




## Parent Information

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# Contents

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Our Commitment to you	03
Settling into Care	04
Working together to increase confidence and learning	05
Am I entitled to Government Assistance?	07
Our Fee Structure	08
Signing in and out of the centre	09
Early Years Learning Framework and our centre	11
National Quality Framework	12
Room Details and Routines	14
Sustainable Practices	14
Child Care Policies and Procedures	15
Accidents and Incidents	15
Health and Hygiene	15
Emergency Evacuation	16
Immunisation	16
Medication	16
Nutrition	16
Cultural Diversity	16
Confidentiality of Centre Records	16
Sun Protection	17
Clothing	17
Priority of access	17



# Our Commitment to you

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G8 Education Limited is one of Australia's most successful owners and operators of education and care services, with well-respected and recognised brands located across Australia.

No two services are the same as we understand that each community has different needs and wants for the care of their children and so are tailored accordingly. Opening and closing times, extra-curricular activities, provision of inclusions such as nappies and meals are designed to support our families and provide children with the best possible start to their education and care experience.

Each education and care service has their own unique philosophy that guides their practices and curriculum decisions. The creation of this philosophy is a collaborative process that asks for involvement by all those that utilise the service including team members, families, the children and contributions from the wider community. Your service's philosophy can be found in the foyer.

Our services are assisted by a support office team who provide guidance and advice to our educators so that they can focus on what they do best - provide education and care for you and your family. A dedicated operations manager visits each service regularly to mentor the team and monitor the service policies and procedures.

Our commitment to our families is reflected in all that we do. We:

- Provide the children in our care with a happy and safe environment that recognises their individual skills, talents and interests
- Provide fully qualified educators to oversee your child's individual educational program and assist them with a comprehensive school readiness program when it is time for your child to make the transition to formal schooling
- Provide a wide range of educational resources that are age and developmentally appropriate for all children in our care
- Incorporate the use of technology, interactive whiteboards, ipads and computers to provide

your child with endless opportunities to further their interests and gain experience with real life tools that they will use once they move to formal schooling.

- Provide beautifully presented, easily accessible environments both indoors and outdoors that invite children to explore, make choices and empower them to make decision about their learning
- Are committed to providing child safe environments and all educators are provided with regular child protection training.
- Seek feedback from all stakeholders in the service on our policies and procedures to ensure that they are meeting our families needs.





## Settling in to care

Introducing your child to care can be an emotional time. It is fair to expect some tearful goodbyes in the early days however; there are many ways to assist your child with this transition.

Prepare your child by attending the centre for an hour or two a week to familiarise themselves with this new environment. This is also a great opportunity for you to spend time with the educators and centre director.

Understanding your child's needs and providing an environment that meets those needs is crucial. Our educators play an active role in gathering information from you and your family to create a smooth transition between home and the educational environment.

On your child's first day in care we assign a primary caregiver and child buddy to assist in settling your child each day. Communication between parent, child and educator is crucial in helping our families to adjust.

We encourage parents to participate in our programs, allowing them an insight into their child's day to day activities. Parents are welcome to spend time in the centre and share those special moments with their children or phone us during the day to check on their child's progress.

*“Separation anxiety is a normal stage in a child's life.”*

# Working together to increase confidence and learning

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Success in early childhood is a goal that both parents and educators have for their children. Learning improves when parents are involved in their child's education.

We encourage parents to actively participate in the care of their children through involvement in decision making with regard to their child's care and education. Parents are welcome to spend time in the centre and share special occasions with their child. You can become involved by joining the parent committee or helping out in the centre's daily routine. Please speak with your child's educator for more information.

Parents are also encouraged to be involved in an advisory and consultative manner. We encourage parents to be involved in the review of our centre's philosophy, policies and procedures. These opportunities will be made available through regular communication in your parent pocket, in the foyer area and in your child's room.

Some of the many ways we communicate include: books, newsletters, information meetings, parent information areas, feedback forms, parent meetings, special events, emails and day books. Please speak to your centre director in regards to your individual preference for communication.

It is important that educators and parents get to know each other to develop trust and respect. Children succeed when there is an open exchange of information that links the home with the centre. It is helpful when parents exchange ideas about the child's special talents and hobbies. We can then focus the child's learning through their interests, strengths and abilities.

