



Parent Handbook



6 Huxtable Street, Mount Waverley

Telephone: 03 9802 7453

mail: Info1@Syndalchildcare.com

Introduction

I would like to extend a warm welcome to you and your family from all the educators and staff at Syndal Child Care and Early Learning Centre. We understand just how difficult it can be choosing the right service for your child. To make it work for you and your family a strong connection between our team and you are crucial. We have a fundamental belief that for us to care for and provide educational experiences of the very highest standard, we must work closely with you. We will endeavor to ensure that both you and your child have an enjoyable and rewarding time with us.

Our Parent Handbook explains imperative information you will need to be responsive of whilst your child attends our service. We strongly recommend you read the provided information and ask questions to confirm your understanding of how our service operates. You will be required to sign and return the form on the last page of the handbook to confirm you have read and understand the information provided.

Opening hours

Syndal Childcare and ELC operates Monday to Friday from 7.00am-6.00pm. We open 51 weeks of the year, closing for one weeks over the Christmas period. Dates for closure are advised well in advance to allow parents to plan.

We belief that in order to care for and provide educational experiences of the very highest standard, we must work closely with you. We want your family to be part of the Syndal CC &ELC family. The service has been running for over 20 years and many generations of children have passed through our doors. This partnership means working together, so your input and feedback are essential if the quality of care and education for your child is to be at the highest standard.

Once again welcome. We know and appreciate what an extraordinary gift of trust you have made, by allowing us to care for your child. We hope that your time with us will be a long and happy one.

Service philosophy

Our goal is to provide a respectful, comfortable, healthy, and safe environment for children to create a strong sense of belonging and wellbeing for them in Syndal childcare and early learning Centre. We believe developing a strong collaboration and partnership with parents will foster children's development and learning and will meet our diverse community needs.

About children, we believe learning during the early years is important and we embrace the image of the child as a capable, confident, creative, and active learner, so we are committed to:

- Providing a program for children based on their interests, strengths, culture, individual needs, and knowledge to extend their learning. The National Early Years Learning Framework and Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework guide our practice and principles.
- Providing opportunities for Children to explore, discover, create, and imagine through a rich play-based, Child -initiated, fun and intentional teaching environment and promoting creative thinking and problem-solving abilities.
- Providing a safe, secure, and nurturing environment and Ensuring experiments are open-ended for each child in our care with the best possible opportunities to grow, develop and reach their fullest individual talent potential and best outcome to children and promote resilience, and self-belief.
- Celebrate the benefits of diversity with each child and enable the child to understand and acknowledge differences and learn about themselves and their diverse world and promote integrity, empathy, and honesty.
- Providing environments supportive of an ongoing culture of sustainability.

About families, we acknowledge and appreciate the uniqueness of each family and respect culture, costume, language, and beliefs, so we feel it is our duty to:

- Support each family in their role of nurturing the child and promoting a healthy lifestyle.
- Providing an opportunity for discussion on the children's EYLF Planning Cycle (Plan, implement, reflect, Observe, Analyze) to fully understand each child and consequently achieve a holistic learning approach.

- Providing an opportunity to understand family's ideas, culture, and interests to respect the diverse cultural background and achieve an inclusive education approach.

Our educators are respected and valued for their strengths and abilities. All the educators contribute effectively to children's EYLF Planning Cycle. Respectful, trustful, and supportive communication and collaboration are important for our teaching team. Management will support the training of new teaching skills and strategies for all educators to improve our service quality.

We provide high-quality early learning for children from the ages of 6 weeks to school age and we believe the philosophy statement is a dynamic document. We always receive all suggestions from families and educators to improve our current practices.

Orientation

We are aware that the introduction of a new environment can be a little difficult experience for a child to adapt to. To support you in this transition we will arrange orientation days prior to your child beginning care.

Orientation is an important start for both you and your child to connect to our service. We encourage each child to attend orientation sessions in the company of a family member before they start their official day with us. This gives you and your child the opportunity to gain an understanding of our program, the lay out of the room, where to find things, provide Educators with additional information about your child and how we can best support the transition and settling period.

If your child is reluctant to attend, please discuss this with your Room Leader so that they can develop strategies with you to support the transition from home to the service.

