A stretcher will be provided for each child. Children will be encouraged to rest quietly and have a sleep if needed and books and drawing will be provided on the individual stretcher for children who do not sleep.

In the Preschool rooms we call this time Chillax time

Quiet activities will be provided and each child will be offered a donut cushion to sit/relax on.

If a child needs a sleep a mattress will be provided.

Rest time varies according to individual needs. We aim to make rest time a relaxed, pleasant time for children. Please feel free to discuss your child's rest needs with the Director or educators.

It is important to note, we do not wake children from sleep.

Parents

We believe the best way to work with you and your child is by building a partnership of care. To do this we want you to feel you are given lots of information about what is happening and you are asked for your views.

Communication, Communication, Communication

What is the best way to communicate with you?

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

We have many types of communication we use for families in the Service just like you.

OWNA app

When you accept an enrolment offer at a centres, you will receive a request to join our OWNA app, which is an interactive tool we communicate with our families.

Social Media

The Hub also has a Facebook and an Instagram account, where we post important information, report on special occasions and inform of upcoming events. If you do not want your child's photo to appear on these pages, please ensure you select 'no social media' on your child's enrolment/permissions forms.



“All our policies are available in the policy folder located in the office. Please feel free to look and provide feedback on our policies at any time.”

Confidentiality and Discretion

Information received through written and spoken communication with families will be treated with discretion.

At any time if you require a private discussion with our educators, please inform the Director to assist in making the time available. This can happen face to face or by phone.

Ways we communicate news/events at the Service:

- Verbally at arrival and departure times.
- Term newsletters which will be sent via email and placed on our website by week two of each term.
- A notice board where various messages and notices are displayed advertising current issues and upcoming events.
- A fees/communication Family Mailbox (at reception) allows parents to leave more detailed written messages if they have concerns or want to provide positive or negative feedback.
- Occasionally educators will ask parents to complete short surveys in order to maintain up to date records and seek parent feedback on various topics.
- Policies will be regularly reviewed in a variety of ways (OWNA app, sign in area, newsletters and via files to enable parent comment on Service practices).

Communication and Educators

What can you expect from Educators?

Educators will:

- Inform families promptly and sensitively of any out of the ordinary incidents affecting their child.
- Share with children's families some of the specific interactions they had with the children during the day. This can occur verbally and also via our OWNA app.
- Provide information on children's eating, sleeping and bathroom patterns through verbal/OWNA app.
- Keep an appropriate record of joint decisions made with families affecting children's progress, interests and experiences.

Please feel free at any time in person, by phone or email to discuss your child's progress, relationships, interests and experiences.



Priority of Access Guidelines

There are no mandatory requirements for filling vacancies. Providers can set their own rules for deciding who receives a place.

Providers are asked to (but not legally obliged to) prioritise children who are:

- at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
- a child of a sole parent who satisfies, or parents who both satisfy, the activity test through paid employment.

This meets the Australian Government's aims of helping families who are most in need and supporting the safety and wellbeing of children at risk.

Court Orders

Parents must notify the Service if there are any Court Orders affecting residency of their children and a copy is required for the Service. Without a Court Order we cannot stop a parent collecting a child.

Arrival and Departure

For safety and security reasons ALL children must be signed in on arrival, and signed out on departure via OWNA app. Please ensure all contacts and authorised pick-ups are up to date. 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.

Building Security

All families will be buzzed in by staff on arrival. Due to the size and location of our building, we will open the doors when the doorbell is rung. When somebody different is picking up or dropping off your child for the first time, please make sure they show their license to reception on arrival. If someone is unknown to us, we will seek identity before offering entry into the premises. Please make sure identification is carried at all times. We ask for patience if a staff member is unsure of who you are, we are a big service and some staff may not know all parents due to being in different rooms, etc.

Please note our building is monitored by an external security company.



Paying of Fees to the Service

All payments must be made by direct debit via our OWNA app. All families must provide their payment details via the OWNA app upon enrolment. CENTREPAY may be available after consultation with management, however, requests are carefully assessed and not guaranteed to be approved. Our Service has a no cash policy. All payments are processed via Direct Debit on a Friday each week.

