



Parent Information Handbook

We acknowledge and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the First Nations' people of Australia and that they are the traditional owners and custodians of the land and waterways throughout our country. Noarlunga Community Children's Centre is on Kurna land. We pay our respects to the elders past, present and emerging.

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SERVICE PHILOSOPHY

Interactions

Our educators prioritise the development of positive and secure attachments with all children and families within our service. To achieve this, we strive to provide regular and consistent educators and a predictable care environment.

All educators will endeavour to promote children's practical life skills through daily routines and practices, promoting a sense of agency by giving children space and time to make their own choices.

'Children have agency. They have capacities and rights to initiate and lead learning and be active participants and decision makers in matters affecting them' (DEEWR 2010, p. 14).

Equity and fairness

Educators acknowledge the uniqueness and potential of all children and work to ensure that each child's individual culture, strengths, interests and ways of being are valued. Our educators encourage and support children to challenge perceptions of stereotypes based on religion, gender, race, language, ability and age.

We promote a sense of acceptance and respect for all within our service community.

We acknowledge the rich and complex histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and strive to build respectful connections with local Kaurua individuals and groups, to better understand their sense of country and strengthen their identities within our community.

'The rights and best interests of the child are paramount' (ACECQA 2011, p. 10).

Relationships

We develop trusting and professional relationships with children, families, and staff based on open and honest communication and information sharing to achieve a strong sense of belonging for all.

As a Community Children's Centre, we encourage and promote links between children, their families and local services and organisations. These collaborative partnerships are sought by our educators to ensure continual improvement of pedagogical practices and to ensure the best outcomes for children and families.

'Families are children's first and most influential educators' (DEEWR 2009, p. 5).

Physical environment

The environment is a vibrant, welcoming, stimulating, aesthetically pleasing and a safe place where children's ideas and interests contribute to the physical resources on offer. We encourage children to accept challenges and take risks, to gain the developmental benefits of adventurous play within their capabilities.

Educators support children to make choices in their play and have access to a variety of learning spaces both indoors and outdoors.

Educators place preference over natural, recycled and open-ended resources within the learning environments. We promote and role model Education for Sustainability in our environments through intentional teaching to develop respect, care and an understanding of our natural and built world.

'Outdoor learning spaces are a feature of Australian learning environments' (DEEWR 2009, p. 15).

Learning through play

Children's learning is a holistic process. It occurs through rich play based experiences that are a combination of child led and adult guided opportunities. Educators support children in this process by tuning into teachable moments to scaffold children's learning as they explore and discover their world.

Educators believe in every child's capacity to succeed as capable and competent learners and take a strengths based approach to planning experiences that promote children's growth in all developmental domains. Educators use regular critical reflection as a tool to guide their planning and everyday practices.

'Learning is dynamic, complex and holistic' (DEEWR 2010, p. 14).

Sources

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority 2011, *National Quality Framework Resource Kit: Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*, Sydney.

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments 2009, *Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*, Canberra.

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments 2010, *Educators Belonging, Being & Becoming: Educators Guide to the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*, Canberra.

Welcome to Noarlunga Community Children's Centres

Noarlunga Community Children's Centres are two community-based (not for profit) services, which are overseen by the same Governing Council, and run alongside each other towards the same common goals and outcomes.

Staff and management work in partnership with parents to provide quality care and education for the children attending our service. Our practices reflect our centre philosophy which is based on the Early Years Learning Framework and the National Quality Standards. We believe respectful relationships between educators and families, extended families and the community are fundamental to the quality education and care that children receive.

Our Morphett Vale Service is open 6.30am–6.00pm. There are four learning environments within the service. We provide a quality educational program facilitated by an Early Childhood Teacher and Educational Leader.

Our Morphett Vale service shares a campus with Calvary Lutheran School and Calvary Kindergarten. We provide before and after care for children who attend the kindergarten.

Our Alexander Kelly Drive campus is open 7.30am – 6.00pm. There are four learning environments within the service. We provide a quality educational program facilitated by an Early Childhood Teacher and Educational Leader. Our Alexander Kelly Drive Campus is at the centre of community facilities, business and transport.

Both services are open Monday to Friday however, there are closures for public holidays as well as a break over the Christmas and New Year period. Child care is available full time or on a per-session basis. There are two sessions each day (morning and afternoon). Extra sessions are available to parents who hold a regular booking, but are dependent on staffing and availability.

Each service has a Quality Improvement Plan located in the foyer. We invite your input and suggestions.