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

Building relationships

Building strong relationships with you, your child and your family is very important to us and makes a real difference to the early learning outcomes for your child. We want to ensure our service becomes an extension of your home life and that the relationships, culture, routines, interests, likes, dislikes and any special needs that are important to your child are recognised. This creates an environment where children feel safe, secure and ready to learn. Working together, engaging in your child's interests and learning and discovering with them is the best way to ensure a high quality education for your child. It also helps to build the foundations for their success not only in the service but throughout their school years.

Please take the time to share information about your child with their educators regularly.

The importance of early learning

Each day, our team provides interactive learning experiences for children to engage and explore concepts of literacy and numeracy, consistently using your child's interests. A holistic approach to your child's development is prioritized through our focus on social and emotional well-being. Concepts such as confidence, resilience, getting along and self-care are embedded throughout the day and explored in small and large groups, as well as during spontaneous conversations with educators.

Information about the daily program, observations and stories about your child and their involvement in learning projects will all be available to you in real time via Storypark. You will be provided with log in details to enable you to access the system. This allows you to keep connected to your child's learning journey and share in their wonder and joy as they explore and discover. We encourage you to read the documents as your input/feedback is greatly valued.

Fees

Our full fee is \$138 per day, before Child Care Subsidy (CCS) has been applied. Fees are to be paid by Direct Debit from your nominated bank account.

Prior to your child's commencement, two weeks full fees are required as a deposit. Fees must always be paid two weeks in advance (the direct debit system will automatically take the current week, plus two further weeks), currently this is taken every second week on a Tuesday. A dishonor fee will apply if you do not have

enough funds in your account (this fee is collected by debit success through the Direct Debit system, not by Syndal CC & ELC). Continual dishonoring of payments or habitual lateness in fees may result in suspension of care for your child. Fees are charged to you on every day your child is booked to attend the service. This applies whether your child is in attendance or not as the service's costs remain the same. Fees are charged for all statutory public holidays and absent days (including family holidays or chosen days away).

Please Note: If you choose to take holidays, your fees are still payable during this time. If you choose to leave the service with a view to return at a later date, please be advised we do not "hold bookings" and we cannot guarantee your child's place will still be available when you return. As a small, well respected service with quality staff our places fill up quickly and it is doubtful that that booking will still be available.

We are sure that you understand that as costs for operating our service increases, so must our fees from time to time. We endeavor at all times to keep fees as low as we can, without jeopardizing the quality of the program and educators that we offer for your child. We will provide prior warning if any changes to fees are about to occur.

Late fee

Please be aware our service closes at 6:00pm. In accordance with National Regulations and licensing, we are not permitted to have children in the service after 6:00pm. A late fee of \$3 per minute per child will be added to your next account. The late fee is strictly adhered to, as two staff members are required to remain at the program until all children are collected.

If we are unable to contact either the parent or a person nominated by the parent on the enrolment form to arrange collection of the child/children within thirty minutes of the service closing, then we will contact the Child Protection and Crisis Centre 24 hour service and the Police to take responsibility of your child.

Childcare subsidy (CCS)

Families are required to complete the online child Care Subsidy assessment (CCS) via MyGov website prior to commencing at our service. This will determine your eligibility and level of CCS you are entitled to. CCS can take time and it is recommended that you educate yourself with Center link's processes to avoid any delay with your rebate.

Full fees will be charged until your CCS rebate appears and the service is notified via our Childcare software.

Three things will determine a family's level of Child Care Subsidy:

1. A family's combined income will determine the percentage of subsidy they are eligible to receive.
2. An activity test will determine how many hours of subsidised care families can access, up to a maximum of 100 per fortnight.
3. The type of child care service will determine the hourly rate cap.

Some basic requirements must be satisfied for an individual to be eligible to receive the Child Care Subsidy.

These include:

- The age of the child (must be 13 or under and not attending secondary school).
- The child meeting immunisation requirements.
- The individual, or their partner, meeting the residency requirements.

In two parent families both parents, unless exempt, must meet the activity test. In the case where both parents meet different steps of the activity test, the parent with the lowest entitlement will determine the hours of subsidised care for the child.

Low income families on \$66,958 or less a year who do not meet the activity test will be able to access 24 hours of subsidised care per child per fortnight without having to meet the activity test, as part of the Child Care Safety Net.

