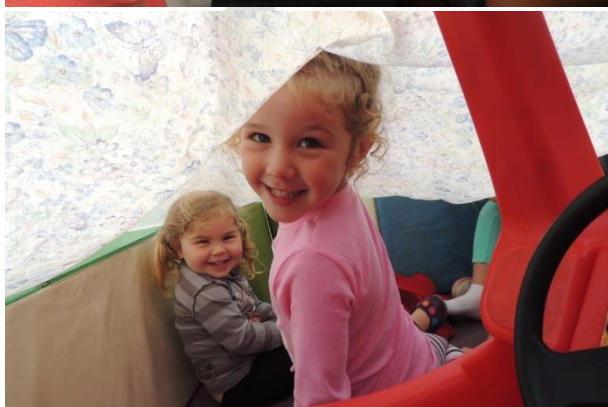


# PARENT HANDBOOK

Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre  
*Early Childhood Education*

ABN 57 130 477 235



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## Welcome to Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre

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Welcome to Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre. We are happy that you have chosen Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre to share these important years of your child's life with us. This Parent Handbook outlines issues you will need to be aware of.

We hope that this handbook will help introduce you to our centre and answer many of your questions. Please read this handbook carefully and keep it in a convenient place for future reference.

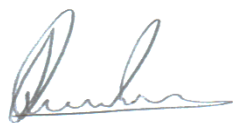
At Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre our aim is to provide a secure and happy environment where children can develop in all areas to become competent and confident individuals and for you as a parent/guardian, to feel safe in the knowledge that your child is receiving first class quality care and education. We pride ourselves on being a family friendly centre. We offer full educational programs for children between 0-5 years of age, based on your child's interest and needs.

We understand that leaving your child in the care of others is often a very difficult decision. Please remember that we are here as partners in raising your child. We will care for and support them, and keep them safe while you are away.

We enjoy having parents visit as often as their schedules permit, so please come and share your joys, suggestions or concerns with us. Our Service has an open door policy. You and your family are welcome to visit the Service at any time.

Our warm, caring and professional educators maintain a positive and stimulating atmosphere where your child is cared for and respected. Your child is very special, and it is our goal to attend to all your child's needs in their formative years.

Kind Regards,



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Christian Stumpfs  
Director/Manager  
P. (02) 4455 2894

## Introduction

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### Our Philosophy

#### Belonging, Being and Becoming

- 'Belonging' is about knowing who you are and where you 'belong'. Having a secure sense of belonging is the basis for living a fulfilling life. *Children feel that they 'belong' because of the relationships they have with their family, community, culture and place.*
- 'Being' is about enjoying the present and being accepted for who you are and supported to meet challenges. *Children need time to just 'be' - time to play, try new things and have fun.*
- 'Becoming' is about how children change and grow and learn to participate fully and actively in society. *Children start to form their identity from an early age, which shapes the type of adult they will become.*

#### In Relation To Children

- We strive to provide the highest quality care and education for our children.
- We see each child as competent and able with a unique range of abilities, knowledge, values, dispositions and experiences, and most importantly, connected to adults and other children.
- We believe that the provision of a service should be based on the child and should focus on the individual needs, abilities, interests and learning styles of each child in our care.

#### In Relation To Families

- We aim to develop respectful; trusting relationships with children and their families is the core of our practice.
- We strive to work closely with families, fostering their sense of belonging, to see themselves as significant partners in all aspects of our service.
- We know that the development of respectful, supportive relationships with parents and families achieve the best outcomes for children.



### In Relation To Educators

- We aim to facilitate, extend, scaffold and encourage the myriad of skills, dispositions, attitudes and concepts developed through play.
- We ensure that our older children are challenged and their learning is extended appropriately
- We ensure that we respect, value and appreciate each educator.

### In Relation To the Community

- We aim to reflect each family's culture within our programme, in a respectful and positive way and to find ways to celebrate these cultures. We also aim to include aspects of Aboriginal culture and practice in our programme, in a respectful and non tokenistic way. We will also do this by consulting with our own aboriginal families and local community.
- We believe that as young children learn to live in communities where everyone is respected and valued, they are learning skills for living, based on principles of equity and social justice. We strive to provide experiences that promote an appreciation of the diversity within our society.

