



October 2018

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Geelong Children's Centre.....

You have chosen to enrol your child in this Centre that has Exceeded the requirements of the National Quality Framework. The NQF rates Centre's on these areas:

Educational program and practice

Children's health and safety

Physical environment

Staffing arrangements

Relationships with children

Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

Leadership and service management

The Centre provides above child staff ratios, staff who are highly experienced and committed educators.

The staff would like to work with you and value your partnership with us. We encourage you to be actively involved in your child's education and care.

The information provided in this booklet is of vital importance and will help you to understand the workings of the Centre.

We sincerely hope that you and your child/children enjoy being part of this vibrant, high quality education and care environment and that you enjoy your association with Geelong Children's Centre.

The Board of Management.

INDEX

Centre Philosophy	4
Centre Values	5
Child Safe	8
How We Care for and Educate Your Child	8
Primary Caregiving	11
The Key Roles of Room Coordinator / Care giver/Educator	11
National Quality Framework	12
Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework	12
Orientation Process	13
Operation of the Centre	13
Commonwealth Priority of Access Guidelines	15
Enrolment Information	15
Management and Staffing of the Centre	16
Fee Structure for 2019	17
When you should pay your fees	18
Childcare Subsidy	18
Communication	19
Complaints	20
What should you bring for the day at care	20

Centre Policies

Hygiene Control	21
Immunisation	21
Illness	24
Head Lice	24
Medication Policy and Procedures	24
Additional Medical Needs Policy	25
Medical Condition Policy Risk Minimisation Plan	25
Anaphylaxis Policy	26
Accidents/Injury/Trauma Policy and Procedure	28
Blood Spills Policy	28
Inclusion Policy	28
Code of conduct	29
Behavior Guidance Policy	30
Dental Care Policy	32
Nutrition Policy	33
Parent Code of Conduct Policy	34
Sexual Harassment Policy	35
Privacy Policy	35
Confidentiality	36
Clothing Policy	36
Children's Sleep/Rest Periods Policy	37
Prevention of Choking/Allergies/Provision of Food for Special Occasion	40
Evacuation Procedures	41
Centre Evacuation Procedure	42

CENTRE PHILOSOPHY

We acknowledge the original custodians of this land, the Wathaurong people and their language and all the indigenous people in the Geelong community.

Children

We value providing a warm and welcoming environment that assists children to feel safe and secure. We believe developing trusting respectful relationships between children and educators is of upmost importance in children to reach their full potential to learn and develop according to their needs. This enables children to feel supported to explore, learn and take risks in their learning environment.

Children are social learners, co-constructing their understanding of the world around them and themselves through interacting with peers and adults alike. Through social interaction, children's learning is facilitated and scaffolded by more capable others, whilst the child remains an active participant in their learning. Through providing an environment and program that encourages and supports social interaction children are enabled to develop reciprocal relationships and develop a sense of Community with their peers and teachers. Children are also provided with consistent opportunities to resource their own learning and initiate their own play experiences. Through this discovery, children further develop their sense of agency within our service.

Families & Community

We acknowledge the importance of developing a sense of community within the Geelong Children's Centre and the importance of involving families in their child's learning journey. We value and respect the contributions that families make, as it is through family involvement that children feel their learning is valued and recognised. Family involvement also enables the curriculum to reflect the diversity of the community. By building trusting and reciprocal relationships between home and the learning environment we aim to positively contribute to children's holistic wellbeing and development, allowing us to focus on the 'whole child' including individual culture, heritage and family values. We endeavour to connect with the local community services, groups and events including maternal health services, local schools, sport groups, library and community festivals and events.

Curriculum & Learning

We believe children learn best when they are provided rich opportunities to make independent choices to guide their learning. Through engagement in a play based program, children's learning is fostered to meet the diverse range of learning intelligences. We also aim to provide programs which support children in developing knowledge, skills and attitudes that will assist them in becoming environmentally responsible. We value providing developmentally appropriate, open ended play experiences that are meaningful to children. This is provided through an emergent curriculum that is planned in response to children's developmental needs and interests. Curriculum decision making promotes inclusive practices by building on children's strengths interest and abilities in both planned and spontaneous learning experiences. Gender equality create opportunities for children to engage in social and educational learning. We believe that through these experiences children are supported to develop the skills and concepts that enable them to become lifelong learners. Children develop early literacy, numeracy and scientific concepts and knowledge as well as social, emotional and physical skills through actively participating in play based experiences. Each child develops and learns in their own unique way and rate. By providing a combination of teacher-initiated and child-initiated learning experiences, all children are able to positively participate in the program at their own level and reach their individual potential.

Educators and Management

The management promotes professional enquiry and development for all teachers and educators to enhance their knowledge. Code of ethics is embedded in our practice and informs our relationships with the children, families and each other. We aim to have constant reflection in all areas of our work and will remain committed to Early Childhood Education and the broader Community. Educators collaborate with variety of organisations and service providers to enhance children's learning and wellbeing.

Our educators are dedicated Early Childhood Professionals who work together to create a supportive and positive environment. Each teacher and educator is recognised for their skills and ideas that they contribute to our service and wider community. The board of management supports the management team, staff, teachers and educators to effectively manage the service with a shared sense of purpose, providing direction and leadership and dealing with collective responsibility.

CENTRE VALUES

Staff and management engage in professional behaviour, through following and implementing all centre's policies, practices and procedures, being courteous to each other, families and children.

Staff and management treat and show respect towards one another, showing openness to critical reflection of our own and each other's performance and ways of doing and being.

Staff display professionalism in accordance to the Early Childhood of Australia's Code of Ethics. Staff are valued and respected as professionals with their views and opinions listened to without fear of consequence and maintaining integrity.

Staff take ownership of all aspects of their work with each other, children and families along with their workplace and the facilities provided, including the environment presented to and for children.

Management will provide a safe working environment in which staff are active participants in maintaining and supervising safe work and play practices for each other and children.

As a collective we initiate and embrace change, accepting it into our ways of operating.

We respect the privacy and confidentiality of each other through non-engagement of gossip and innuendo.

Fairness and equity is given and received by all stakeholders (Management, Staff and Families)
Flexibility is shown with regards to room assignments, roster times and requests for leave and the changes that occur to these.

CHILD SAFE POLICY

Geelong Children's Centre is committed to child protection and child safe environments. This policy demonstrates the strong commitment of the management, staff, educators, students and volunteers to child safety and to provide an outline of the policies and practices we have developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse. The Child Safe Policy reflects the service's philosophy, which can include values, code of ethics and code of conduct and it applies to management, staff, educators, children, families, students, volunteers, community and any other individuals involved in our organisation.

Commitment to child safety

All children who come to Geelong Children's Centre have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and we have a zero tolerance to child abuse. We will take all allegations and concerns very seriously and respond to them consistently in line with the Centre's policies and procedures. We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow diligently.

Children's rights to safety and participation

Geelong Children's Centre educators/staff and volunteers actively work to listen to and empower children and encourage children to express their views. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children who use our service to 'have a say' about things that are important to them.

We teach children about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns children, or their parents, raise with us.

Valuing diversity

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and their families
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families
- welcome and provide a safe environment for children with disability and their families and act to promote their equal participation
- seek appropriate staff from diverse cultural backgrounds

Recruiting educators/staff and volunteers

Our Centre applies the best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of educators/staff and volunteers. We interview and conduct referee checks on all educators/staff and volunteers and require police checks, VIT registration Card and Working with Children Checks for relevant positions. We actively encourage applications from Aboriginal people, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability. Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements.

Supporting educators/staff and volunteers

Geelong Children's Centre seeks to attract and retain the best educators/staff and volunteers. Our organisational culture aims for all educators/staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/guardians and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our educators/staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. All of our educators/staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children. New employees, students and volunteers are supervised regularly to ensure they understand our organisation's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (please refer to the Centre's code of conduct to understand appropriate behaviour further). Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Education and Training and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

Educators are monitored and supported by room co-ordinators/kinder teachers to ensure that they meet compliance on ratios and child protection policies and procedures. All educators/staff attend compulsory in-service education sessions every couple of years and information sheets are provided on child protection issues to keep them up to date on the latest knowledge of child protection.

Allegations, concerns and complaints

Geelong Children's Centre takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our educators/staff and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations. In meeting the Centre's duty of care and legislative requirements management, educators and staff implement and adhere to the service's Child Safe Policy and ensure a level of safety and protection to all children who access the service. Director and Deputy Director have been appointed as Child Safety Persons with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints or concerns regarding abuse. We provide support by having regular meetings and provide information on agencies or reading material or any counselling services.

We work to ensure all children, families, educator, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place (see information about failure to disclose).

If an adult has a **reasonable belief** that an incident has occurred, then they must report the incident to the person in charge and document and record all information on Incident Report Form. Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:

- A child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves)
- Behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed
- Someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it
- Observing suspicious behaviour.

Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be educators, staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.

Legislative responsibilities

Geelong Children's Centre takes our legal responsibility seriously, including:

- **Failure to disclose offence:** Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police.
- **Failure to protect:** People of authority in our organisation will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.
- Any personnel who are mandatory reporters must comply with their duties

Risk Management

Geelong Children's Centre has risk management strategies in place to identify, assess and take steps to minimise potential for child abuse or harm to occur and use this to inform our policy, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks posed by physical environment and online environments (refer to internet, social media and email policy).

All educators and staff get training on Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting.

HOW WE CARE FOR AND EDUCATE YOUR CHILD

Our philosophy of teaching embodies an Emergent Curriculum that develops from exploring what is relevant, interesting and personally meaningful to children. The benefits of this approach enables the program to be organised based on the children's budding interests, passions, strengths and needs. The topics of interest that emerge are often linked to children's play, their experiences at home, a community event, and priorities that emerge from conversations between children, children and educators, children and parents, and parents and educators etc. These interactions and observations are important and are utilised as part of the teacher's intentional teaching practices.

At our Centre we are trying to engage children in STEM education. STEM is the acronym given to the integrated learning approach focusing on science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Educators are introducing children the basics of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and engaging them in STEM-related learning activities. Children need to be presented opportunities to learn the same material in different settings and through different lenses. STEM gives children chances to investigate an idea in a variety of settings and their learning is strengthened when they learn the same skills, ideas, and concepts in different contexts.

Babies' Room

The educators in the babies' room care for children aged from 6 weeks through to 18 months. The room is set up to provide each baby with support, comfort, positive guidance and nurturing.

The Babies room operates on the primary care giving model.

The primary care giving model ensures that every child has a familiar person, and that each parent has a primary contact.