****PLEASE NOTE:** This is the FULL fee and does not take into consideration any claim of Childcare Subsidy (see details below). It is the parents' responsibility to register for these benefits and ensure the centre of their CRN details. One month's notice will be given before any fee changes.

It is our policy that all fees are paid one week in advance at all times. It is our policy that there should be no outstanding fees.

Accounts in arrears will be reviewed by *The Hub's* family accounts team and the Director, and may potentially be subject to care being cancelled. Once you have exited the service, any outstanding fees will be sent to a debt collection agency, any costs incurred will be passed onto the account holder.

Bond

A bond of \$300 per child or \$500 per family is paid prior to orientation. The bond is refundable once your time at *The Hub* is complete. Please note that if you decide to cease service prior to commencement or within the first two weeks of your child's enrolment, your bond will not be refunded.

Resource Fee

A non-refundable annual fee of \$100 per child will be charged annually, which will be debited in March for our currently enrolled families or at enrolment for our new Hub families. This is for resource items (art, craft, etc) to be used throughout the year.



Absences

The subsidy is paid for each child for up to 42 absences per financial year from all approved child care services, not from each service, except occasional care. These absent days can be taken for any reason with no evidence required.

You can also be paid for additional absences beyond the 42 days for certain reasons. There is no limit on these days, but supporting documentation will be required. Talk to your child care service about additional absence information and any supporting document requirements.

Notification of Hours

When completing your enrolment form, please state your child's hours of attendance, and give notice for change of hours, so we can staff the centre accordingly. The same fee is charged no matter what hours your child attends.

If a child is not collected by 6.30pm, a fee of \$15.00 plus \$2.00 for each minute or part thereof will be charged. This is a serious incident as the service is NOT licensed to care for children outside of these specified hours. Picking a child up AFTER 6.30pm *may jeopardise your child's place in the service.*

Attendance and Absence

Once a child is enrolled at the Service, payment of fees must continue during the child's absence for illness or other days the parent chooses to absent their child. Public Holidays are charged for. Fees will not be charged when the centres are closed between Christmas and New Year.



Waiting List

When we have full enrolments, children's names will be put onto a waiting list. Once a position is vacant, parents are then contacted about placement. When parents wish to change days, this can be made effective immediately if enrolments for that day are not full. If they are full, the child's name will be placed on a waiting list. Once a position is available, the days will then be adjusted. Our waiting list gives priority as per the Policy of Access Guidelines. There is no fee payable for the waiting list.

Notice of Withdrawal

The Service requires 2 weeks notice advising of the withdrawal of a child. This notice must be given by requesting the Exiting Service Form on our OWNA app. If notice is not provided, fees will be charged for the 2 week period.

***PLEASE NOTE** if your child is absent on their last day or days you will be charged full fees for all days back to your last attendance day at the centre as you will not be eligible for any CCS for those days.*

Amendment to Days Enrolled

Parents are required to provide 2 weeks written notice if they wish to reduce the days their child attends. This can be done online through your parent login.

When a parent wishes to increase the number of days, a discussion with Directors is required and is dependent on availability. To request a change to enrolment, parents/carers must email centre.

Casual Attendance Days

Enrolled children may be able to be accommodated for special 'casual' days of attendance. Discussion with the Director is required with as much notice as possible depending on availability on the day required.

Once a casual day is booked into the system, cancellation of the booked spot MUST be done via email by the FRIDAY of the week prior to booking. If this does not occur, a charge will be incurred.

Casual days are offered based on availability on the day required.



Parent Involvement

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 your family to be involved. We understand that our busy lives cannot always afford the time, however, any contribution no matter how big or small is much appreciated.

Your Occupation or Hobby

Your child loves you, and you are the most important person in their world. We welcome all parents to the Service to talk about their occupation or hobby (eg. music, craft, cooking) or demonstrate practically a skill (eg. guitar, etc). 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 programming and the ideas explored from parent talks can last for weeks.

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. We have a cultural table that we use to represent the cultures of our service and also a world map to visually display cultural heritage. We use sticky dots to locate places families have come from, please do this activity with your child at your convenience.