Step	Hours Of Activity*	Maximum Number of Hours of Subsidy per child
1	8-16 hours	36 hours
2	More than 16 hours to 48 hours	72 hours
3	More than 48 hours	100 hours

*Per fortnight. Source: www.education.gov.au/child-care-subsidy-activity-test

You can read more about the Child Care Subsidy and Activity Test, and can complete an online estimator at www.education.gov.au/ChildCarePackage

You can contact Centrelink by phone on 136 150, in person or by accessing your MyGov account at my.gov.au

Changes to bookings or cancellation of care

For any changes in bookings, changing of days or cancelling of care, a minimum of two weeks' written notice is required in writing. If your child has been absent for a consecutive two-week period and no contact has been made to the service prior or during that time, we will terminate your booking and full fees will be applied (CCS will not pay you a rebate if you do not attend your notice period).

Allowable absences

You can be paid for any absence from approved care your child attends for up to 42 days per child per financial year. Additional absences beyond 42 days for certain reasons may be approved and paid. Please talk to us about the additional absences.

Public holidays will be counted as an absence if the child would normally have attended the service on that week day, and fees have been charged for that day for the child. You can access your child's absence record on your online statement by selecting 'View Child Care Details and Payments' on your Centrelink online account.

Signing in & out

It is a National Law requirement that upon arrival and departure each day, your child/ren must be signed in and out of our service every day they attend. As well as being a government requirement, this is in the interest of your child's safety and security. In the case of an emergency we require our attendance records to be accurate. These records are also used for the calculation of the Child Care Subsidy (CCS).

There is an iPad located at the entrance for you to record arrival and departure times. During orientation, you will be shown how to sign in and out using "QikKids Kiosk" .

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 Director.

Arrivals & departures

At Syndal Childcare and ELC educators work to ensure that arrivals and departures to and from the service are not only safe and secure for the children, but also a valuable means of exchanging information.

In regards to arrival and departure times, we ask that you:

- ensure that you are signing in and out daily using the QK Kiosk
- leave your child in the direct care of an educator
- let educators know that you are taking your child home
- feel welcome to spend time with your child both upon arrival and departure from the service
- notify educators if your child's arrival and departure times are going to vary for that day

In addition to this we wish to draw your attention to the following:

- To ensure the safety of all children, no child will be released into the care of any persons not registered as authorised by the parent/guardian on the enrolment form and on the “QK Kiosk.
- If team members do not know the person collecting your child by appearance, the person must be able to produce some form of photo identification to prove that they are authorised to collect your child.
- Both parents, unless a Magistrates Court or Family Law Court make different orders, have lawful authority of their children, and are consequently permitted access to their child.

Our educators always endeavor to be available and responsive to parents and children's needs at these times. Arrivals and departures, and greetings and farewells, are an important part of the day. Through creating an environment of trust and support, our educators ensure that the transition from home to service, and service to home, is at all times a pleasant and positive experience for you and your child.

Court orders

Parents must notify the service if there are any court orders affecting residency of your child. A copy is required for the service. Without a court order, we cannot stop a parent collecting your child.

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)

At Syndal Childcare and ELC we understand that children from 0 to 6 years are rapidly growing and learning. We know that children of this age learn through play and exploration. Our program is based around The National Early Years Learning Framework.

The EYLF is a view of children's lives, characterised by Belonging, Being and Becoming. From before birth children are connected to family, community, culture and place. Their earliest development and learning takes place through these relationships, particularly within families, who are children's first and most influential educators.

As children participate in everyday life, they develop interests and construct their own identities and understanding of the world. The Framework conveys the highest expectations for all children's learning from birth to six years and through the transition to school.

The EYLF describes childhood as a time of belonging, being and becoming.

- Belonging is the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel they belong because of the relationship they have with their family, community, culture and place.
- Being is about living here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need time to just 'be' - time to play, try new things and have fun.
- Becoming is about the learning and development that young children experience. Children start to form their sense of identity from an early age, which shapes the type of adult they will become

Through the Framework's five learning goals educators will assist your child to develop:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world

- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators

The EYLF 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. We aim to guide your child in becoming an effective learner through creating an environment that is challenging and stimulating. The overall aim of our programs is to help your child in developing all areas necessary for success now and in later years

Educational program

We are committed to providing a developmental and educational program, which caters for each child's individual needs, abilities and interests. Our program will continue to develop as we work in partnership with parents, to ensure each child's knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.

We encourage children to be responsible for their own learning through choices in experiences, interests and routine. We use conversations, actions and play as the basis for teaching and seek out children's ideas, opinions, thoughts and questions. All Educators will promote independence and self-help skills by assisting within routines.