### In Relation to our Curriculum

Our curriculum is guided by the key principles and practices of the Early Years Learning Framework. Belonging, Being, Becoming. These are:

#### Principles

- Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships
- Partnerships with families
- High expectations and equity for children, families and educators
- Respect for diversity
- Ongoing learning and reflective practice

#### Practices

- Holistic approaches – recognising that children's learning is integrated and interconnected
- Responsiveness to children
- Learning through play
- Intentioned teaching
- Learning environments – where educators create a safe, nurturing, creative environment designed for active learning
- A place of high expectations that engages and challenges the minds and bodies of all children.

### Curriculum aims

- To provide an environment where children are able to live out their childhood at their own pace and time. EYLF – ‘Being’ Outcome 1 – Sense of identity
  - To foster relationships with the child and his/her family based on mutual trust and respect. EYLF Principles – Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships and partnerships.
  - To recognise and encourage the child’s growing independence, sense of self and developing self esteem by fostering a trusting and secure relationship where the child known and trusts that his/her emotional and physical needs will be met.
  - For educators to respond sensitively to children’s communications and interactions, both physical and verbal.
  - For educators to spend time with each child in the recognition that all children need warm, consistent relationships if they are to have the confidence to explore and learn. EYLF – Outcome 1 – Children have a strong sense of identity. Outcome 3 – Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.
  - To provide continual opportunity for growth and development, and will ensure that staff are provided with experiences, further study and support in which they can do this.
  - To promote free play as the main, but not only, form of learning and to do this by providing a rich learning environment allowing for child choice and interactions.
  - To support the child’s problem solving skills by careful observations, knowing when to step in or to observe.
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- To support the child’s problem solving skills by careful observation, knowing when to step in or to observe.
  - To include developmentally appropriate small and large group projects and interest based activities and experiences that strengthen children’s dispositions to observe, experiment and explore their environment.
  - To create a place where the child feels free and safe to imagine, explore, create, laugh and cry.
  - To engage in sustained shared conversations with children to extend their thinking and to engage in collaborative learning.

EYLF- Outcome 1 – Children have a strong sense of identity. 3 – Children have strong sense of wellbeing.

## General Information

Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre is a private, family owned, 40 place Long Day Care service. The Pre School is licensed and registered with the Government's Department of Education and Communities (DEC) and is working within the requirements of the National Quality Framework (NQF) and National Quality Standards (NQS). Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre is also guided by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). ACECQA oversee how the National Quality Standard is applied across the country and ensure that services are meeting the new requirements.

The Aim of the Pre School is to provide a quality service that meets the needs of the families in our community. It is in our best interest to work in collaboration with parents in the care and education of their children at the most important stage of their development – the early years.

## Hours of Operation

Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre is licensed to be in operation from 7.30 am to 6.00 pm, 51 weeks per year. We ask you as parents to respect your child's emotional development by being on time each afternoon. If you are running late, please phone the Centre so our Educators can prepare and save your child any unnecessary emotional strain.

We remind parents that we are only allowed by N.S.W legislation to operate within licensed hours. The Centre closes at 6.00 pm each evening. We suggest family members arrive at least 10 minutes earlier that 6.00 pm. This allows time to collect your child and to have a chat with our educators.





## Education, Curriculum and Learning

We will be following the Early Years Learning Framework (as per our Education, Curriculum and Learning Policy). All Educators at our Service 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 programs for each group of children. The Educators will develop a daily program, observe the children in their care and plan their programs around the needs and interests of the children in child free time.

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) describes the principles, practice and outcomes essential to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school.

The Framework has a strong emphasis on play-based learning, as play is the best vehicle for young children's learning providing the most appropriate stimulus for brain development. The Framework also recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development.

The outcomes are:

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.

Children have a voice in their own learning and development.

Also, as part of the children learning about the environment and the world around them, our centre has gone **Green**, the children will not only learn about this topic but will implement it on a daily basis e.g. recycling paper by placing it in a special bin for recyclable items only. If you would like any further information about EYLF there are some EYLF parent and family guides available in the centre or you can look up and download an information guide off the Internet.