Mini Reverse Garbage (MRG)

We are very proud of our Mini Reverse Garbage. The MRG was born out of a desire to be sustainable and is included as part of our sustainability project. We have a basket at the front of the service where you can place your recyclables such as empty food containers, ribbons, wrapping paper, towel tubes (not toilet rolls or egg or milk because of hygiene and allergy issues), plastic bottle tops, bread ties, spools, paper or anything interesting from your work is much appreciated.



Clothes Swap

Our clothes swap is a new initiative that has been introduced as a part of our sustainability project.

Please feel free to help yourself to our clothing that is placed onto our clothes rack. Please note that after two weeks, all lost property will be added to our clothes swap. We believe that the clothes swap is another great way to reduce waste and help out others in need as well.

Book Swap

Our book swap is part of our sustainability project. We believe the book swap is a great way to reduce waste. Please bring books into the centre's administration office. We have so much to gain from doing what we can to reduce negative impacts on the environment and contribute in positive ways to sustainability, every little bit we do makes a difference. We are very excited to see the positive benefits of this initiative. Books can be any type such as children's, cooking, fiction, non-fiction etc.

More information on our sustainability projects will be communicated through OWNA as they develop at our centres.



Health and Safety

The Service provides a healthy and safe environment for children, Educators and families – please refer to our policies covering nutrition, hygiene, medication and infectious diseases. Children with contagious illnesses must be kept at home.

Food Allergies

We are an allergy aware Service.

Please inform the Nominated Supervisor if your child has any allergy or anaphylaxis. All allergies issues must be updated with the Director as they occur or change. Please make sure your enrolment form is up to date with allergy information, ensuring relevant documentation/plans are also provided. With any changes to allergy/dietary or medical Information, you must fill in a 'Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan' on OWNA.

Illness

NO CHILD will be allowed to attend care with any obvious signs of a contagious illness. Our policy states the incubation period, symptoms and exclusion periods of such diseases. When an outbreak occurs, notification will be circulated via OWNA with an attached information handout outlining symptoms, exclusions, etc. These outbreaks and exclusions are also written on our noticeboard in centre foyers.

A doctor's clearance is required for the return of a child to care after an infectious disease has been notified to the service. Please see the 'Staying Healthy in Child Care Infectious Disease' Fact Sheet. Infectious diseases are not limited to the Fact Sheet and the Director will confirm exclusions for other illnesses not listed. The Director's or certified person's discretion will be used when necessary. Please do not send your child to care for 24 hours after they have and a temperature over 38.1 degrees. Please do not send your child if medication has been given for a temperature. Children who are not immunised will not be allowed to attend the service.



Immunisation

Children who have not been vaccinated will be unable to enrol in childcare under the new New South Wales legislation. The New South Wales State government closed the 'conscientious objector' loophole, meaning all parents must immunise their children. We are unable to accept children who have not been immunised.

The policy coincides with the 2016 federal governments 'No Jab, No Pay' policy that exempts unvaccinated children's families from certain child care tax benefits. This policy still applies to all states outside Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales.

Parents must provide (on enrolment) an Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) certificate that shows your child's immunisation status.

Medication

Educators will be able to administer medication to children who are recovering from illness if a medication form has been completed on OWNA before the medication is given. The Nominated Supervisor or an Educator can assist you to complete the form.

Medication must be in date, in its' original container with the original label, have the child's name on the label, MUST be a chemist label and have any instructions about the medication (including those from a GP) attached to the medication.

Medication must be handed to an Educator for appropriate storage.

Please DO NOT leave medication in your child's bag.

Please note if over the counter medications are required to be administered we will not accept verbal authorisation over the phone. Parents MUST follow the process above. This will mean if your child has a temperature you will need to have someone readily available to pick up your child as soon as possible if no written authority has been given. As the staff will not be able to administer panadol or other over the counter medications due to lack of authority, so please make sure written authority is complete.

Any child who has commenced an antibiotic must not attend the Service for 24 hours from commencement.



Medical Conditions including asthma and anaphylaxis

The Service aims to provide a safe environment for children who have identified medical conditions. It is Service policy that a Medical Management Plan be completed by parents/guardians in consultation with the family doctor. The Plan should include a photo of your child, state what triggers the medical condition, what first aid is needed, contact details for the doctor who signed the plan and state when the Plan should be reviewed. This must be completed and returned before enrolment commences or as soon as possible if an already enrolled child commences a Plan.