Our Educators apply intentional teaching practices providing the children with an authentic and meaningful learning environment that challenges, supports and nurtures a child's development. We also involve the children in interest based projects to further enhance their learning and knowledge.

Educators will create a range of short and long-term goals for your child that they will incorporate into the program and will observe your child's learning so they can build on, plan, reflect and report on the next learning steps for your child. They will do this by listening, observing and talking to your child. Knowing your child as an individual and building up a relationship with your family is critical for curriculum planning and development. While your child attends our service, our educators will keep written documentation on their learning to assist them too individually and appropriately plan for your child's participation.

Educators value family input and strongly encourage communication between families and educators to ensure continuity in what we are delivering to your child.

Environments & routines

The routines in each room provide a flexible and developmentally appropriate framework for daily activities. The routines incorporate such things as eating, resting and toileting, individual play as well as small and large group play and learning activities.

Children's language and literacy skills are further developed during these times as children are involved in storytelling, drama and games. Music also plays a large part during these sessions as children are able to experiment with dancing, singing and exercising their bodies.

Spaces are made available for children to engage in rest and quiet experiences. Educators provide a range of active and restful experiences and support children to make appropriate decisions regarding participation. Each room is tailored to suit the age and developmental stage of your child, the diversity of the educators, children, families and the wider community. If appropriate and depending on your child's progress and suitability we may incorporate the child within different rooms at different times, the educators will assess the suitability of the child and make judgements based on their social, emotional and developmental level and their learning requirements. All aspects of children's learning and development is catered for including physical, social, emotional, creative, cognitive and communication skills.

As your child grows and develops their needs, interests and abilities. To cater for this, your child will gradually transition to the next room, where their skills and development can be extended.

Our transitioning procedure includes communication with families and involves a careful assessment of your child to ensure they are ready for the next step. This process also includes visits to the new room to build familiarity and ensure a smooth transition.

Our kindergarten programs

At Syndal Childcare and ELC we offer a funded kindergarten program to all four year and three-year-old children who do not attend another service. To be eligible, your child must turn four before 30th April. The four/ three-year-old kinder program is run by a qualified Early Childhood teacher. There are many benefits in sending your child to a long day care service which delivers a kindergarten program. For children who already attend long day care there is continuity which allows families to remain with their work commitments. Children can continue their journey with their friends when moving to the kindergarten room. Educators are able to work together with families to make a smooth transition for your child into kindergarten within the long day care service. Please talk to our Kindergarten teachers for more information on our kinder program.

Daily communication

We recognise that effective communication is vital in providing care that is personal and individualised. We recognise that when it comes to your child, you are the expert. Our educators rely on you to share with them your intimate knowledge of your child each day, in order to provide care that is consistent with your home environment, and to develop a program that reflects an understanding of your child's changing needs throughout their growth and development.

Our educators in turn welcome the opportunity to share their professional expertise in child development with you, as well as their knowledge and growing understanding of your child. We see both parents and educators as a resource to each other, and therefore, as active partners in the care and education of children. Daily communication between you and your child's educator is an essential element of a quality early childhood program.

If you have any questions or concerns, no matter how small, they are important to us. We invite parents and family members to schedule meeting times with your child's educators to discuss specific details about your child's development. We also welcome and encourage the opportunity to chat informally at any time.

We look forward to many conversations and opportunities for exchanging information, and getting to know you and your child personally during your time at our service.

What to bring

Backpack

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

Clothing

It is helpful to your child if they are dressed in play clothes that wash easily and enables your child to move around easily and encourages independent in dressing. Please consider the following:

Your child will be working with messy materials such as paint, glue, water, and sand so clothing must be able to stand a little wear and tear

- Clothing must provide some protection for both indoor and outdoor experiences such as t-shirts with sleeves (no singlets or mid-drift tops) and be comfortable for both indoor and outdoor experiences
- Children will be climbing, running, hopping, jumping, and swinging so they will need clothes and shoes that neither restrict their activity nor reduce their safety (e.g., slippery shoes, thongs, long skirts/dresses)
- Children will need clothing that is easy to put on and take off by themselves which allows for growing independence i.e., pants that can come off easily for toileting.
- A hat, either a legionnaire or bucket hat is recommended
- A drink bottle
- A comfort toy/blanket if your child has one
- Child's own sunscreen if your child has sensitive skin
- Nappy cream if required
- A minimum of 4 nappies, if they are required by your child

Spare Clothes

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

Please Note: Every item should be clearly labeled with your child's name

Items from home

A soft toy or security item is acceptable for rest time however it is appreciated if personal items/treasures are not brought to the service. Any items brought must come entirely at the parents own risk with regards to breakage or loss.