Here is a helpful link:

[http://www.deewr.gov.au/earlychildhood/policy\\_agenda/quality/pages/earlyyearslearningframework.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/earlychildhood/policy_agenda/quality/pages/earlyyearslearningframework.aspx)

## **The Daily Routine**

Although the routines of each room and age group will vary, the same aspects are contained in each. We endeavour to provide a home and family environment at the Service where the children feel comfortable and secure at all times and our daily routines reflect this.

## **School Readiness**

There are many attitudes, dispositions, skills that make up 'school readiness'. These are learnt from birth and continue to develop throughout the child's life. Among these are:

- Confidence
- Curiosity
- Self control
- Co-operativeness
- Resilience
- Fairness
- Communicability
- An active approach to learning
- The ability to develop and sustain positive relationships
- The ability to listen and follow instructions

We help children develop these skills and dispositions within our programme by:  
Implementing the National Years Learning Framework – supporting the children to work towards reaching the five Learning Outcomes.

Also by:

- Developing positive, respectful relationships
- Motivation through genuine encouragement
- Providing opportunities and support for children to engage in meaningful learning relationships
- Providing opportunities for children to explore interests in depth through individual group and project work, both spontaneously and planned
- Genuine choice from a range of activities and experience
- Opportunities to collaborate with adults and peers
- Promoting free play as the main, but not only form of learning and to do this by providing a rich and challenging learning environment, allowing for child choice and interest.

The most important factors associated with a successful start and continued learning in school is related to the child's social and emotional maturity.

## **Child Care Benefit (CCB)**

Upon enrolment of your child, parents are responsible for contacting the Family Assistance Office (Phone No. 136 150) to be issued with a Centrelink Reference Number (CRN) for both you and your child. You will then need to provide these numbers to Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre (there is a space for these on your enrolment form if you already have the numbers). When applying for CCB, you will need to provide the Family Assistance Office with the name of the Pre School. This is a means tested benefit and will be based on your family income. Once you have applied for CCB, a letter will be sent to you that will state the percentage of Child Care Benefit that you are eligible for. Please note:

- The Child Care Benefit will only be available to families from the date stamped on the application by the Family Assistance Office. The full fee is payable for any period where a Child Care Benefit assessment has not been received by the Centre, or where the assessment is no longer current.
- The parent is obliged to contact the Family Assistance Office if there is any change to his or her circumstances that may have bearing on the amount of fees to be paid and their eligibility for any subsidy.
- Child Care Benefit Information is confidential and seen by the Directors and Administration staff only. CCB is based on a Government approved hourly fee, not on our Centre's fees. Therefore, it can be complicated to work out what your reduced fee will be. 100% Childcare Benefit does not mean you do not pay at all. When the Centre receives your notification of your percentage, we will work out your reduced fee using our child care management software and let you know what your weekly fee will be.

## **Child Care Rebate (CCR)**

Child Care Rebate is a non-means tested payment Federal Government initiative to assist working families with the cost of childcare. Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre is an approved child care service for this rebate, therefore parents can claim CCR for care used in long day care if they are working. Your care usage will be reported weekly to the Family Assistance Office. The rebate is 50% of your fees, up to \$7,500 per year. Parents who also receive CCB have a responsibility to report changes to the Family Assistance Office. It is the parent's responsibility to provide the pre school with CRN numbers to receive CCR. In order to receive all benefits and rebates you must sign and initial attendance records daily to show when your child starts are ('time in') and finishes care ('time out').

## Our Policies

All our policies are available in the policy folder located in the front foyer. Please feel free to look and comment on our policies at any time. The following is a list of guidelines and procedures at Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre. Should you wish to read any of these, a copy is available in the policy folder located in the front foyer.