Each child has a primary caregiver who develops a relationship of mutual trust and respect with the child and their parents. The primary caregiver also works with other staff within the room to ensure a positive learning and care experience for each child.

Care giving is primary in two senses. Firstly - most but not all of the care, nurturing and parent communication is provided by the educator who is the primary caregiver. Secondly - teaching is primary because of the prime times (nappy changes, feeding, putting to sleep etc.) - and those most intimate and personal moments of care and teaching – are the major responsibility of the primary caregiver.

The program within the Babies room has been developed to ensure that each child is given equal, quality and responsive care to assist in the progression of their development. The program covers a variety of developmental areas including; cognitive (thinking), gross motor (large muscle development), fine motor (small muscle development), social and emotional (interactions), language, literacy and expressive arts and mindfulness.

During the day we offer indoor and outdoor play with children given the opportunity to make their own decision as to where they would like to play and what experiences and activities they would most like to engage with. Activities within the program are designed to be enjoyable, educational and appealing. Incorporated into the curriculum is a collaboration of interaction, natural materials, multiculturalism, music and dance, dramatic play, painting and the encouragement of self-help skills.

You are welcome to phone staff or visit your child at any time during the day while your child's is at care.

We provide two supervised separate sleep rooms so that the babies may sleep peacefully and undisturbed. Staff are proactive in following the safe sleeping practices in conjunction with Red Nose and ACECQA guidelines.

We also provide breast feeding facilities, disposable nappies, and all linen.

The menu has been developed to follow the Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013 providing each child with 50% of their recommended daily intake of foods. We acknowledge and implement each family's decision in their child's dietary requirements.

We welcome all parent ideas, feedback, suggestions, as we want you and your child to feel at complete ease whilst in our care.

Toddlers' Room

We implement primary care giving into the room, whereby children form a bond with their primary carer.

We incorporate your child's home routine into the day-care program. Children are able to sleep according to their individual needs as we provide a supervised sleep room that is a separate room from play areas.

We focus on language, independence and toilet training as the major milestones in the Toddler years.

The play based curriculum allows children to feel a sense of belonging through warm, responsive, individualised care designed to promote your child's self-esteem. We see every experience as a learning opportunity – the program is structured to optimise opportunities for learning, through continuous in/outdoor play.

We provide a range of teaching experiences and also intentional teaching experiences that encompasses all areas of development.

We engage in spontaneous group times including stories, music/movement and puppets etc. We focus on small groups of children that allow one to one interactions with staff. Through the outdoor program we enhance physical skills such as climbing, balancing, swinging, digging and bike riding.

We have visual displays that show you what we have done in the Toddlers Room each day. We value the opportunity talking to you about your child's day at the beginning and end of the day. The information board is located in the room and contains all of your child's information such as sleep time, food and toileting. We will also keep you informed through Educa, newsletters and e-mails about your child's learning and development.

The toddler's room provides a school holiday program which offers events such as multi-cultural days, teddy bear picnic, cooking day and dress up days. We also provide various incursions and excursions throughout the year.

We welcome families' participation in every facet of the Toddlers Room and most of all we aim for the children and educators to have fun together.

3-5 Room

The 3-5 integrated pre-school curriculum identifies key areas of development such as the arts, numeracy, literacy, music and movement, social studies, science and motor development.

The program is designed and reflected on a daily basis and incorporates the needs, interest and strengths

of the individual child as well as the whole group. The main focus of the program is to plan positive experiences that assist children to make choices, develop responsibility, respect for themselves, others and the environment, encourage independence and provide challenges and enjoyment. We implement formal learning sessions that give the children the opportunity to gain knowledge in basic mathematics, life skills (stranger danger), language and literacy, science and multicultural activities- including languages other than English.

Children explore their own ideas, problem solve and experience social interaction in all size groups. The group operates an indoor / outdoor program where children have a choice of playing indoors or outdoors throughout the day. The children have long periods of uninterrupted play time to explore the various activities, whilst having opportunity to have intentional teaching moments with educators to provide children skills to master these activities.

We provide above required educator child ratios so educators can spend lots of time interacting with individual children as well as focusing on small groups rather than all the children as a whole.

Our school holiday program compliments and extends the children's learning environment by providing special days to relax and unwind. This program includes some incursions and excursions, cultural days, dressing up, special person's day and visits from educational/important people from the community, i.e. guide dog association, vet and dental visits, musicians and the animal nursery.

The emergent curriculum is based on the interests and experiences of the children, educators are sensitive to individual differences that are free from cultural and stereotypical biases. We also encourage family participation into the programming and in the care in which we provide for your children.

4 Year Old Kinder

The kinder follows an emergent curriculum which focuses on providing overall development of the children in order to prepare the children for school and teaching children everyday life skills.

Through a program which is based on stimulating play experiences, the children build and further develop valuable skills as well as learn new ideas and concepts. Problem solving, literacy, numeracy, creativity and social skills are fostered through these play experiences.

The program meets the needs of all children as the experiences are based both on the children's strengths, interests and their development. The children work with the teachers in small groups as well as individually.

The sessions for 4 year old kindergarten are run four days a week for eight hours duration:

Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs: 8:30am to 4:30pm

In Term 4, children going to school the following year have the opportunity to visit various Schools within the local community introducing them to all aspects of school life, e.g. outside toilets, school assembly, different rooms for different activities, use of library, art room, and classroom, and eating of lunches. They are accompanied by the pre-school teacher and a staff member.

Kinder Funding Reminder

Children are only able to access one funded 4 year old kindergarten program. If children are enrolled at this centre they cannot access another kinder.

3 Year old Kinder

The Kindergarten program aims to provide the children rich learning experiences through a structured setting to prepare them for a 4 year old kinder. We are offering extended hours which will provide the

children opportunity of longer periods of teaching times and free exploration. As we are focusing on learning through play, it helps children to develop structured imaginative play, social skills, scaffold each other's play to learn how things work, recognize other people's ideas and suggestions along with language and learning dispositions to develop confident competent learners.

The sessions for 3 year old kindergarten are (Fridays only)

Friday: 8:30am to 4:30pm

PRIMARY CAREGIVING

Primary caregiving provides children, families and educators time for purposeful communication and meaningful relationships to develop, forming the basis for trusting and secure attachments.

Primary caregiving ensures that each child is linked to one educator who assumes major responsibility for their care. Primary caregiving is offered to children under 3 years of age however we do continue with this practice with the children from the toddler's room who orientate to the 3-5 room at the beginning of the year and we do this for a period of six months. This is to ensure that children feel belonged and supported as they transition to another room

The Key Roles:

Room Coordinator

Room Coordinators are highly skill educators, who are flexible, decisive, innovative and are responsive to the change process. Room Coordinators are responsible to manage the day to day operation of the designated room; this entails, effective supervision of all children and educators, management and implementation of the children's programs, meeting the needs of all families and children. Possessing the skills to effectively lead their team throughout the day.

Primary Caregiver/Educator

Communicate

Share information about children with their parents and other staff within the room.

A link in the communication chain between parents and program and children and program, ensure that children's experience is communicated to parents – not just what you observe, but what others observed or enacted. We relay parents' concerns and suggestions to other staff within your child's room.

Advocate

Speak to children and their parents.

Empower parents and children by translating their individual concerns and needs into action through the efforts of all program staff. Ensure that the program wraps around children and their parents rather than insisting that children and parents fit the program.

Nurture

Love and care for children.

Tune in to children and develop a special bond that ensures that all their needs are met. You ensure that prime times are provided in ways that empower children and establish a sense of security and basic trust, while promoting independence and secondary attachments.

Facilitate learning

Help children learn.

Care for children in ways that maximize their language experiences and learning potential. Ensure that the learning environment works for each child, providing a balance of developmentally appropriate experiences and neither too much nor too little stimulation.

Observe, monitor, and reflect.

Ensure that children and their parents have positive experiences.

Ensure that children's experiences in the program are positive and that parents' concerns are addressed by continual assessment through observation, discussions with other staff, talks with parents, and assessments of the actual experiences of children and their families. The Centre aims to provide 70% of daily activities to be conducive of Primary Care.

NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK

The National Quality Standard (NQS) is a key aspect of the National Quality Framework (NQF) and sets a national benchmark for early childhood education and care, and outside school hours care services in Australia.

As the NQF progress, every service in the country is be assessed to make sure it meets the new quality standard. Safety is paramount all day and every day and every service must comply with rigorous health and safety requirements. The NQS will also support the implementation of the EYLF by ensuring that the necessary environments, facilities, staffing arrangements, resources and management structures are in place. To ensure children enjoy the best possible conditions in their early educational and developmental years, the NQS promotes continuous improvement in quality.

The major benefits for parents and children include:

- improved educator to child ratios
- greater individual care and attention for children
- educators with increased skills and qualifications
- better support for children's learning and development
- a national register to help parents assess the quality of education and care services in their area.

See more at: www.acecqa.gov.au

<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/the-national-quality-standard>

VICTORIAN EARLY YEARS LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

A child's learning and development is holistic, advancing simultaneously in the areas of health, cognition, personal and social development and wellbeing. Their learning and development is advanced when they are provided with opportunities, support and engagement within their families and in partnership with our educators. By acknowledging each child's identity, culture and spirituality, and responding sensitivity to their emotional states, our staff build children's confidence, sense of wellbeing and safety and willingness to engage in learning.

The Victorian Framework identifies five Outcomes for all children from birth to eight years:

- Children have strong sense of identity(identity)
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world(community)

- Children have strong sense of wellbeing(wellbeing)
- Children are confident and involved learners(learning)
- Children are effective communicator's (communication)

The framework is used by early childhood professionals to design experiences and opportunities for advancing children's development and assessing children's progress towards these outcomes.

SOURCE: <http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/earlyyears/index.aspx>

ORIENTATION PROCESS

The orientation process is compulsory before starting care. The Centre offers an extensive orientation process to all families, whereby your child is introduced into day care slowly through regular visits with you prior to their commencement day at the Centre. This process is actively encouraged. We organise for you and your child to orientate initially for ½- 1 hour to enable you to meet and talk to staff regarding your child's needs. These times gradually increase depending on how your child settles. We require families to orient their child for at least one week before start date. Families are provided with opportunities to share information about their child and their families which they feel will assist their child's participation in orientation to the Centre. Staff will guide you through this process. We strive to ensure that this is a positive experience for your child. Please see the Director to arrange suitable times for orientation. Please consult with the person in charge of the room who will tailor this period to suit both you and your child. The orientation period is not charged as fees.

OPERATION OF THE CENTRE

The approved provider of Geelong Children's Centre (Geelong and District Day Nursery Inc.) is the Board of Management.