Rest times

Rest times are an essential part of the day for all of the children in our service. Some of the children use this time to sleep, others to play quietly in a peaceful and relaxing environment. The transition from play to sleep, or from lunch to sleep, is always a smooth one in an environment where children feel secure. The educators spend time helping each of the children to bed whilst encouraging independence in dressing and undressing.

Your child's sleep routine at the service is developed with your help to compliment your home routine. Your child is welcome to bring along any security items, such as a dummy, blanket or special toy.

At our service your child will never be forced to sleep, but encouraged to rest by either reading or playing quietly. Our rooms are always set up with quiet activities for children who do not require a formal sleep or rest time.

Policies & procedures

You will find a copy of our Service policies and procedures in the foyer and office. We expect our staff and families to always adhere to our policies and procedures to ensure we maintain compliance and abide by the National Law and Regulations.

Our policies and procedures are review regularly, we welcome and encourage staff and families to share your views to ensure our policies and procedures continue to adhere to family needs and meet regulation requirements. Your involvement helps us to improve our service. For more information on our policies, please speak to Director.

Immunisation

The introduction of legislation known as, 'No Jab, No Play' requires children to be fully vaccinated before they can commence at early childhood education and care services. Prior to commencement we require approved documentation that indicates the child:

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

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

As part of your enrolment process you will be asked to provide your child's current immunisation statement. You can print your statement using your Medicare online account through myGov. Please provide the service with an up to date immunisation statement each time your child is immunised.

Please Note: In the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease it may be necessary to exclude any children who are not immunised for their health and wellbeing.

When should I not send my child to the service?

Children and educators are actively encouraged to practice good personal hygiene to minimise any instance of illness. We appreciate the enormous difficulties facing working parents when your child becomes ill. As an important step in the control of infection, we ask that if your child is unwell, that the best place for them to be is at home where they can rest and recover faster.

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

- A runny, green nose
- Severe or constant coughing
- Fever or temperature above 37.8 degrees
- Diarrhoea, loose bowel motions
- Red, swollen or discharging eyes
- Vomiting or upset stomach
- Rashes, spots or swelling
- Irritability, unusually tired or lethargic
- Open or weeping sores

If any of the above symptoms are present within the past 24 hours, please do not bring your child into the service and let us know as soon as possible that they will be absent.

If a child becomes ill whilst at the Service, the child's parents or person responsible for the child will be contacted to organise collection of the child. If the child is unable to be collected, educators will contact the child's emergency contact for collection. We are bound by government regulations e.g. staff to children ratios and as such we are unable to provide one on one care for extended periods of time.

Your child should not attend the service if they have had Panadol or Neurofen within 24 hours for a temperature. It is extremely important that staff members are aware if a child has had either medication, so we do not re-administer and potentially overdose.

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

If your child has been away due to illness, please check with the Service as to whether you will need a certificate before your child returns.

Medication

If your child requires medication while in care, a medication authorisation record must be completed and signed by a parent. The medication must be in its original packaging and accompanied by a prescription label which states:-

- Your child's name
- · The name of the medication
- · The dosage and dosage instructions
- The doctor or pharmacists name
- The date of issue
- The expiry date

Medication must be handed to a staff member and will be stored out of reach of children or if required, in the refrigerator in a medication box. Under no circumstances is any type of medication to be left in your child's bags. Please refer to the Medication Policy for further information.

Please note: Paracetamol is not regarded as a first response and can only be administered in emergency situations and with prior written parental consent.

Allergies/Asthma/Anaphylaxis/Diabetes or a specific health care need

If you have listed on your child's Enrolment form that they have an allergy, asthma, anaphylaxis, diabetes or a specific health care need, you will be required to provide a medical management plan for your child. You will also be required to work with the Nominated Supervisor or Room Leader and an educator to develop a risk minimisation and communications plan. You will need to provide a medical management plan prior to your child commencing at Syndal Childcare and ELC. Care will not be allowed until the service has received this plan.