Enrolment

When a family has indicated their interest in enrolling their child in our service, a tour will be organised. During this tour, we will give the family information about the service including, but not limited to, programming methods, meals, fees, policies, procedures, our status as a Sun Smart service, signing in and out procedure, room routines, introduction of educators in the room the child will be starting in and educator and parent communication. Families are also invited to ask any questions they may have. Current information is available to families about community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing. Before commencing care make sure you:

Complete enrolment form, available from the office and have a **MyGov account: <https://my.gov.au/>**

For further information see our Enrolment Policy. If you require translation or have additional needs with reference to written information, please inform the Director or educators, who can arrange assistance.

Orientation Process

Prior to commencing child care, we encourage families to come for visits and familiarise yourself with the environment. We believe orientation is an important process where educators can gather important information about your child's needs and those of the family. This process supports the transition from home to care to be as smooth as possible with the aim to maintain continuity. Educators will also discuss the best way to help settle your child into the centre— with some parents choosing to gradually build up from half to full days. Educators will encourage families to say goodbye when dropping off – and be reassured that if the child becomes distressed, that educators will contact them. Families can stay as long as needed to reassure their child. Families will also be encouraged to send any special comfort items (special toy, blanket or other items) to help the child in the initial settling in period. You are welcome to call the centre and check on your child at any time or request updates through Kidzap. For further information see our Orientation Policy.

Parental Interaction and Involvement in the Service

Families are encouraged to share aspects of their culture with the educators and children as well as appropriate experiences.

Noarlunga Community Children's Centre aims to provide as many outlets as possible for family/service communication. These include face to face conversations, a regular newsletter which will be available via the KidsXap app, through our Facebook Page, communication sheets within each room, communication forms in foyer, a community notice board, community floor book, regular informal meetings with parents and the opportunity to plan formal meetings if required. We will be annually seeking parent input regarding the service's philosophy/ policies and how you feel about the service. All policies are located on KidsXap. A paper copy can be printed or emailed if required.

Facebook page: If you are a family attending one of our services you can request to be a member of our private group by logging into your personal account and searching for Families of NCCC Alexander Kelly Drive or Families of NCCC Windsong Court. Then send us a friends request.

Community

From time to time excursions are planned within the local community. Parental authorization will be obtained, and a benefits and risk assessment will be carried out prior to any excursions. Parents and families are welcome to join us. We also have incursions from our local community which may include the fire department, library or performing artists. Families from diverse cultures are encouraged to share their ways of life with us including but not limited to special celebrations, meal recipes or traditional song and dance. If you have a talent or hobby which you could share to enhance our learning programs please inform educators so they can prepare and plan for this within the educational program.

Educational Program and Practice

We base our program on the *Early Years Learning Framework* and our practices on the *National Quality Standards* which focus on ensuring that the educational program and our practice is stimulating, engaging and enhances children's learning and development. Educators plan a curriculum according to children's strengths, interests, culture and ideas as well as the center's own philosophy for learning. Each service has an Educational Leader who oversees the implementation of the curriculum. Documentation about each child's progress is available to families via KidsXap and Individual Learning Portfolios which are kept in the learning environments. Children's learning and development is assessed as part of an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluation. We encourage family input as much as possible, as families can provide valuable information about children's interests, strengths and abilities as well as important feedback that assists educators in meeting the best outcomes for children.

Sun Protection

Children, staff and families will be expected to wear a broad brimmed hat or legionnaire style hat, whenever they are involved in outside activities. Sunscreen will be applied every 2 hours as per the sun smart recommendations. Families are required to apply sunscreen before arrival or on arrival at the centre. Children under the age of 12 months should be kept out of the direct sunlight as much as possible and always protected by shade, clothing and hats. Sunscreen should be applied to small areas of exposed skin not protected by clothing and hats. Children are expected to wear loose fitting sun protective clothing that covers shoulders.

Children should be clothed in an appropriate manner which will allow them to explore and play freely. Children should have appropriate footwear that enables them to play comfortably and safely (i.e. thongs, clogs or backless shoes do not allow children to play safely). Children will be encouraged by educators to use smocks for messy play and art experiences to protect their clothing, however it is important to not send children in their best clothes. All clothing and belongings must be clearly labelled with the child's name and kept in their bag. Please supply appropriate spare clothing for your child.

Food and Nutrition

The Centre provides a weekly menu of food and beverages that are based on the Australian Dietary Guidelines to ensure that the provision of food and beverages are nutritious and adequate in quantity. There is an emphasis on fresh fruit and vegetables. The weekly menu is displayed in the foyer area for parents to view. Educators establish healthy eating habits in the children by incorporating nutritional information into our program. We also aim to support and provide adequately for children with food allergies, dietary requirements, restrictions and specific cultural and religious practices. Our Centre's are **NUT FREE**, due to the high number of children with severe nut allergies.