The Director is: **Jane Rathjen** (Nominated Supervisor)

The Deputy Director is **Payal Mahajan** (Certified Supervisor)

The Educational Leader is: **Jenny Hill**

The Centre operates **50 weeks of the year**.

Open **Monday to Friday**, excluding Public Holidays

Between **7:00 am and 6:00 pm**

Christmas and New Year Closure

The Centre will close from 6:00 pm on Thursday, 20th December, 2018, and will re-open at 7:00 am on Wednesday, 2nd January 2019

Parent Contact Details

Please ensure that your **mobile phone is turned on whilst your child is in care**. We **must** be able to contact parents and the nominated contact person in case of an emergency or illness.

If an emergency arises and you are unable to collect your child, it is **your responsibility to contact the Centre and advise of the arrangements made for the collection of your child**. No child attending the Centre is given into the care of any person other than the parent or guardian of the child, except where

authorisation has been given by the parent or guardian, either personally or by phone. (Education & Care Services National Regulations 2014).

Parents should immediately notify the Administration staff of any changes to their address, home or work phone numbers, and emergency contact numbers.

Security

You will be given the “pin” number to enable you to enter the Centre. If you forget it, please press the intercom button on the security pad.

Attendance at the Centre

Selling Days

We **may** be able to sell your child’s day of care if they will not be attending on a certain day. To do this, either contact the Centre early in the morning of the day of care, or you can also speak to the Administrative staff and complete a form advising which days your child will not be attending. Any fee adjustments will be made in the next billing period through the Ezidebit system.

If you have booked extra days on a casual basis, you are obligated to pay for these days unless you give **24 hours’ notice to cancel**. The reason for this is that at times, we have high demand for care and other people miss out because of lack of notice.

Care for Children about to commence prep

When places are available in January, the Centre will offer care for children who attended the kinder or 3-5 room the previous year. Contact the Director for further information.

Arriving late for care

Please advise us by 10:00 am if your child will not be arriving at the Centre until later in the morning and you require their lunch to be saved.

Withdrawing your child or changing days

If you wish to withdraw or change your child’s booked days from the Centre, **two weeks’ notice** must be given to the Director.

Failure to do this will result in fees for those weeks being charged in lieu of notice.

Drop off and collection of your child

Parents are required to sign in and record the arrival time and expected collection time of their child on the attendance sheet in the child's room. On collection of your child you will be informed about your child’s day, and you are required to sign your child out.

Parents are to deliver and collect their children as agreed to under Authority to Collect/Emergency contacts, as stipulated on the enrolment form. If you are running late to collect your child on a particular occasion, please phone the Centre and let the staff know. Any **overtime incurred** as a result of late collection of children (i.e. after the Centre closes at 6.00 p.m. sharp), **will be charged and invoiced to parents**. Regulations stipulate that there be two staff on duty at all times.

Please do not allow your children to run in the corridors. Children must remain with the parent whilst departing the Centre and are **not** permitted to press the green exit button.

Changes to days or times of care

If parents wish to change their hours or require extra days of care from those stated on the enrolment form, please contact the Director or the Deputy Director.

Parents are not able to change or directly sell their days of care to other parents. All changes must be discussed with the Director or Deputy Director.

Staff cannot make arrangements for buying or selling of days within the rooms, parents need to contact the office staff and follow the Centre procedure of buying/selling days.

COMMONWEALTH PRIORITY OF ACCESS GUIDELINES

The Federal Government has determined guidelines for allocating places to those families with the greatest need for childcare support.

These guidelines are strictly adhered to by the Management of the Centre.

First Priority

Children at serious risk of abuse or neglect.

Second Priority

A child/children of parent/s who satisfy, the WORK / TRAINING / STUDY test (under section 14 of the Family Assistance Act).

Third Priority

Any other child.

Please Note

If you are a non-working/studying parent you may be restricted to one day of care per week. Should a working parent require your allocated day of care, every effort will be made to offer you an alternative day. If this is not available, you will be given 2 weeks written notice to withdraw your child to make way for a higher priority child.

ENROLMENT INFORMATION

Each year, your enrolment at the Centre applies from the first day the Centre is open in January, to the final day the Centre is open in December. Fees are applicable for this period in order for you to retain your place at the Centre. Clients are required to re-enrol each year.

Current Clients:

- The Centre will take enrolments for current clients for 2019 on 15th and 16th October 2018.
- Parents can access the enrolment form from our website www.geelongchildrenscentre.com.au. Please hand in a duly completed Enrolment form and an updated Child Immunisation Certificate to the administration staff in the office hours between 7.00am to 4.30 pm on the above dates.
- Management will allocate your 2018 booked days for 2019.
- Current clients will be notified of their booked days after enrolment process in the third week of

November 2018. If your booked days for 2018 are unavailable due to Centre space restrictions, these days will be put on the priority wait list.

- If you require extra/different days, these will be allocated after your current days are allocated.
- If your requested day/days are not available, you will be placed on the wait list.
- All current clients will receive priority over new clients however we cannot guarantee that siblings will be offered a place this will depend upon days available.
- If current clients do not return their enrolment forms by 4.30pm on the 16th October 2018 they will not get preference over the families who have requested additional days.

New Clients:

- The Centre will take enrolments for 2019 for new clients on Monday, 22nd October, 2018 commencing at 7:00am.
- New clients will be notified in writing of their requested days for 2019 by third week in November 2018.
- If you are not successful in obtaining your days you will be placed on the wait list.
- All new clients will go on a wait list based on the Commonwealth priority of access guidelines; each family will be allocated a number on arrival on the enrolment day.
- You will be offered positions as a vacancy occurs.

MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING OF THE CENTRE

This Centre is registered under the Education and care Services National Law Act 2010 and operates under the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011. The Centre is registered for 120 children, 48 children under 3 years of age and 72 children over 3 years of age.

The governance of an organisation is concerned with the systems and processes that ensure the overall direction, effectiveness, supervision and accountability of a service. Under the National Law and National Regulations, early childhood services are required to have policies and procedures in place relating to the governance and management of the service.

Geelong Children's Centre works on a Management Team approach. The Management Team is made up of the Board of Management, Room Coordinators, Educational Leader, Kinder Teachers, Deputy Director and Centre Director. The operation of this Centre is administered by a voluntary Board of Management to whom the Centre Director is responsible. The Board consists of community members and the parent representatives. The names of the Board of Management including the parent representatives are placed on the notice board in the Centre's entrance. The Board of Management meet monthly and as necessary to ensure that the channels of communication are kept open and that the Centre provides the highest care, education programs and services to ensure the viability of the service.

All members of the Management Team who gain access to confidential, commercially-sensitive and other information of a similar nature, shall not disclose that information to anyone unless the disclosure of such information is required by law.

The staffing and management policies are displayed in the foyer, as are the children's programs, menus, food audit, building audit and immunisation details. Children's programs are also displayed in each room. **We encourage parents to read the information that is displayed, particularly notices on the whiteboard, on Educa, the front doors of the Centre, and within your child's room so that you are aware of what is happening in and around the Centre.** Parents will also receive several newsletters, emails and text messages throughout the year bringing them up to date with relevant information. All parents will be invited to information and evaluation meetings at appropriate times during the year in addition to social and informal gatherings.

Staffing Ratio

Management ensures that all children in the Centre have regulated staff coverage at all times. In absence of Nominated Supervisor, there is Certified Supervisor on duty at all times while the Centre is in operation. All staff holding current first aid, asthma and anaphylaxis qualifications. This Centre employs staff ABOVE the minimum requirement. We do not employ casual staff in our Centre. We employ permanent relievers who are trained to work in all the rooms across the Centre.

The Centre has a staff of 50, consisting of 24 Diploma Qualified staff, 20 childcare Assistant and 2 kindergarten teacher. Other staff includes 2 administrative assistants, a cook and kitchen hand. A commercial cleaner, maintenance person and gardener are employed on a part-time or needs basis. The Centre employs permanent relief staff and additional staff are employed for special needs children.

The staff coverage for each group is as follows:

Babies' Room:	2 diploma qualified staff member and 4 assistants for up to 16 babies aged 6 weeks to 18 months.
Toddlers' Room:	3 diploma qualified staff members and 6 assistants for up to 32 children aged 18 months to 3 yrs.
3-5 Room:	4 diploma qualified staff members and 3 assistants for up to 35 children.
4 year old Kinder Room:	1 qualified Kindergarten Teacher, 1 qualified staff member and 3 assistants.
3 year old Kinder Room:	1 qualified Kindergarten Teacher, 1 qualified staff member and 3 assistants.

FEE STRUCTURE FOR 2019

Daily/Weekly fees are charged for **50 weeks** of the year, **including public holidays**.

You are required to pay fees for all days you enrol your children in, even if your **child is absent due to illness, holidays or any other** days off.

Weekly Fees	\$	
Daily Fees	\$	To be notified
Half Day Fee	\$	

* The Board of Management reserves the right to alter fees during the year. You will be given adequate warning in writing of any fee changes.

WHEN YOU SHOULD PAY YOUR FEES

Fees will be directly debited from your nominated account fortnightly in advance through Ezidebit. You are required to complete an Ezidebit Direct Debit Request form with your enrolment form.

Statements will be sent electronically.

Please read carefully the Ezidebit service agreement and the frequently asked questions to ensure you understand your commitment.

Clients who default on a payment will incur an administrative fee of \$14.80 with Ezidebit.

Please contact the Director immediately if you know in advance that you will be unable to meet your direct debit requirements to enable discussion to take place.

If fees continue to be unpaid for two weeks, and you have not contacted the Director, your **child's position at the Centre will be cancelled**. Any clients with concerns with this arrangement must put these concerns in writing to the Committee of Management.

Ezidebit Fees

There is a once off set up fee for this service which parents are to meet the cost of which is \$5.20. Ongoing fees for this service which parents will also meet the cost of are as follows:

Transactions from a Bank Account:	0.88c per transaction
Transactions from Visa/MasterCard:	1.87% of transaction
Transactions from AMEX/Diners:	4.4% of transaction

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

The government provides Child Care Subsidy (CCS) to families to help with the cost of childcare

There are three factors that determine a family's level of Child Care Subsidy. These are:

- **Combined annual family income**
- **Activity test – the activity level of both parents**
- **Service type – type of child care service**

The Child Care Subsidy is generally paid directly to service providers to be passed on to families as a fee reduction. Families make a co-contribution to their childcare fees and pay to the provider the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount.

The person who is liable to pay the childcare fees will have to apply for CCS using their Centrelink online account through myGov. The Child's enrolment details are required to be confirmed on the myGov website and ensure that they match the Complying Written Agreement (CWA) including fees and sessions of care.