Parents/carers must complete a 'Risk Minimisation Plan and Communication Plan' which is based on information in the Medical Management Plan on OWNA.

Parents are responsible for updating their child's Medical Management Plan or providing a new plan when necessary.

Sun Protection

Our Service's policy is 'no hat, no play'. This policy will be enforced. Parents are asked to provide a wide brim hat to wear during outside activities. These must be labelled. The most suitable hat is one which shades the ears and neck, as research is showing a high incidence of skin cancer on people's ears.

Children are required to wear sun safe clothing that covers as much of the skin as possible when outdoors. Please dress your child in clothing that will protect them from the sun i.e. tops/dresses with sleeves.

Accidents and Illnesses

The Nominated Supervisor will contact parents immediately if a child is involved in a serious accident or illness 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 sent via our OWNA app for all accidents, injuries and illnesses. This will contain details of the accident/injury/illness, any first aid that was administered, and be signed by 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 fire extinguishers that are in the Service. An emergency escape plan will be displayed in the room.



Using the Service Safely

- Never leave children unattended in cars while dropping children off or collecting children from the Service.
- Always hold children's hands when arriving and leaving the Service.
- Never leave a door or gate open.
- Never leave your children unattended in a room.
- Children are not permitted into the laundry areas.

Workplace Health and Safety Feedback

We welcome all feedback regarding the safety of our Service. If you see something that concerns you regarding safe work practices, the safety of building and equipment or general Work Health and Safety, please contact the Nominated Supervisor immediately.

Educators

Educators: qualifications and ratios

We meet all legal requirements in relation to child to Educator ratios and the qualifications of our Educators. We actually operate above the required ratios. All Educators will hold First Aid qualifications, have Working With Children checks completed and attend regular Educators meetings. Our Educators are continually evaluating how our curriculum meets the educational needs of our children and reflect on ways to improve children's learning and development. They are encouraged to attend further professional training and development.

For further details on the qualifications of the Educators, please see our Nominated Supervisor.

Conclusion

We aim for your child to have a happy, safe and secure relationship with our Service and our Educators and that the time he or she is in our care will be positive and fulfilling.

Important Contacts and Information for Families

The Service provides families with current information on child and family resources and services accessible in the local community.

Our Service has a parent library with resources you may find helpful.

ACECQA

is the new national body ensuring early childhood education and care across Australia is high quality.

Address: Level 15, 255 Elizabeth Street
Sydney, NSW, 2000

Postal: PO Box A292
Sydney, NSW, 2000

Email: enquiries@acecqa.gov.au

Phone: 1800 181 088

Family Assistance Office

Phone: 13 61 50

Australian Childhood Immunisation Register

Phone: 1800 653 809

Community Health and Resources Service

Phone: (02) 4016 4530

Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children

Melinda Lloyd

Phone: (02) 9872 0826

Emergency Services

Police, Fire and Ambulance

Phone: 000 (or 112 from mobiles)

Hospitals:

John Hunter 02 4921 3000

Calvary Mater 02 4921 1211

Maitland 02 4087 1000

Police:

Waratah 02 4926 6599

Charlestown 02 4942 9999

Maitland 02 4934 0200

Fire:

Mayfield West 02 4927 2562

Cardiff 02 4927 2551

Rutherford 02 4015 4055

NSW Education & Care Services National Laws & Regulations

www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653

Informative Websites For Parents

Raising Children Network

The Australian parenting website: comprehensive, practical, expert child health and parenting information and activities covering children aged 0 – 8 years.

www.raisingchildren.net.au

Better Health Channel

Quality consumer health information quality-assured, regularly reviewed health and wellbeing information and services. This site is sponsored by the State Government of Victoria.

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/

Please read this handbook carefully so you fully understand the commitment that you are undertaking and your responsibilities to the Service. When you have done so please sign and return the next page to the Service using the deposit box.

Please Remember

We encourage family participation and involvement in the Service. This allows you to see firsthand what we do and your child sees that there is a connection between home and the Service.

We welcome your feedback and view "Feedback as a Gift".