- Learning Environments
- Positively Promoting Each Child's Ability
- Professional Support Services for Children
- Professional Development for Educators
- Emergency Administration of Medication
- Emergency Involving Anaphylaxis or Asthma
- Child Protection Policy
- Continuity of Education and Care Policy
- Management Interactions and Responsibilities
- Professional Development Requirements
- Grievance Guidelines
- Education, Curriculum and Learning Policy
- Emergency and Evacuation Procedures and Drills
- Environmental Sustainability Policy
- Environmental Sustainability and our Curriculum
- Partnerships with Families
- Enrolment Policy
- Priority of Access Guidelines
- Epilepsy Policy
- Excursion Policy
- Family Law and Access Policy
- Fees Policy
- Food, Nutrition and Beverage Policy
- Promoting healthy living and good nutrition
- Breastfeeding, Breast Milk and Bottle Warming
- Safe Storage and Heating of Babies Bottles
- Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy
- Hygienic Nappy Change Procedure
- Hygienic Toileting Procedure
- Dental Hygiene and Care
- Food Preparation and Food Hygiene
- Food Safety, Temperature Control and Transport Procedure
- Immunisation and Disease Prevention Policy
- Exclusion Periods
- Administration of First Aid
- Medical Conditions Policy
- National Quality Framework Policy
- Orientation for Children Policy
- Transition from one room to another
- Parent Communication
- Parent Grievances
- Parental and Family Involvement
- Photography Policy
- Physical Activity Promotion Policy
- Physical Environment (Workplace Safety, Learning and Administration) Policy
- Cleaning of Buildings, Premises, Furniture and Equipment
- Minimising Potentially Dangerous Substances
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Record Keeping and Retention Policy
- Relationships with Children Policy
- Interactions with Children
- Behaviour Guidance
- Bullying
- Biting
- Sleep, Rest, Relaxation and Clothing
- Social Networking Usage Policy
- Staffing Arrangements Policy
- Technology Usage Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy

## **Grievances, Complaints and Feedback**

If for any reason you are not happy with the Service's level of care or care environment we want to know immediately. You can discuss this with educators or formally write a letter. When any matter is raised the Service will be following our Grievance Procedure Policy. All Service policies are made available to parents. Positive feedback is most welcome too.





### Settling Your Child In

The introduction into long day care 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 family's needs will vary greatly in the orientation process and individual needs will be met as best is possible.

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

- 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.
- Provide a blanket or comforter to support your child when they are separating from you or settling to sleep. This can help your child feel more secure.
- 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.
- Interactions between Educators and parents or Educators and other children can be reassuring. This experience can help to establish trust in an unfamiliar setting.
- Try to talk at home about child care. 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.
- Talk to the Educators about your child, for example, what they like to do; successful ways of settling them to sleep; 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 you say goodbye and then leave. Hesitating and not going after you have said your goodbyes, if a child is upset, only confuses them. 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.

## **What to Bring**

- Please remember to bring your child's immunisation record on enrolment.
- Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre provides lunch, morning, afternoon tea and snacks. We do however ask that children bring a piece of fruit per day (for the fruit basket) which can be cut up and shared with other children.
- Children may bring comforters if needed such as teddy bears or soft toys as they are important for settling the child if upset or for sleep. Toy guns, swords and other 'weapons' are not encouraged in the Centre as they tend to promote aggressive play.
- Make sure you provide a full change of clothes appropriate to the season that allow them to feel comfortable and move freely. Casual clothing is strongly recommended. Your child should be dressed for play; children do get dirty when they are actively involved in play. Keeping them happy is much more important to us than keeping them spotless. Proper footwear is important for the safety of your child. Footwear with non-slip soles is safest for activities.
- The Centre provides sunscreen and SunSmart Hats for the children. Hats must remain at the Centre to ensure that children have sun protection all the time while at Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre.

## **Food and Meals**

Children will be provided with morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea in a family-style environment for a relaxed social experience. Our Educators will encourage children to utilise self-help skills to gain independence. Educators will model correct mealtime manners and habits for the children. The children will be served a portion of all the foods being offered. Children will never be required to eat foods that they are not comfortable eating. Food is never used as a reward or punishment.

Children with specific food allergies must have a doctor's written note with recommendations on file. Educators will provide substitutes if the menu cannot be used. Parents are strongly requested not to send in any lollies, chocolate, potato crisps or 'junk food' in general. At Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre we offer fresh and nutritious food everyday.

## **Birthdays**

The centre provides a special birthday cake for each child.

## **Separation Anxiety**

Separation anxiety is when a child gets upset when separated from a parent or loved carer. Separation anxiety is normal during early childhood. It usually starts at about six to eight months of age and lasts until about two and a half to five years of age.

Remember, separation anxiety is a normal stage of development. You won't be able to head off every leg-cling or tearful goodbye, but you can help prepare your child to strengthen confidence and security about your return.