A CWA is an agreement between you and your provider to give care in return for fees.

Further information is available on the link below.

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy>

Childcare Benefit for Absences from Childcare

If your child is away on holidays or sick for any length of time, every effort will be made to sell your days to other clients requiring extra days of care. This facility is offered subject to your child's room being at full capacity at the time. Please always advise the Director or the Administration Staff when your child

will be away from care.

Holidays / Days Off / Sickness

Childcare Benefit is paid for a child's absences from care up to **42 days per year** commencing every financial year. These absence days may be taken for any reason, and do not require supporting documentation, e.g. medical certificate. Public Holidays are counted as an absence day, and therefore are included in the 42 days. Childcare Benefit is not available if you exceed 42 absent days and, therefore, **full fees are charged to parents for any absent days over the 42-day limit**. Once the 42-day absence limit is reached, documentation is required for childcare benefit to be paid on any absences.

COMMUNICATION

The Board of Management and staff welcome your opinions and views on any aspect pertaining to your child's care at this Centre. Parents are encouraged to become actively involved in, and contribute to the children's programs, centre policies and procedures. If you have any special skills, (diverse or cultural), that would benefit the children and programs, please talk to the staff members in your child's room.

Parents have access to the Centre at any time during the hours of operation, either in person or by telephone. Parents are welcome to have discussions with the educators regarding their children's learning and development throughout the day. If you, require a more detailed discussion or meeting with any of the qualified teachers, please contact the Director so appropriate staffing arrangements can be organised. Daily exchange of information about your child's day will be communicated upon collection of your child. It is strongly encouraged that parents share with staff any relevant details regarding their child's health and wellbeing on arrival in the room, or any aspects of their child's life which could be included in the program.

Communication is an essential tool that is practised by all staff valuing the different backgrounds, attitudes and beliefs from: -

- staff with children; staff with staff;
- staff with parents, parents with staff;
- whenever parents request a discussion/meeting; staff and parents with management;
- staff with community agencies and parents;
- newsletters, emails, flyers, whiteboards, notices on doors, posters, leaflets, books, parent contribution books, suggestion boxes.

If staff have any concerns about any developmental issues with the child in their room they will first talk to the parent. If referral is needed to an outside agency, requests are made on official forms, by letter or by telephone. Parents' permission is always sought and parents can avail themselves of this service. Referrals can be made to specific external services as required.

Our Centre provides opportunities to communicate with all families including families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and/or low literacy levels, with bi-lingual support where required and any appropriate agency support deemed necessary.

Babies Room: babies@geelongchildrenscentre.com.au

Toddler's Room: toddlers@geelongchildrenscentre.com.au

3/5 Room: 35room@geelongchildrenscentre.com.au

Kindergarten: kinder@geelongchildrenscentre.com.au

Please feel free to contact any of your room staff on the above e-mail address

COMPLAINTS

If parents have any concerns at all regarding their child's care, please see the Director immediately. We strive at all times to offer the highest quality of care and welcome suggestions and feedback to continuously improve our policies, procedures and Centre practices and to accommodate your needs. Geelong Children's Centre will document and investigate all issues, concerns, complaints and grievances fairly and try to resolve it in a timely manner.

1. If a **parent/guardian** has a complaint relating to the children's service, they must approach the **Director** who will respond and deal with the complaint as promptly and discreetly as practicable.
2. If the complaint cannot be resolved by the Director, the complainant should put the complaint in writing to the Board of Management. Further action will take place as soon as practicable after the complaint is made. A member of the Board will contact the parent and discussion will take place with a representative of the Board of Management, the Director and the parent concerned, or in such other way which satisfactorily deals with the complaint.
3. If the complainant still feels that the complaint has not been handled adequately and there is no resolution, the complainant would be directed to the Department of Education and Training, Attention: Manager Quality Assessment and Regulation, Barwon-South Western Region, 75 High Street, Belmont 3216. Phone: (03) 5215 5136. The complainant may make the complaint in writing or email to bsw.qar@edumail.vic.gov.au or arrange an appointment to see the BSW Quality Assessment & Regulation Team.
4. Should the complaint allege that the health, safety and well-being of any child attending the Centre has been compromised, or that there may have been a contravention of the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, the Director will notify the Department of Education and Training within 24 hours of the complaint being made.
5. The Centre also operates a Fair Hearing Committee.

Parents if they wish to, can talk to the office staff or Room Coordinators/ Kinder teachers or email the Centre.

WHAT YOU SHOULD BRING FOR THE DAY AT CARE

Where can I park?

The driveway of the Centre is an emergency entrance and exit. We request that parents **do not** park in the driveway or in front of the driveway on any occasion. Short-term parking is available on either side of Lomond Terrace ensuring you are at least 1 metre from any driveway.

What do I need to bring?

The Centre supplies nappies, feeders, washers, sheets, blankets. Children who are not toilet trained are requested to come into the Centre in a disposable nappy. A disposable nappy should be supplied for going home.

We also provide sensitive/low allergy sun screen. This Centre is a registered **Sunsmart** Centre. You may supply your own sunscreen if your child has an allergy.

Your child will be provided with a named locker for their belongings. All clothing and bags must be named. Staff will endeavour to look after clothing but will not take any responsibility for lost items if they are not named.

Parents need to supply the following items which must **remain at the Centre at all times:**

- a named legionnaire or wide brimmed hat for summer months and a named coat and beanie for winter months

Babies	Spare changes of clothes, disposable nappy for going home. Formula and bottles
Toddlers	Several complete changes of clothing and shoes in case of toilet training and also as we provide water play and other sensory experiences Disposable nappy for going home.
Pre-Schoolers	Spare set of clothes and shoes as we provide water play, mud play and other sensory experiences.

The following articles of clothing are **not appropriate**:

- "Singlet" T-shirts or "singlet" type dresses due to increased risk of sunburn.
- Open toed sandals, slip-ons or thongs are not permitted for safety reasons, please ensure children wear appropriate footwear (closed toed shoes).

Can my child bring toys to the Centre?

The Centre has a large and varied array of both educational and fun toys. Therefore, we only allow children to bring in one soft toy, a book or comforter for rest time.

Parents are requested to **not allow** their children to bring any other toys into the centre other than on special toy days /school holiday requests. Staff will not be responsible for children's toys, jewellery etc. that is misplaced, broken or lost.

War toys are not to be brought into the Centre at any time, e.g. pistols, guns, swords, knives, bows and arrows.

CENTRE POLICIES

HYGIENE CONTROL

The spread of infections in the early childhood environment is facilitated by crowding and microbial contamination of the environment, as well as the unhygienic behaviours and greater exposure of young children. Our Centre will minimise children's exposure to infectious diseases by adhering to all recommended guidelines from relevant authorities regarding the prevention of infectious diseases, promoting practices that reduce the transmission of infection, ensuring the exclusion of sick children and staff, supporting child immunisation and implement effective hygiene practices. The Centre will implement the recommendations from Staying Healthy in Child Care – Preventing the spread of infectious diseases in the early childhood environment. Children are protected from harm by ensuring relevant policies and procedures are followed regarding health and safety within the Service. Staff and all children wash their hands on arrival after signing in. All rooms and bathrooms are thoroughly cleaned throughout the day and at the end of each day. Staff and children practise frequent hand washing throughout the day and staff also use gloves where necessary.

IMMUNISATION

Immunisation is an important health measure for children and families. It is the simplest, safest and most effective way of protecting children against harmful diseases before they come into contact with them in the community. Immunisation not only protects children, but also others in the community by reducing the spread of disease.

Under the 'No Jab, No Play' legislation, before enrolling your child you must first obtain evidence that the child is: immunised in accordance with the National Immunisation Program schedule or be on a recognised catch-up schedule according to the current Australian Immunisation Handbook or have a valid immunisation exemption recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register

ILLNESS

Children with obvious infectious illness are to be excluded from the Centre immediately. If a child becomes ill, the parent is immediately notified by staff with authorisation from the person in charge. Appropriate treatment as deemed necessary will be given to the child in consultation with the Director.

The Director or Deputy Director are the only authorised bodies who can make the decision that a sick child should be removed from the Centre. Children may return to the Centre if medically directed, or at the approval of the Director or Deputy Director.

It is not possible to prevent the spread of all infections and illnesses within Centre. However, some illness from infectious disease can be prevented. The primary responsibility of staff in this Centre is to maintain the health and wellbeing of all children. Staff are to be alert and aware of common signs of illness, monitor children closely and consult with other staff and the family. Staff will complete an Illness Incident Form recording the temperature or other signs and symptoms of illness and action taken. Making sure to clean and disinfect the relevant equipment and area. Parent must read and sign this form on collection of their child. The Centre will inform other families and staff once confirmed by the medical practitioner of the infectious illness or disease.

There will be times throughout the year when your child becomes ill. If your child is obviously ill, they should not come into day care. We expect parents to be honest with staff in letting staff know if their child has been awake for most of the night, has had a temperature, vomiting or diarrhoea.

- Any child with a high fever or temperature reaching 38°C or higher will not be permitted to attend the Service until 24 hours after the temperature/fever has subsided.
- If your child is unwell with vomiting or diarrhea they are not permitted to attend the service for 24 hours after the last vomiting or diarrhea episode. If there is a gastroenteritis outbreak at the Service, children will be excluded from the Service until the diarrhea and/or vomiting has stopped and the family are able to get a medical clearance from their doctor.

Non-infectious causes of gastroenteritis include:

- Medication such as antibiotics
 - Chemical exposure such as zinc poisoning
 - Introducing solid foods to a young child
 - Anxiety or emotional stress
- If your child has had three loose bowel movements, you will be asked to come and pick up your child immediately from care to stop the spread of infection.
 - If your child has been prescribed Antibiotic your child will not be able to attend the Centre for 24 hours after the first initial dose.
 - If your child has had Paracetamol or Ibuprofen they will not be able to attend the Centre for 24 hours after the administration of the medication. If they develop temperature or are unwell during

this period, they can't come back to care for another 24 hours or unless they are able to participate 100% in the program.

- If parents are not contactable while a child is in care and the child's temperature reaches 39 degrees' emergency contacts will be contacted to come and pick up the child. If the temperature reaches 40 degrees and if the parent/emergency contacts are not contactable or are unable to reach the Centre in time, an ambulance will be called at Director's discretion.
- If your child has discharge coming from the eyes, you will be asked to come and pick up your child. The child will be excluded from the service until the discharge has stopped even if they have been prescribed eye drops, unless a doctor has diagnosed non-infectious conjunctivitis.
- If your child has a broken bone or fracture or infectious illness or disease a clearance from a medical practitioner will be required before your child can return to the Centre. It is important that your child can participate in all aspects of the program when returning.