Incident management

Our employees follow recommended health and safety guidelines and procedures in the event of a child-related accident, injury, trauma or illness. Our service always has qualified first aid staff on duty.

Incident/Injury/Trauma and Illness record

Any incidents that occur are recorded in an incident/injury/trauma and illness report and requires a signature from a parent/guardian. If an incident occurs your child's room educator will contact you if they need, to discuss or clarify anything with you. We comply with regulatory requirements that all incidents are communicated to families within 24 hours and all notifiable incidents are reported according to regulations.

If your child requires medical treatment, other than first aid, and we are unable to contact you, we will take any steps necessary to ensure that your child is appropriately cared for. This could include contacting the identified emergency contact for the child, or calling emergency services. It is important that information about your emergency contact and authorised nominee list is up to date at all times.

Doctor service

For your convenience we have a visiting doctor service, Dr Robert Chan who attends our service every Monday if required. Dr Robert has been with the service for the past 20 years. If your child requires an immunisation or an examination, please fill in the doctor form and Medicare slip on the Monday morning you wish Dr Robert to see your child (please ask one of the educators if you need assistance). Any relevant information/scripts etc from Dr Robert will be left with your child's educators to collect.

Sun protection

Children enjoy playing outdoors regardless of weather conditions and it is particularly important that children are protected against over exposure to the sun. The sun does not need to feel hot to cause damage to your skin. Damage is caused by Ultraviolet radiation (UV), which is not related to temperature.

Our Sun Smart Policy has been developed to ensure that all children attending our service are protected from skin damage. We implement this policy throughout the year, with particular emphasis in term 1 (January to April) and Term 4 (October to December).

Because we are “sun safe” we know that you will appreciate our diligence in making sure that children are wearing hats for all outdoor play activities. We request that you provide a legionnaire or bucket hat which protects face, neck and ears and is clearly labeled with your child's name. Clothing should cover the shoulders so please, no dresses with thin straps or singlet tops.

Children who do not have hats with them will be asked to play indoors or in an area that is protected from the sun. Children will be encouraged to use available areas of shade for outdoor play activities. Staff lead by example therefore hats will also be worn by staff outdoors.

SPF 30+ sunscreen is provided to all children throughout the day and will be applied at least 20 minutes before going outside, however if your child is allergic to certain ingredients in sunscreen we suggest you supply your own sunscreen for your child's use. You will be required to complete a Sunscreen Application form, please see one of your child's room educators for assistance.

For more information on our Sun Protection Policy, please ask Director. Literature on sun care is available at www.sunsmart.com.au

Extreme heat

It is the services responsibility to ensure that children and staff are adequately cared for while at the service. From time to time weather conditions outside of normal summer temperatures occur and additional strategies need to be enacted to prevent risk of serious health issues associated with excessive heat. If the temperature reaches 30 degrees or above, the children will play indoors only. All measures will be taken to ensure the children stay comfortable and rehydrated at all times.

Meals & nutrition

We all know how important healthy food is to the wellbeing, growth and development of children. A four week menu is available and is displayed in the foyer. Your child's meals are developed and prepared by our experienced cook who has a Food Handlers Certificate and Food Safety Supervisors Certificate. We offer a variety of fruits and vegetables and encourage children to try different foods. We use feed Australia, a Department of Health initiative as a guide. www.feedaustralia.org.au

Your child is provided with:

- Progressive morning tea-commencing at 9:00am
- Lunch -commencing at 11:15 am (Ducklings)
- Lunch-commencing at 11:45 am (Dolphins, Kinder)
- Progressive afternoon tea - commencing at 2:30pm
- Late snack-4.30 pm (Duckling)
- Late snack - 5:30pm (Dolphins, Kinder)

Families are asked to provide their own breakfast. Please keep in mind our children with allergies when making your breakfast choices. We are a nut free and egg free service. Please consider the health and safety of other children.

Please note: Breakfast will not be provided to children after 8am.

Water and milk will be provided with meals and water is available whenever a child desires throughout the day.

Parents need to make the Director aware in writing if their child/children have a dietary restriction due to food allergies, medical, cultural or religious reasons so that our cook can prepare meals accordingly. Unfortunately, some children can have a highly serious allergy which can be so severe as to be life threatening.

The highest possible hygiene standards will be adhered to by staff responsible for food preparation. Children are asked to wash their hands before and after eating.