Parents are encouraged to give the child the opportunity to gradually get used to the idea of childcare. Perhaps come into the centre before your child's first day for a short visit. This will allow your child to get used to the Educators and new surroundings.

On your child's first day, prepare to stay for approximately 10-15 minutes. This will give Educators time to engage your child in play prior to you leaving. Depending on how your child reacts to their first day, Educators may recommend a period of shorter days to assist your child in the transition.

Always say goodbye, even if you have to go while your child is upset. Resist the urge to sneak out the door. Always make sure your child knows what you are doing. This builds trust. Be reliable and always come back when you say you will. If for some reason you can't get back on time, please phone the centre and let the educator know, so that we will be able to tell your child what has happened.

If you are having difficulty separating from your child, please let one of our staff know so that they can quickly comfort your child and allow you to go. If your child is quite distressed during your routine and will not be comforted, it is generally better not to stay too long. Children generally settle in the first few minutes after parents leave and staying only prolongs the period that your child is distressed. Allow our educator to guide you. Educator saying "Give Dad a kiss and a cuddle" or "It's time for Mum to go to work now" is giving you a clue that now is probably a good time to go.

If you are ever worried during the day please feel free to ring us at anytime. The settling in process can sometimes be just as upsetting for the parent and a phone call may just ease your mind. Likewise, if we feel your child is not coping with their day we will ring you. The direct line is 02 4455 2894.

## **Guidance and Discipline**

Educators use the Relationship/Interactions with Children policy in conjunction with our Guidance Policy.

## **Rest and Sleep**

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

## **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 their play period and should be unimpaired by clothing. While paints, etc will come out in the wash, accidents do happen so it is best to send the children along in their "less than good clothes". Young children enjoy and need "messy" play with paint, clay, sand, water and mud.

The Service will only have a limited supply of spare clothing. Please supply at least one change of clothing and underclothing in case of accidents.

**Please mark your child's clothing and replace name tags if they fade in the wash. Ensure clothing is weather appropriate.**

Please ensure that toddlers have about three complete changes of clothing and plenty of training pants.

## **Clothing safety**

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

## **Belongings**

Please ensure all belongings are clearly labelled such as dummies, clothes etc. Lost property will be displayed for parent collection in your child's room. Parent co-operation in labelling assists the Service in keeping your child's belongings together.

## **Possessions**

A soft toy or security item is acceptable for rest time. It is appreciated if personal possessions are not brought to the Service e.g. guns, toys etc. Any possessions brought must come entirely at the parent's own risk with regards to breakage or loss.

## **Lockers**

Each child is allocated a locker. Please place bags etc. in your child's locker. If your child attends less than five days per week, they will share their locker with another child.

## **Child Protection**

Each staff member at Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre is a mandatory child protection reporter. This means that all staff are required by law to report any suspicions of child abuse to the Department of Community services. For further information please see the Child Protection Guidelines or speak to the Manager.





## Parents

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### Communication

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

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**You are given lots of information about what is happening and you are asked for your views**

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#### **What is the best way to communicate with you?**

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

#### **Confidentially 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 us. This can happen face to face or by phone.

#### **Ways we will be communicating the events of the Service by:**

- Face to face verbal interactions at arrival and departure times.
- Regular newsletters which will be sent home via the children's individual pockets once a month.
- A message section on the day book, where brief notes can be left between Educators and parent and a parents spot book in the foyer.
- A notice board where various messages and notices are displayed advertising current issues and upcoming events.
- A fees/communication box is located in the Service. Parents are able to leave more detailed written messages, for the purpose of expressing concerns, positive or evaluative input that they feel they need to let Educators know about. These can be anonymous if so desired.
- Occasionally Educators will ask parents to complete short surveys in order to maintain up to date records and seek parent feedback on various topics.
- Each family will be allocated an individual 'pocket' in which newsletters, accounts and other written communication will be placed. ***It is the parent's responsibility to read these notices and ensure they are aware of current issues and events in the Service.***
- Policies will be regularly reviewed in a variety of ways (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 make efforts to communicate effectively with families.

- Educators will inform families promptly and sensitively of any out of the ordinary incidents affecting their child.
- Educators will share with children's families some of the specific interactions they had with the children during the day.
- Information on children's eating and sleeping patterns at the Service will be provided to families through verbal communication and through the room sign in sheet.
- When families and Educators make a joint decision that affect children's progress, interest and experience, a record will be kept in the appropriate form.