Management have the right to send children home if they appear unwell due to a cold or general illness. Children can become distressed and lethargic when unwell. Discharge coming from the child's nose and coughing, can lead to germs spreading to other children, educators, toys and equipment. Management will assess each individual case prior to sending the child home.

We acknowledge the pressures on parents who are unable to take time off work or have no extended family to help them look after their sick child, so we please ask you to have a "Back-up" person in case your child needs to leave the Centre due to illness. Although staff will make provisions for the comfort and care of the unwell child, the Centre does not have the extra staffing or facilities to care for sick children in an appropriate manner.

The following illnesses are a guide only. If you are in any doubt, please phone the Director/ Deputy Director of the Centre on (03) 5229 1326.

Not able to come

The below illnesses are highly infectious and will spread rapidly to other children. The following illnesses are the examples of when children are not able to attend the Centre.

- Vomiting (24 hours' exclusion after the last one)
- Diarrhea (24 hours' exclusion after the last one)
- High Temperature (24 hours' exclusion) 38 degrees or higher
- Gastroenteritis (24 hours' exclusion after the last one)
- Chicken Pox
- Giardiasis
- Conjunctivitis (exclude until discharge has stopped, unless a doctor has diagnosed non-infectious conjunctivitis)
- Hand, Foot & Mouth exclude until all blisters have dried
- Slap cheek syndrome

Able to come

Children with the following illnesses are able to come to the Centre on conditions. If the child is not able to participate in the program parents will be asked to pick up the child.

- Slight cold
- Green discharge from nose

Please see exclusion table on:

https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch55e_exclusion_period_poster_130701.pdf

All communicable diseases are reported to the Department of Health and Department of Education and Training by telephone or e-mail.

HEAD LICE

If your child is found to have live head lice, you will be advised by telephone to come and pick up your child to enable treatment to commence as soon as possible. See head lice policy on Centre Policy document.

MEDICATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development specifies that the following procedures be strictly observed.

- Pain relief and fever control medication or cold / cough medication e.g. Panadol, Nurofen, Dimetapp (or similar medications) will **not** be kept at Centre.
- Any medications prescribed by the medical practitioner will only be administered to the children including the medication bought across the counter (e.g. eye ear drops, cold, cough medication, creams and ointments, Panadol, Nurofen or any similar medication) and any naturopathic remedies. When medication has been prescribed by a medical practitioner the service will follow the medical practitioner's instructions on the label.
- Antibiotics, Anaphylaxis, Allergy and Asthma medications (e.g. Ventolin, Asmol or Zyrtec etc.) will only be administered if prescribed by the doctor. It is a requirement that children have an Action plan for Anaphylaxis, Allergy and Asthma. The Action Plan has to be updated annually.
- No medication is administered unless the parent or lawful guardian has given the Centre written permission to dispense the medication by filling out the medication authorisation sheet.
- All medications must be kept in the original container within expiry date and bearing the child's name, have a clear readable and original label. No medications will be administered if mixed in milk bottles or any pre mixed formula, drinks or liquids.
- Verbal authorisation by the parent to the person in charge for the medication to be administered may be given in an emergency with written authorisation as soon as possible.

Please note

- Medicine which is expired will not be administered
- Medications will not be administered to the child if the medication has another name on the medication.
- Sibling's medication cannot be administered to another sibling unless both children's name is clearly written on the prescribed label.

ADDITIONAL MEDICAL NEEDS POLICY

Parents/guardians of any child with additional medical needs (including but not limited to, asthma, anaphylaxis or allergy) must provide to the Director/Deputy Director an individual Medical Management Plan/ Action Plan for that child before the child attends the service.

A Medical Management Plan/ Action Plan must be prepared by the child's parents/guardians in consultation with the child's doctor or specialist and outline the child's condition, the symptoms and signs, and when and how medication is to be administered. The plan must be signed by the parents/guardians and doctor.

All staff members working with the children will be made aware of the child's medical needs and the plan of action to be implemented in case of emergency. All staff within the Centre are trained in First Aid and can observe and respond to the children noticing the signs and symptoms of illness or need for medication in consultation with the person in charge at the time in the room.

Your mobile telephone should be turned on at all times to enable contact to be made with you.

Staff will administer medication supplied by the parent, as and when necessary, according to the instructions on the Medical Management Plan. Parent will be notified once the medication is administered. If a child's condition deteriorates, the Director or person in-charge of the Centre will first call an ambulance and then contact the parents. If parents are not contactable the emergency contacts will be informed.

All children who require special medication will be unable to attend care if their prescribed medication as stated in their medical management plan is not brought into the Centre.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS POLICY RISK MINIMISATION PLAN

We aim to efficiently respond to and manage medical conditions at the Geelong Children's Centre ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children, staff, families and visitors.

Our Centre is committed to adhering to privacy and confidential procedures when dealing with individual health requirements. There are a number of concerns that must be considered when a child with a diagnosed health care need, allergy or medical condition is enrolled at the service. Key requirements must be in place prior to the child commencing at the Service to ensure their individual health and safety.

All children with a diagnosed medical condition must have a risk minimisation plan in place.

A meeting will be arranged with the parents/guardian by the Room Coordinator/ Kinder teachers as soon as the Centre has been advised of the medical condition. During this meeting a risk minimisation plan will be developed in consultation with the parent/guardian to ensure:

- That the risks relating to the child's specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition are assessed and minimized
- That practices and procedures in relation to the safe handling, preparation and consumption and service of food are developed and implemented
- That the parents/families are notified of any known allergens that pose a risk to a child and strategies for minimising the risk are developed and implemented
- Educators and volunteers can identify the child, the child's medical management plan and the location of the child's medication are developed and implemented

- That the child does not attend the Centre without medication prescribed by the child's medical practitioner in relation to the child's specific health need, allergy or relevant medical condition
- Plan(s) in conjunction with parents/guardians will be reviewed at least annually and/or will be revised with each change in the Medical Management Plan
- All relevant information pertaining to the child's health and medical condition is communicated to parents at the end of each day
- Any special activities taking place such as celebrations, sporting events and excursions have a plan to maintain safe inclusion of children
- Any allergens that may be present at the service will be communicated to parents and addressed through the Risk Minimisation Plan.
- Appropriate hygiene practices are followed when managing medical conditions in line with the Control and Exclusion of Infectious Diseases Policy
- Risk minimisation plans will be reviewed in collaboration with families every 6 months

Communication Plan

A communication plan will be created after the meeting with the parents/guardian to ensure:

- All relevant staff members and volunteers are informed about the medical conditions policy and the Individual Medical Management Plan or Allergy Plan and Risk Minimisation Plan for the child
- Parents are expected to notify the Room Coordinator of any changes to the child's medical management plans or allergy plan
- An ongoing individual child communication plan is created as part of the Risk Minimisation Plan so parents can communicate any changes to Medical Management Plan and Allergy plan for the child to the room coordinator. Room Coordinator then documents these changes in the communication plan with both parties initials and the date when changes were communicated.
- At all times, families who have a child attending the Service who have a diagnosed medical condition will be provided with a copy of this policy which includes a communication plan and any other relevant policies. All staff including the kitchen staff in the Centre are made aware of the changes in writing in their room communication diary regarding the changes to medical management plans/ allergy plans and risk minimisation plans.
- All staff members are informed of the service's medical conditions policy and new staff are handed the policy during induction along with other policies.

ANAPHYLAXIS POLICY

All staff have had training in the Management of Anaphylaxis

Values

This children's service believes that the safety and wellbeing of children who are at risk of anaphylaxis is a whole-of-community responsibility. The service is committed to:

- providing, as far as practicable, a safe and healthy environment in which children at risk of anaphylaxis can participate equally in all aspects of the children's program and experiences.
- raising awareness about allergies and anaphylaxis amongst the service community and children in

attendance.

- actively involving the parents/guardians of each child at risk of anaphylaxis in assessing risks, developing risk minimisation strategies and management strategies for their child.
- ensuring each staff member and other relevant adults have adequate knowledge of allergies, anaphylaxis and emergency procedures.
- facilitating communication to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children at risk of anaphylaxis.

Purpose

The aim of this policy is to:

- minimise the risk of an anaphylactic reaction occurring while the child is in the care of the children's service.
- ensure that staff members respond appropriately to an anaphylactic reaction by initiating appropriate treatment, including competently administering an EpiPen® and Anapen (adrenaline auto-injectors).
- raise the service community's awareness of anaphylaxis and its management through education and policy implementation.

Scope

This policy applies when a child diagnosed as being at risk of anaphylaxis by a qualified medical practitioner is enrolled at the children's service. It applies to children enrolled at the service, their parents/guardians, staff and Approved Provider. It also applies to other relevant members of the service community, such as students, volunteers and visiting specialists.

Staff responsible for the child at risk of anaphylaxis shall:

- ensure a copy of the child's anaphylaxis action plan is visible to all staff.
- follow the child's anaphylaxis action plan in the event of an allergic reaction, which may progress to anaphylaxis.
- In the situation where a child who has not been diagnosed as allergic, but who appears to be having an anaphylactic reaction:
 - Call an ambulance immediately by dialling 000.
 - Commence first aid measures.
 - Contact the parent/guardian.
 - Contact the person to be notified in the event of illness if the parent/guardian cannot be contacted.
- practise EpiPen® and Anapen (adrenaline auto-injectors) administration procedures using an EpiPen® and Anapen (adrenaline auto-injectors) trainer and "anaphylaxis scenarios" on a regular basis, preferably quarterly.
- ask all parents/guardians as part of the enrolment procedure, prior to their child's attendance at the service, whether the child has allergies and document this information on the child's enrolment record. If the child has allergies, ask the parents/guardians to provide a medical management plan signed by a Doctor.
- ensure that parents/guardians provide an anaphylaxis action plan signed by the child's Doctor and a complete EpiPen® and Anapen (adrenaline auto-injectors) kit while the child is present at the service.

- ensure that the EpiPen® and Anapen (adrenaline auto-injectors) kit is stored in a location that is known to all staff, including relief staff; easily accessible to adults (not locked away); inaccessible to children; and away from direct sources of heat.
- ensure that the EpiPen® and Anapen (adrenaline auto-injectors) kit for each child at risk of anaphylaxis is carried on excursions that this child attends.
- regularly check the EpiPen® and Anapen (adrenaline auto-injectors) expiry date. (The manufacturer will only guarantee the effectiveness of the EpiPen® and Anapen (adrenaline auto-injectors) to the end of the nominated expiry month.)
- provide information to the service community about resources and support for managing allergies and anaphylaxis.