In collaboration with families with children who are being breastfed, we provide a supportive and comfortable environment so that carers can continue breastfeeding. Babies' bottles must be clearly named. Parents need to provide their own formula however cow's milk will be provided by the centre. All bottles will be prepared at the Centre as needed. Our service will use microwaves to heat Infant Formula and Cow's Milk.

Sleep

Each child's comfort is provided for and there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation. These needs will be met provided they are within the service's requirements as recommended by Red Nose.

Information regarding safe sleeping practices is provided in the enrolment pack. Please assist educators by providing them with as much information regarding your child's sleep routine.

Delivery and Collection

Our priority is the welfare and security of your child. Children will be released only to their parents/guardians and those who have been nominated on the enrolment form. Please advise educators or administration staff as to whom you have authorized to collect your child. Inform educators if someone other than those nominated is collecting your child, and those not on enrolment or unfamiliar to educators will be asked to show photo identification. Please inform the Centre as soon as possible if you are unable to collect your child prior to their booked time. If there are any changes to family circumstances or parenting orders, please advise the Centre immediately. We use a digital format which provides the service with a time stamp of your child's arrival and departure.

Sick Children

Children who are unwell should not attend the Service. If a child becomes unwell while at the centre we will request parents to collect their child, or to make alternative arrangements as soon as possible. If we suspect a child may have an infectious disease, we will ask that you provide a medical certificate stating the child is fit to return to care. The Centre will inform parents of any infectious diseases reported to the Centre. Relevant written health information will be displayed for parents to read. In an emergency the service will call an ambulance, any financial cost is the parents responsibility. We appreciate the Centre being notified if your child is going to be absent due to illness, as it will assist with infection control. A doctor's certificate is advisable to ensure there is no loss to allowable absences, which is limited to 42 days per year, for the purposes of child care subsidy, as per government legislation.

Immunisations

It is a legal requirement that our service has a record of your child's immunisation history.

On enrolment you will be asked for a copy of your child's Immunisation history statement. You can upload the document onto our KidsXap app under Health and Diet details inside the app, OR bring in a hard copy OR email us a copy.

You can obtain your Statement in the following ways:

-Online - through MyGov(opens in a new window) once an account has been created.

Medicare Express Plus App(opens in a new window) - once a MyGov account has been created,

-Over the counter - at a Medicare Service Centre OR

-Phone - call AIR on 1800 653 809

Medication

All Prescription medications must be clearly labeled by a health practitioner. For Non Prescription medication a Medication Authority form must be completed by a Medical Practitioner (dentist, pharmacist, nurse practitioners, specialists etc.) which is available in the entrance hall or from a member of staff. All medications are to be left with the staff. Please DO NOT leave medications in your child's bag. If your child is to be given medication, please ensure you fill out the Medication Sheet in your child's room on a day to day basis. All children who have been diagnosed with Asthma, Anaphylaxis or Epilepsy are required to provide an Action Care plan filled out by a Medical Practitioner. Please take the time to discuss your child's health and wellbeing with one of the educators. This will ensure that your child gets the best quality care while attending the service.

Staffing Arrangements

Educator to child ratios and qualification requirements are always maintained. At our service we will seek to use consistent educators to ensure that all children feel comfortable and secure whilst being educated and cared for. Providing effective continuity of care builds positive relationships between families, educators and children.

The Educator to Child Ratios are as follows:

Birth - 2 Years, 1:4

2 Years - 3 Years, 1:5

3 Years - School Age, 1:10

Leadership and Service Management

Our service is overseen by a Governing Council which consists of parents (elected at the Annual General Meeting), the Directors, staff representatives and community representatives. The names of council members are displayed in the foyer. The Annual General Meeting is held in March each year.

Governing Council Meetings are held monthly; the agenda and previous minutes will be accessible for all parents to read following the meetings. All parents and interested members of the community are encouraged to attend meetings.

Fee Policy

Our fee policy is attached to the enrolment form. Please read and retain this policy. If you have any issues or concerns with the fee policy or the payment of fees, please discuss these with the Director or Office Manager.

Fees are requested to be paid weekly/fortnightly. Methods of payment include:

BPoint is available at both services

Cash or cheque can be placed in a clearly named envelope in the fee box.

Centrepay can be organised.

Internet transfer – Our bank details are on each account

We request that you pay your fees weekly or fortnightly, and prefer that you pay over the internet using your individual banking programs/app's and use the **child's surname as a reference**. Thank you, this helps us keep our banking fees down.

Noarlunga Community Children's Centre

BSB # 065-156

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