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

### **Priority of Access**

Please refer to our Enrolment Policy for more information about the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations' (DEEWR) requirements for Priority of Access.

### **Enrolment and Waiting List**

When you enroll your child there will be some necessary paperwork to be filled out. Examples of these are: enrolment form, medical forms, child information forms, excursions permission forms, etc. We will make all this paperwork available to you and help you with any questions. All paperwork should be completed promptly and returned to us. We will also hand out a copy of this handbook upon. After you have had a chance to read through these materials we will meet with you to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

Children are enrolled at Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre strictly in line with our Enrolment Policy. If you are interested in adding a sibling's name to our waiting list (and have not already done so) please do so as soon as possible. We have an extensive waiting list and demand for places is increasing. If you are pregnant or if your baby is very young, it is not too soon to put them on the waiting list.

### **Arrival & Departure**

For safety and security reasons ALL children must be signed in on arrival, and signed out on departure. The times must be noted. 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 Manager.

## Parent Involvement

This is vital to ensure maintenance of a quality service. Your contribution of ideas, experiences and skills are welcomed and greatly valued. You may be able to share your skills and experiences in Music, Craft, Cooking and Storytelling etc. to enhance your child's program at the Service. Please complete your availability or what you can offer the Service on the enrolment form.

Parents are welcome to visit or call the Service at any time. If you have any talents or hobbies, we welcome and encourage to please share them with the children.

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

## Commencement Fees

A fee of \$50.00 is payable on enrolment. This fee ensures commitment on behalf of the parent and the Centre to secure a place for your child and covers the cost of your child's sun hat, sun lotion, bed linen, and correspondence throughout the year.

## Portfolios and Newsletters

A portfolio of each child's progress: their learning journey, is completed for your child each year. The portfolios will be available to be taken home at the end of the year. However, these are available for you to view at any time (simply ask our educators).

The Centre's newsletter is distributed regularly. This will contain important information about the Centre events, policy issues and education articles.

## Attendance and Absence

Once a child is enrolled at the Service, payment of fees must be continued during the child's absence for illness, **public holidays**, holidays, etc. Children will be allowed to have up to 42 days absent for any reason per financial year. No proof of absence is needed for these days. Additional days absent may be approved for specific reasons only. When a child is absent for any reason we must be notified. The Service is open for fifty weeks per year; the only period during which we are closed is Public Holidays. Dates will be advised.

## **Service Fees**

For more information about fees please call the Centre.

It is Service's policy that all accounts are to be at a nil balance each week.

### **Late Fees**

The service director has the authority to terminate an enrolment at the Centre when fees remain outstanding for two or more weeks and no agreement to pay is in place. Placements may also be terminated where an enrolled child is absent from the service for two weeks or more without prior written notice given. Continual or habitual lateness in payment of fees can jeopardise the child's place at the Service.

### **Notice of Withdrawal**

Should notification be withheld until the last day, 2 weeks payment must be made in lieu of notice.

For more information please refer to our Fees Policy

### **Change of Details**

Please let the Centre know as soon as possible if any details such as address, phone numbers, allergies and collection authorities, etc. have changed. These will need to be adjusted on the child's enrolment form and are vital in case of emergency situations. For continuing children each year we ask that you fill out new permission forms which will be given to you at the beginning of the school year.

## Health & Safety

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The Service provides a healthy and safe environment for children, Educators and families to grow and develop in – as such the Service has a health and safety and hygiene policy regarding illnesses and medications. Children with contagious illnesses are required to be kept at home and a doctor's certificate must be presented to show that the infection cannot be passed when the child returns to the Service.

### Food Allergies

We are an allergy aware Service.

Please inform the Manager if your child has any allergy.

### Exclusion due to Illness

**A child will not be able to attend the Service for any period of time during which:**

- Directors follow the NSW 'Staying Healthy in Childcare' documentation. Please see office copy
- The child is suffering from a disease or condition that is contagious through normal social contact.
- A medical practitioner has recommended the child not attend childcare.
- When the Manager of the Service requests that the sick child be kept away from the Centre because the child requires care that the Service cannot fulfil.
- Where a child requires four hourly paracetamol.
- If a child has been unwell prior to arriving at the Service.
- During the first 24 hours of receiving antibiotics.
- If a child has been hospitalised in the last 48 hours.