ACCIDENTS/INJURY/TRAUMA POLICY AND PROCEDURE

In the event of any accident, your child will be comforted and appropriate first aid action taken. The parent will be notified. The person in charge is notified immediately and the accident is recorded on the Accident/ Injury/ Trauma Record Sheet. Parents will be notified of the accident immediately. The parent is requested to read and sign the incident report upon arrival at the Centre. Any incident which requires medical intervention or hospitalisation will be reported to the Department of Education and Training within 24 hours.

If the accident is considered serious or is a potential life threatening incident an ambulance will be called immediately and then the parent or the emergency contacts will be notified by the Director or

BLOOD SPILLS POLICY

In the event of a blood spill, staff will follow specific procedures for the protection and the prevention of contamination/infection of both children and staff.

Staff wear gloves at all times when dealing with bodily fluids such as blood. Pressure is applied to the bleeding area with disposable paper towelling. When bleeding stops, gloves and paper towel are disposed of into a plastic bag and placed in rubbish bin. Surface (e.g. floor, bench) is cleaned with warm water and detergent and the area to be disinfected. (Gloves are worn). Gloves are then disposed of in a plastic bag and placed in bin. Hands are thoroughly washed after this procedure. If there is blood on clothing bedding or toys it is immediately removed and thoroughly washed. Each room has been provided with a Blood Spill Kit.

INCLUSION POLICY

The Centre is committed to ensuring an inclusive environment that is accepting and accommodating of different, background and abilities, and embraces acceptance of individuality.

Educators aim to ensure an environment that welcomes children and parents regardless of race, religion, ability, culture or special needs. We aim for a sense of belonging and participation for all children, and offer a balance across all areas of child development, learning and experiences, avoiding bias and reflecting cultural diversity by recognising, appreciating and respecting children for their individual needs, interests, strengths and abilities they bring to the dynamics of the group care setting. Educators aim to provide integrating experiences for all children involved in our Centre programs.

Educators promote on-going discussions of the child's needs with all those concerned and may work in consultation with a broad range of support agencies. Educators will work as a team involving the child's parents in all areas of communication, programming and Centre activities.

Educators shares the vision of providing high quality care in a secure, responsive and enjoyable environment.

CODE OF CONDUCT (STAFF)

Geelong Children's Centre is committed to the safety participation, wellbeing and empowerment of all children accessing our service. All staff, volunteers and board members of Geelong Children's Centre will observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children. We support the right of the child and will act without hesitation to ensure a child-safe environment is maintained at all times.

We also support the right and wellbeing of our staff, students and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all participants.

Geelong Children's Centre is a Child Safe organisation that adheres to child safe policy at all times:

- welcomes and respects children, their parents and caregivers;
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse;
- respects staff, students and volunteers by providing support, training and guidelines to do their jobs well;
- identifies potential risk to children and works continuously to prevent and reduce them;
- encourages parental participation;
- values children by asking their ideas, views and also listens to them, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another;
- promotes the needs of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable, recognising that these differences do not reduce the child's right to be safe or the organisation's responsibility to protect the child from harm.
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities);
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child;
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to Geelong Children's Centre's Child Safety Officer Jane Rathjen and ensure any allegation is reported to the police or child protection;
- reporting any child safety concerns to Geelong Children's Centre's Child Safety Officer Jane Rathjen; and
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them;

Staff will:

- conduct themselves in a manner consistent with their position as a positive role model to children, and as a representative of the Geelong Children’s Centre;
- follow Centre policy guidelines around the safety of children as outlined in the Child Safe Policy;
- believe and practice respect for children and their families;
- raise all concerns, issues, problems with the Child Safety Officer Jane Rathjen as soon as possible;
- make sure all allegations or suspicions of abuse are recorded and acted upon;
- engage children in safe appropriate play;
- show warmth towards children in their daily interaction, displaying cultural sensitivity;
- spend time with all children equally;
- accept all children as individuals;
- practice primary care giving and work towards practicing relationships with all children;
- celebrate special events through activities and song;
- not take children at any time from the Centre unless permission has been sought from individual parents for their child to attend an excursion or to pick up after work;
- not develop any ‘special’ relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children);
- not exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps. Sitting on laps could be appropriate sometime, for example while reading a storybook to a small child in an open plan area);
- not put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors);
- do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes;
- not engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities);
- use appropriate language in the presence of children;
- not express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children;
- not discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability; and
- Staff are prohibited to discuss any issues pertaining to the Centre operation inside and outside of business hours on all social media sites. This includes details relating to staff, children or parents. Doing so can lead to disciplinary action and including termination of employment. (Internet, Social Media and Email Policy)

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

By observing these standards, you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to Geelong Children’s Centre Child Safety Officer Jane Rathjen.

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY

Educators ensure there are age, stage developmental expectations of individual children. The setting of limits will be appropriate, reasonable and consistent. Positive encouragement, guidance and redirection is in place for encouraging appropriate behaviour. The environment is set up to minimise conflict by allowing children the freedom of choice and a wide range of experiences both indoors and outdoors.

Educators aim for consistency in their behaviour and approach to support children and their needs, being positive and proactive role models in their everyday interactions, hence valuing the importance of ongoing educator and parental consultation and support.

The Behaviour Guidance Policy used at this Centre is one of positive guidance. It offers children choices of activities, re-directs children to other activities or experiences, and suggests alternative activities and outlets for children to undertake and express their feelings in more appropriate and acceptable ways. Educators encourage all children to acknowledge and talk about their feelings rather than use destructive physical action or negative behaviour. Educators support and assist children in resolving conflicts and acknowledge their efforts to do so. Educators support one another by developing strategies to prevent further negative behaviour and share these with the child's parents/guardians. Educators maintain eye contact remaining at the children's level whilst talking to them in a calm and appropriate tone of voice at all times.

Children are respected as individuals and are not subjected to any form of punishment, dragging, pulling, hitting, or pushing. The demeaning of, shouting or yelling at, or threatening of children is not practiced at this Centre. Children are not isolated as a result of inappropriate behaviour.

Implementation:

All educators are committed to a positive, encouraging approach to behaviour guidance which:

- differentiates the child from the behaviour, (use "I" messages);
- supports parents/guardians and educators working together on matters of concern.
- deals with inappropriate and challenging behaviour;
- recognises the developmental influences on behaviour at different ages;
- avoids giving children attention only when they are behaving inappropriately.

Procedures for behaviour guidance:

For all children in their care:

- educators have appropriate developmental expectations;
- are sensitive to the child and take into account background factors, including health, family circumstances and culture;
- educators avoid humiliating, embarrassing or frightening the child and focus on the behaviour not the child;
- educators provide the child with positive experiences and encouragement so that they develop their self-esteem.

In setting up the environment, educators:

- allow children to make choices where appropriate and accept their decisions;
- avoid setting up the environment in ways that encourage inappropriate behaviour;
- are alert to potential problems and step in before negative behaviour occurs;
- encourage children to develop conflict resolution skills with the guidance of educators.

In setting limits for children, educators:

- ensure room limits are appropriate;
- explain the limits clearly;
- make sure all educators consistently set the same limits/consequences;
- guide the child through actions and words.

As responsible educators:

- be consistent and show no favouritism or bias;
- model appropriate behaviour;
- make sure of the facts before taking action;
- respond to difficult situations calmly and rationally;
- ask someone else to step in when they feel they need assistance;
- consult with other educators and the Director if there are ongoing, challenging behaviour problems;
- inform parents of situation and discuss behaviour guidance techniques used.

Procedure for dealing with ongoing unacceptable, challenging behaviour:

- All incidents of inappropriate behaviour are recorded. Parents are always kept in the loop and are made aware of the behaviour at the end of the day or via phone call by the Room Coordinator
- Management strategies are discussed with parents/guardians to maintain consistency and to support the child.
- If the inappropriate behaviour continues, further professional support agencies may be sourced for educators, parents and the child. (Strictly confidential).
- The Director is kept informed of the proceedings.
- A meeting with parents, educators and the Director will be arranged to discuss the outcomes, advice and strategies provided by the external source. An agreed timeline for an improvement in the child's behaviour is set in place.
- A follow-up meeting with the parents will be organised to review the child's progress and improvement.
- If the unacceptable behaviour continues and all strategies and forms of action have proved unsuccessful, the Centre is obliged to balance its commitment to the child exhibiting the behaviour with its duty of care to all other children. The parents will be requested to make alternative care arrangements for the child.

DENTAL CARE POLICY

Geelong Children's Centre strives to reduce the incidence of dental decay in the children in our care by developing and implementing high quality oral health practices, assisting children in developing the skills and knowledge to protect the health of their teeth for life and providing educators and parents with the most up to date information and advice to support them in ensuring oral hygiene at home and healthy food choices to prevent dental decay and gum disease.

Educators promote and provide dental health education for children by increasing their awareness, appreciation and knowledge of their mouth and healthy teeth, and encourage the importance of regular brushing of teeth. The Centre provides periodic visits from health care professionals to discuss dental hygiene with educators, families and children.

The Centre acts as a role model for children in our care by providing good nutritional meals and snacks, always finishing off with fruit to "clean" their teeth. Only milk and water is offered to drink.

Dental Accidents

If a dental accident occurs at the service, the following will occur:

- The accident will be managed as an emergency. Accident, Injury and Trauma and Record will be completed.
- The tooth will not be reinserted into the socket, but gently rinsed in clean water or clean milk to remove any blood and will be placed in a clean container or wrapped in cling wrap to give to the child's parent or dentist.
- Seek dental advice as soon as possible and ensure educators or the parent takes the tooth/tooth fragment to the dentist with the child.

NUTRITION POLICY

The Centre actively encourages good eating habits from babyhood and develops in children positive attitudes towards eating. This Policy was developed in consultation with parents and staff.

To provide children with 50% of recommended daily intake of foods.

The Centre acknowledges that starting a child's life with proper nutrition and good eating habits is vital for good health and well-being throughout their life.

The Centre aims to meet 50% of your child's daily food requirements as recommended by Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013. Sample of Australian dietary guidelines for food provided is as follows (click on the link):<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/n55fchildrenbrochure.pdf>

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION GO TO www.eatforhealth.gov.au and www.feedaustralia.org.au/

Menus are planned with the dietary guidelines for children and adolescents in Australia NHMRC 2013 and feed Australia. Foods that are high in fat, salt and sugar are not included in menu planning. The menu ensures that there is a variety of food every day with a range of tastes, textures, aromas and flavours.