Rest

Rest/quiet period and sleeps for all children will be according to their individual needs. Please discuss your children's needs for rest with your child's room leader so that we may follow the home routine as closely as possible. Educators will consider families' preferences about the amount of sleep their child has at the service and will accommodate any requests about their child's sleeping practices where these are not inconsistent with the safe sleeping practices discussed in our policy

Parent involvement

We have an open-door policy and welcome and encourage the involvement of all parents/families at our Service. Your ideas, experiences and skills are greatly valued. There are many ways for your family to be involved, we understand that our busy lives can't always afford the time, however any contribution no matter how big or small is much appreciated. A few ideas include:

Home Culture - You may be able to share aspects of your culture and family life. This could assist us to enrich the lives of all our families and children.

Reading - Children love to be read to. If you have the time please contact your Room Leader to organise a suitable time

Occupation or Hobby - Your occupation or hobby (music, craft, cooking) are wonderful educational resources for our children

Recyclable items

We are always on the lookout for recyclable items for the rooms. Empty food containers/boxes, ribbons, wrapping paper, towel tubes (not toilet or egg cartons because of hygiene and allergy issues) paper or anything interesting from your home/work can always be put to good use.

Suggestions

If you have any suggestions or ideas on how we can improve our Service please let us know.

Birthdays

Your child's birthday is a special event in his/her life. To celebrate your child birthday we will make a special time for all the children to sing happy birthday and recognise how special it is that your child is celebrating growing up. We Bake a healthy cake for children and will ensure that your child has a wonderful time with their friends.

Toilet learning

Staff aim to support, encourage and incorporate all needs and suggestions from parents and children regarding toilet learning. No pressure is placed on the child to use the toilet, however, if a child shows an interest and eagerness we will encourage this. It is important that there is consistency in expectations for successful toilet learning. Staff and parents should discuss the child's progress and any ideas/methods which work. This will help make toileting a positive experience. Please pack extra clothes, under pants and a spare pair of shoes if possible, as they often get wet.

Parents and educators need to be consistent with toilet learning. Please ensure that if your child is toilet learning during the day at the service, that this is also carried on in the home environment.

Emergency evacuation

If the service needs to be evacuated, we aim to conduct this in a rehearsed, timely, calm and safe manner to secure the safety of each person using the service. Emergency evacuation drills are conducted every 3 months and occur at any given time throughout the day. Fire extinguishers are strategically located throughout the service as well as emergency

evacuation plans. The safety and wellbeing of each child, educator and person using the service is paramount above any other consideration in the time of an emergency or evacuation.

Cultural diversity

We recognise that our service is culturally and linguistically diverse and we want to ensure all families experience a sense of belonging. To achieve this we provide opportunities for all children to develop an understanding of different cultures and help foster in each child an awareness and acceptance of these cultures by integrating multiculturalism into our programs.

Student & volunteers

From time to time our service is happy to welcome students and volunteers into it. This time should be a positive learning experience for such people. They are in the service as additional people, and are never included in the staff ratios. All students or volunteers are monitored and supervised by a qualified educator.

Visitors & excursion

We always aim to provide a range of experiences that will support and extend your child's learning. From time to time these will include visits at the service. If such a visit is planned, you will be given prior notice.

Concerns & complaints

We encourage all parents and guardians to discuss any concerns complaints or suggestions that you may have. If you have any concerns we request that you utilise the following process:

In the first instance, we request that you voice your concerns with the Room Leader of the room which cares for your child. If you do not feel that the matter has been satisfactorily resolved, please contact our Director to arrange a discussion of the issues.

We would hope that by following this process, anxieties can be allayed, and procedures changed where necessary and as quickly as possible. If, however you feel that this hasn't been achieved, then you are able to contact the Department of Human Services (the licensing body which oversees childcare regulations in Victoria).

Children Services Advisor

Quality Assessment & Regulation Division

Eastern Metropolitan Area

Phone:1300 651 940

Our door is always open to you and you can approach us about anything no matter how small it may seem to you at the time.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is of paramount importance to us. All of the information provided to us by you, such as addresses, phone numbers, and custody information, is seen and recorded only by the administration and the educators directly responsible for the care of your child. At no time will information be given out without your consent, and any individual meetings that take place between you and our educators will be undertaken with the highest degree of professionalism.

If you have any further question, please do not hesitate to speak to us.

Welcome to Syndal Childcare and Early Learning Centre