Please use your own judgement. Your child may not be contagious but if generally feeling unwell may need to stay at home for rest and some extra cuddles. Children who have had a contagious illness or an unspecified rash must produce a doctor's certificate stating the details of the illness that they are no longer contagious and are fit to return to the Centre. We require written proof that the child is immunised appropriately for his/her age prior to commencement at the Centre. A child who has not been immunised may be excluded from the Centre if a condition usually prevented by immunisation occurs at the Centre. This is a Department of Health requirement.



## **Medication**

Educators will be able to administer medication to children who are recovering from illness.

A medication form must be completed and signed by parents before any medication will be given. All prescription medication must be prescribed for your child and not another family member- unless stated otherwise by a doctor's certificate. Medication must be in date and in its original packaging.

The medication must be handed to an Educator to store in a locked container in fridge. Please do not leave medication in your child's bag.

The Educator who gives medication requires a medication form to be completed by the parent, e.g. tablets, mixture, creams.

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

Parents must indicate on the enrolment form if they give authorisation for the child to receive paracetamol in an emergency.

## **Asthma Action Plan**

The Service aims to provide a safe environment for children who have asthma. It is Service policy that an "Asthma Record Plan" be completed by parents/guardians in consultation with the family doctor. It is also a requirement that the record plan be reviewed by your family doctor annually or as circumstances change. This must be completed and returned before enrolment commences. These will be available at the time of enrolment.

## **Sun Protection**

Please refer to our sun protection policy. This policy will be enforced. The centre will provide a hat to wear during outside activities. These will be named. 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.

## **Accidents**

In case of an accident or illness occurring at the Service, the Manager or educator will contact parents if deemed necessary. As a matter of extreme importance parents must ensure that the Service has up to date emergency contact numbers. An incident report will be filled out, outlining the accident and signed by the Educators who observed and administered first aid, as well as any witnesses.

## **Emergency Drills**

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

## **Using the Service Safely**

Never leave children unattended in cars while collecting children from the Service.

Cars parks are dangerous places for children, always hold children's hands when arriving and leaving the Service

Never leave a door or gate open.

Never leave your children unattended in a room.

Children are not permitted into the kitchen and laundry areas, unless accompanied by an educator.

## **Educators**

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At Myrtle Street Early Learning Centre we recognise that our educators are paramount in the provision of high quality care and education for all children. Our educators have knowledge, training and experience in Early Childhood Education and Care. The educators work as a team and are committed to making your child's day happy, safe and educationally stimulating.

Suitable qualified educators are employed in all age groups and the child-educators ratios are adhered according to our legal requirements. All educators will have their Senior First Aid Certificates, Working with Children Checks completed and attend monthly educators meetings. Our educators are regularly involved and encouraged to attend further development and training.

## **Conclusion**

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

## Handbook Form

Please read this handbook carefully so you fully understand the commitment that you are undertaking and your responsibilities to the Centre.

*When you have done so please sign and return this page to the Director before your child commences care indicating that you have read the Handbook and are aware of your commitments and responsibilities.*

1. Child's Full Name

2. Child's Full Name   
(if applicable)

1. Parent Full Name

2. Parent Full Name   
(if applicable)

*I/we have read and agree to comply with the statement and requirements and set out in this handbook and in the Centre's policies.*

1. Parent Signature  Date

2. Parent Signature  Date

### ***Please Remember***

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

We welcome your feedback and view **“Feedback As A Gift”**

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO OFFICE

## Parent Input Individual Program

Here is the opportunity for you to offer us input into your child's individual program. Your input is important to us, and your child's program, because children often display differing behaviours, skills, and interests between home and Child Care. Your input provides us with more pieces of the puzzle in relation to getting to know your child and therefore planning appropriate experiences for them, which they will learn from and enjoy.

1. What do you feel are your child's current needs? E.g. toilet training, development of social skills, expansion of vocabulary?
3. How can we foster these interests at the Service?

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How can we assist your child in these areas?

What do you feel are your child's strengths at this point in time?

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2. What are your child's current interests?
4. How can we provide further development of your child's strengths at the Service?

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