Educators sit down with children and offer a calm, relaxed, happy, social atmosphere in which children eat. Foods from all major food groups, as well as milk, are offered each day. We offer a 4 week rotating menu with fruit and vegetables served at each meal. Morning, afternoon tea and snacks comprising various foods are offered each day. Milk and water are the only drinks offered to children. Menus are displayed in the children's rooms and the notice board in the foyer.

To encourage awareness of good eating habits, educators talk to children when at their table, use books, discussions and songs to reinforce the healthy eating message. Independence is encouraged at mealtimes with children self-feeding, using utensils, setting tables and clearing up. Food is not used as a reward or punishment; it is also not used as a comforter for unsettled children.

All children are encouraged to taste their food. If a child refuses to eat, fruit is offered - a separate meal is not provided; it is only provided if a child has a special dietary requirement. We will work in conjunction with parents and health professional in ensuring the child's RDI whilst in care is met.

The Centre caters for children with food allergies, intolerances or any special dietary requirements. Any allergies or food intolerances are recorded in the child's enrolment records, displayed in the kitchen and displayed in that child's room. Educators and cook are also made aware if any child has a risk to any specified ingredient to which they may be allergic. The parent is to present to the Centre a detailed allergy/anaphylaxis management plan and an emergency action plan including an Epipen® and Anapen (adrenaline auto-injectors) or allergy medication.

In the event of the child having ingested an allergic food, the emergency action plan is implemented.

Further information on severe reaction to allergies can be obtained from:

<https://www.allergy.org.au/patients/information>

Policy on choking is documented in the policy folder situated at the entrance to the Centre, enclosed in the parents' enrolment package, and displayed in all children's rooms.

The Centre provides storage for breast milk, and parents are welcome to breast-feed. Breast milk is frozen if necessary, or refrigerated if it is to be used that day. Breast milk for feeding is reheated in a jug of boiling water, not in the microwave. The Centre will work with parents on the introduction of cow's milk and cups for feeding your baby. As an addition to milk drinks, babies are offered cooled, boiled water as necessary, particularly on hot days.

The Centre provides cow's milk but parents are expected to bring their own formulas for their children to make up their daily bottles in an airtight container with the child's name clearly written on it or to bring ready bottles of breast milk or formula with the date of preparation or expression. Parents are also expected to supply the labeled bottles with child's name as well. Bottles are heated in the microwave and tested on staff's inner arm's skin for correct temperature. Bottles are heated only once then the formula is discarded. Bottles are rinsed with hot soapy water and returned to parents at the end of the day. Centre bottles and teats are soaked in hot soapy water and sterilized in dishwasher as required.

The introduction of solids is undertaken in consultation with parents. Parents are encouraged to introduce solids when there is an increased appetite, able to hold their head up and begin to control their tongue to take food from a spoon. Introduction of solids is encouraged from approximately 5-6 months, but only after parent consultation. All foods introduced are done after parent consultation.

The Centre provides for the children's morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and late snack. However, if children have any specific cultural/religious or dietary needs and wish to supply their own food, it must be labelled with the child's name and ingredients and automatically put in the refrigerator. No food is to be brought into the Centre at any time or kept in children's bags unless arrangements have been made with the Director.

The Centre has emergency foods in stock in case of power / gas interruption, these being: sandwiches, vegemite, light cream cheese, baked beans, salad vegetables, cheese and fruit.

To assist parents with information on children's diet the Centre displays posters, booklets etc. in the foyer throughout the year.

The Centre is registered with the City of Greater Geelong for purposes of food safety and food handling procedures in which staff are trained. The Centre's food safety procedures are inspected and audited each year by outside organisation. We have four staff members who are trained as Food Safety Supervisors. All educators have informal training of food handling.

Articles and policy on nutrition will be displayed on notice boards and other various locations throughout the Centre at least four times a year by Centre educators.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

This policy applies to parents and educators when involved with Geelong Children's Centre.

These requirements include occupational health and safety; Education and Care Services provisions and other child protection measures.

All staff and educators are responsible for establishing and maintaining professional and appropriate roles, relationships and boundaries with children and other adults.

To protect everyone at Geelong Children's Centre from misunderstandings or a violation of this

professional relationship, parents and educators are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with being a positive role model to children while displaying support for the program and the Centre staff.

All adults are responsible for their behavior. A breach of this policy may have serious consequences including for example, denial of service or mandatory report to the authorities.

Policy Expectations

To meet the expectations of this policy, parents and educators will:

- Treat all children and adults associated with our program with courtesy and respect.
- Accept cultural differences, differing needs and personal ability.
- Support a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all children, other parents, staff and volunteers.
- Encourage open communication and invite children and adults to participate in the decisions that affect them.
- Report any concerns or incidents of child abuse/harm whether intentional or not.
- Feel safe, be safe and reinforce safety.
- Report any injury or hazard in a building or playground that may cause an injury.
- Respect the property of the Centre and other people's property, privacy and confidentiality.
- Come to our Centre fit and well and go home in the same condition. This includes being unaffected by drugs or alcohol.
- Understand that the curriculum is a play based
- Conduct yourself in a manner that is consistent with the above principles and values.

Responsibility

The Director is responsible for monitoring this policy and procedures.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Geelong Children's Centre Inc. considers that sexual harassment and bullying is an unacceptable form of behaviour which will not be tolerated under any circumstances. We believe that our employees, including our independent contractors, have the right to work in an environment which is free from sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is not only **unacceptable**, it is **unlawful** pursuant to State Legislation (Equal Opportunity Act, 1995) and the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act (1984).

PRIVACY POLICY

Geelong Children's Centre is committed to ensuring that the confidentiality of the information given to us is maintained at all times. On enrolment of your child at Geelong Children's Centre, we request you to complete the enrolment form which includes personal information and contact details. Our privacy policy sets out this commitment to protect your personal information against misuse.

The Health Records Act states all personal and health records are required to be kept in accordance with the National Privacy Principles applicable to both the public and private sectors. The National Privacy Principles control the way in which Geelong Children's Centre may collect, store and disclose your personal information.

Consent and Personal Information

Personal information is any information which may identify you or your dependents and may include your name, address, contact details, your child's health details which may be relevant whilst they are in care, and other sensitive information.

Geelong Children's Centre will only collect personal information from you or about you from third parties with your consent. We will only use your personal information for any approved purposes with your consent.

Collection and Storage of Personal Information

Geelong Children's Centre collects your personal information to enable us to provide a high quality childcare service and to fulfil our legal obligations under the Children's Services Regulations. All information relating to clients and staff is kept in secure, locked filing cabinets and all steps are taken to protect your personal information from misuse, loss and from unauthorised access or disclosure. Where personal information is no longer required, it is destroyed.

Requests to Access Personal Information

You have a right of access in full to your personal information. You may request details of the personal information we hold about you or your children by writing to the Director of the Centre. The Centre may take up to a maximum of 45 days to provide you with the personal information requested and, if necessary, to verify your right to receive this information.

You may view the information on the premises in the presence of the Director or another named member of staff, but the information may not be removed from the premises.

Protection of Children's Privacy in all Rooms of the Centre

All rooms will operate to protect your child's privacy in regards to their toileting, behaviour, accidents and medication.

Denial of Access

Geelong Children's Centre may refuse access to personal information where:

- providing access would pose a serious threat to the life or health of any individual, or
- providing access would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of other individuals.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The staff in the Centre has a duty to protect all documentation and information regarding children and parents from being discussed or disclosed to unauthorised persons. Any information regarding clients should not be discussed or disclosed by staff outside the Centre. Such information may include: staff, children, parents, families and Board of Management. On commencement of employment, staff, students and volunteers will sign a legal document on confidentiality. Breaches of any confidential nature may mean dismissal of that staff member.

CLOTHING POLICY

If possible please dress your children in suitable clothes to enable them to partake in all activities e.g. sand pit, water play and painting. Some activities result in clothing being stained. Children need to wear clothes that do not restrict their play e.g. long skirts or tight fitting pants restricts climbing and running. Tight and/or sleeveless clothing and dangly jewellery is not recommended for safety reasons. The Centre provides written information to parents regarding the type of clothing that is suitable for children.

The Centre requires all children and staff to wear hats/beanies on every day of the year that the Centre is open. Staff to consult with parents on the appropriate clothing to be worn in all types of weather conditions. Staff advise of children's comfort as regards, under or over dressing in all weather conditions – appropriate fabrics are advised to families.

Staff will ensure that all children are comfortable at all times when in care at the Centre. We have available spare clothes, if children have toileting accidents or water accidents. The Centre has a large array of clothing in case of emergencies.

Children's clothing must be named at all times. Unnamed clothing will be sent to a charity organisation.

Clothing and dressing play a vital role in children's learning and development. Clothing incorporates what children wear; clothes provided by the Centre and dress up clothes. Staff provides a variation of suitable dress up clothes and consider health and safety issues when choosing dress up clothes.

Staff discuss with children their interests in clothing, and staff model dress eg. Wearing of hats, proper shoes. Safe, comfortable footwear that fits well is essential. Shoes must provide support as well as protection for the feet and allow for participation in all the activities. Open toed sandals/ shoes or thongs are a hazard for children while climbing or running as it can snub their toes.

During the warmer months over summer (Sun-Smart months) we do allow children the opportunity to take their shoes off during play. However, this is for a set time during the day and would be based on the individual needs of the children in each room.

Staff show respect to children, by giving them opportunities to dress and undress themselves in particular if they have specific clothing preferences. Staff use dressing as a learning experience for children by encouraging children to try dressing themselves and only help as necessary.

Staff are aware of differing issues with families re dressing as regards their culture or religion, or if a parent does not want their child to get dirty. Effective communication with families that is non-judgemental and conveys a sense of working together shows respect to families re each family's differences. This policy is maintained by staff observing and taking action on children's clothing comfort.

Babies and Toddlers:

Babies and Toddlers should be dressed appropriately to suit all weather conditions.

It is policy that any child under 3 is **not permitted** to wear the following:

- Singlet t-shirts
- Singlet dresses
- Jeans
- Tight fitting short or long pants (with buttons)
- Belted pants
- No open toe shoes, sandals and thongs.

3-5 aged children

These children should **NOT** wear:

- Tight jeans or belts
- Singlet t-shirts
- Singlet dresses

- No open toe shoes, sandals and thongs

CHILDREN'S SLEEP/REST PERIODS POLICY

All children are supervised at all times whilst they are sleeping/resting.

All children have individual bedding provided for sleep and rest time. If children are tired before their designated sleep time, they are encouraged to have an earlier sleep / rest as dictated by the child. Parents provide comforters such as dummy, blanket, soft toy etc. if required by the children.

Parents and staff consult together on what is an appropriate length of sleep for the child. No child is forced to sleep. All children's sleep times are recorded for the parents' information.

All children are made comfortable when going to bed. Linen in cots and stretchers is used on an individual basis for each child. Linen in cots is changed daily for all children in babies' room. Stretcher linen is changed according to the child's attendance, e.g. daily children every Friday, part-time children every fortnight or when necessary.

To reduce the risk of SIDS, staff at this Centre:

Lay babies on their back to sleep, from birth.

Babies, under one year of age, wherever they sleep, should be placed on their back to sleep, unless otherwise directed in writing by the child's medical practitioner.

Sleep babies with face uncovered.

Babies will be placed at the bottom of the cot to prevent them from wriggling down under bedclothes. No quilts or doonas will be used. Light bedding, such as blankets, will be firmly tucked in at the bottom to prevent them covering the baby's head during sleep. A safe infant sleeping bag with fitted neck and armholes is a good alternative for bedding.

Keep babies smoke free.

Infants and young children will not be exposed to cigarette smoke while attending this Childcare Service

The primary safe resting and sleeping practices for children in care at this service are:

- All children will be placed on their back to rest when first being settled for a rest. If a child turns onto their side or stomach during sleep, then allow them to find their own sleeping position.
- All children will sleep/rest with their face uncovered with no comforters after they have been asleep. If a dummy falls out of the child's mouth during sleep it is not re-inserted.
- Children's rest environments are free from cigarette or tobacco smoke as detailed in the service's Smoke Free Environment Policy.
- The rest environment, equipment and materials will be safe and free from hazards as detailed in the service's Occupational Health and Safety Policy and the Maintenance of Building and Equipment Policy.
- Staff/educators monitor resting children at all times and supervise the rest environment as per licensing regulations/best practice standards.

Safe resting practices for babies

- Babies will be placed on their back to rest.
- If a medical condition exists that prevents a child from being placed on their back, the alternative resting practice must be directed in writing by the child's medical practitioner.

- If babies over 1 year old turn over during their sleep, allow them to find their own sleeping position, but always lay them on their back when first placing them to rest. Babies aged younger than 12 months who have not been observed to repeatedly roll from back to front and back again on their own are re-positioned onto their back when they roll onto their front or side.
- At no time will a baby's face be covered with bed linen.
- Comforters will be removed after they fall asleep. If a dummy falls out of a baby's mouth during sleep it is not re-inserted.
- To prevent a baby from wriggling down under bed linen, they will be placed with their feet closest to the bottom end of the cot.
- Quilts and duvets will not be used as bed linen. Pillows, soft toys, lamb's wool and cot bumpers are not recommended or utilized at Geelong Children's Centre.
- Light bedding is the preferred option, which must be tucked in to prevent the baby from pulling bed linen over their head.
- Babies over three months of age are not wrapped as the startle reflex disappears at around three months of age. If a baby is wrapped when sleeping baby's stage of development is considered and baby's arms are left free.
- Sleeping bags with a fitted neck and arm holes are an alternative option to bed linen and encourage a baby to rest on their back. Sleeping bags should not have a hood.
- Self-feeding is not permitted in cots and or on the floor.

Safe resting practices for toddlers/ 3-5 year old children

- Toddlers/ 3-5 year old children will be placed on their back to rest, unless otherwise directed in writing by the child's medical practitioner.
- If toddlers or 3-5 year old children turn over during their sleep, allow them to find their own sleeping position, but always lay them on their back when first placing them to rest.
- Comforters will be removed after they have been asleep. If a dummy falls out of the child's mouth during sleep it is not re-inserted.

The Centre caters for the children's individual needs for rest and sleep. Children's behaviour is observed for signs of tiredness and irritability. Children are encouraged to dress and undress themselves; guidance by staff is undertaken when children are having problems. Children are not to wear bibs, hoddies or jewelry, teething beads or necklace or hair accessories in bed.

Children sleep in individual stretchers with linen changed every Friday for fulltime children and every fortnight for part time children. The sleep room is well ventilated with open skylight and air conditioning/heating. The room temperature is set to enable children to sleep in comfort. Children are only taken to the sleep room if they show signs of tiredness.

This Centre implements the Red Nose safe sleeping practices. Red Nose safe sleeping practices kit is in Director's office for all educators to access. We provide training to all educators every year on Safe sleeping practices.

Information on the latest developments in the children's need for rest, sleep and comfort accessed through professional literature and the internet. This information will be relayed to families through Educa, information reading material and on parent notice boards across the service.

PREVENTION OF CHOKING / ALLERGIES/ PROVISION OF FOOD FOR SPECIAL OCCASSIONS

Choking is due to the lodgement of a foreign object in the casualty's airway. In some instances, the object lodges at the epiglottis, the entry to the airway, but does not enter the airway itself. Both cause initial coughing, the body's reflex action to release the obstruction.

If choking occurs – First Aid measures to be followed by educators/staff:

When a child is choking:

- Immediately check if the child is still able to breathe, cough or cry. If so, they may be able to dislodge the object by coughing.
- Do not try to dislodge the object by hitting the child on the back or squeezing the stomach – this may move the object into a more dangerous position and cause the child to stop breathing.
- Stay with the child and watch to see if their breathing improves.
- If the child is not breathing easily within a few minutes, call triple zero (000).
- If, after the coughing settles down, there is any continued noisy breathing or coughing, take the child to see a doctor, as the object may have lodged in the windpipe or airway. If this is the case, it will need to be removed in hospital using a special instrument.

If the child is not breathing:

- For a young child (under about five years), place the child face down over your lap so that the head is lower than the chest. For an older child, lay them on their side. Give four sharp blows on the back between the shoulder blades to dislodge the object.
- Check again for signs of breathing.
- If the child is still not breathing, call triple zero (000) and ask for an ambulance. The ambulance service operator will be able to tell you what to do next. You will probably be advised to start expired air resuscitation (mouth to mouth) while waiting for help.
- Do not use the Heimlich manoeuvre (squeezing the abdomen or hitting the child in the abdomen) unless directed to by the ambulance service operator, as this can cause serious damage to organs in the abdomen.

At Geelong Children's Centre:

- All food is inspected by the educator serving the food before it is given to any child.
- Geelong Children's Centre is nuts free Centre.
- Apples are cut and the skin inspected before being given to toddlers. If necessary, apples are peeled. Babies under 8 months are not given cut pear or apple but given pureed apple/pear.
- Vegetables are soft and served in small pieces or mashed.
- Children are seated at all times when eating/drinking.
- Educators actively supervise all children when they are eating/ drinking.
- Babies are not left alone with a bottle.
- Mealtimes are positive, relaxed and social.
- Children are encouraged to try different food types and textures in a positive eating environment.
- Cords, strings or ribbons are not attached to dummies.
- Cots/ stretchers are away from blinds and cords.

ALLERGY POLICY

- All allergies and intolerances to food are documented on enrolment forms.
- If the allergy is severe, the parent will make an appointment with the Director to discuss the appropriate regime and present the medical action plan.
- If there are any changes to allergies and dietary requirements parents are required to notify the Room coordinators/ kinder teachers. Room coordinators/ Kinder teachers in parent's presence will document the changes to the allergies and dietary requirements in the Risk Minimization plan under Communication plan section. Parents and Room coordinators/ Kinder teachers will sign and date to acknowledge the changes.
- All room educators/staff are notified of children's allergies and these are posted in an appropriate position in the child's room for all educators to see.
- Children's allergies are documented and placed on the kitchen noticeboard for cook and kitchen hand.
- For all children who do have allergies, their food is either made separately or educators will check with the cook to determine the appropriate ingredients.
- Children with food intolerances are also documented in the Allergy list in the rooms and on the kitchen notice board. A risk minimization plan and communication plan is also developed with the parent.
- All educators are made aware of any changes to children's allergies and intolerances in writing in the communication diary and changes are made to the allergy list and kitchen staff notified.
- If a child collapses, DRSABCD procedure is enacted and an ambulance is called.
- All staff/educators regularly update their anaphylaxis training, so they are aware of the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- All staff/ educators regularly update their knowledge of the epipen & anapen (auto injector devices). There is anaphylaxis kit in the Director's office to enable staff to practice. Centre stores Epipen, Allergy and Asthma medication for emergencies.

Any food brought into the Centre by parents is inspected for suitability. In accordance with the nutritional nature of our food policy, we ask parents not to bring any food/ drinks or snacks – unless it is used for a specific dietary need and the parent has had discussion with the Director regarding the suitability of the meal and it meets our policy and procedure. Any such food is to be given to an educator from the child's room for safe storage. Parents are expected to label the food/ drink or meal with the child's full name and also write the ingredients and date. In accordance with our nutrition policy we ask parents not to bring ice-creams/ cakes or lollies for children's birthday. Special food / multicultural food is provided to children on special occasions e.g. school holiday programs, special days or Christmas party. The format of the Christmas celebration is determined by the Educators/Staff/Management and the Board each year.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Evacuation procedures are followed by each room throughout the Centre and an emergency evacuation box containing all the required items and documentation. Fire drills are carried out every term in each room to ensure the service safety standards.

The Director is responsible for ensuring that all educators, including relief educators and staff members, are aware of the service's policy and procedures relating to Emergency Management and Evacuation.

Informal games and discussions will be used to familiarise children with the service's evacuation and emergency procedures.

The Centre follows the Emergency Management Plan to provide a detailed plan of how the Centre will prepare and respond to emergency situations.

A copy of the Emergency Management Plan is available for parents and the Evacuation Procedure for each room is displayed in the rooms and on the notice board in the foyer.

CENTRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

- Director of the centre on site takes charge and decides who does what
- Call 000;
- Inform the Emergency Services of the nature of the emergency (i.e. “There is smoke in the building, internal fire, gas leak, chemical spill, bush fire, bomb threat, flood”);
- Seek advice from Emergency and Security Management Unit (03) 9589 6266.
- If the decision to evacuate is made, using all available staff/volunteers calmly move/carry/walk the children out of the building; to your pre-determined outdoor assembly area if this is the evacuation option;
- Take the children’s attendance list, contact numbers, mobile phone, medications, staff roster and your Emergency Evacuation Kit and First Aid kit;
- Once at assembly area, check all children and staff are accounted for;
- Call 000 and inform them of your location at the outdoor assembly area;
- Focus on safety and well-being of staff and children;
- Wait for Emergency Services to arrive or for further information/direction.