Each child will have an individual portfolio of their learning at the centre. As a parent you are able to access, view and add to this at any time. Please speak to your child's educators for more information.

Information regarding your child's day will be documented daily for you to view. This includes details of sleeping habits, toilet practices, child's response to the day and any health and safety issues that may have arisen.

Our educators will also speak with you informally upon collection of your child or through phone calls if any issues arise during the day.

Throughout the year we also offer parent/teacher interviews as a more formal time for a parent and a teacher to talk. Just like every child is different, so will be each parent/teacher interview.

Children are encouraged to develop social skills that will allow them to resolve conflicts and meet their needs without the use of aggressive or destructive behaviours.

Children are encouraged to respect themselves and others. When educators guide a child's behaviour they aim to provide the child with clear guidelines as to why a particular behaviour is unacceptable. Children are given realistic limits to follow while they are in care.

Children at times run into a roadblock or two. This is where communication is vital to solving these problems.

Our educators are here to ensure that your child is happy and healthy in their care. If there is a problem that arises that you feel you need to resolve with our educators, then please let us know.

All grievances will be taken seriously and our best effort will always be forthcoming. All outcomes will be discussed with the parent who is concerned. Our grievance policy is displayed in the centre foyer.



## Educators appreciate it when parents:

- ✓ Help their children understand that learning is important
- ✓ Set expectations for learning, by taking into account their child's ability
- ✓ Show an interest in what their child is learning and what is happening at the centre
- ✓ Remember that at this age, playing is learning too!
- ✓ Read the memos and information sheets that are sent home with their child
- ✓ Take note of important dates on the calendar



“Keeping in touch and working together is the best way to ensure a high quality education for our children, and to help ensure their success not only in the centre and the early years, but also in life”



## Am I entitled to Government Assistance?

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Child Care Benefit (CCB) is a payment made by the Commonwealth Government to help families with the cost of quality child care. A family's eligibility is subject to an income test, which is administered by the Department of Human Services (DHS).

It is the responsibility of the parent to register for Child Care Benefit. Information and forms can be accessed from the DHS Office (through Centrelink) or families can call direct on 136 150.

With the introduction of the Government's Child Care Management System (CCMS), families will receive a CCB fee reduction only if they have registered with Centrelink, are eligible for CCB, have a formal enrolment at the centre and the centre has received confirmation from the Government pertaining to the percentage of CCB they are eligible for. If parents are not eligible for CCB, full fees must be paid.

Most families are also entitled to 50% Child Care Rebate (CCR), which can be paid directly to the centre, further reducing your fees. Please check if you are entitled to this rebate with the DHS.

# Our Fee Structure

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It is our policy that all families pay an enrolment fee and their fees one week in advance at all times by Thursday (this includes current week plus one). The parent must then continue to pay the weekly fee in advance in order to maintain a credit balance equivalent to one week of fees.

All payments must be made via EZIDebit and all families must complete an EZIDebit application form upon enrolment. In consultation with management, CENTREPAY and BPAY may be available however, requests are carefully assessed and not guaranteed to be approved. Our service has a no cash policy.

If you are planning holidays, a holiday application form is available from the office. This form must be filled out two weeks prior to the holiday absence to receive half price fees for up to four weeks per financial year.

All children's booked days, including public holidays and absent days must be paid to retain your booking. Late fees are charged if children remain in the centre after closing times.

Two weeks' notice is required if you wish to cancel a booking. Failure to do so will require parents to pay two weeks full fees. All accounts must be finalised by this time as any outstanding accounts will be forwarded to debt collection agencies.

*Please refer to the fee policy for all conditions of fee discounts including holiday bookings and cancellation of bookings.*



# Signing in and out of the centre

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Each child must be signed in and out of the centre every day they attend. This is a legal requirement that we must follow. These records are used in case of emergencies and for the calculation of the Child Care Benefit (CCB). If a child is away, ill or on holidays the corresponding days must be signed by parents/guardians.

On arrival at the centre you are asked to do the following:

- Document the time, sign and print your name
- Present your child to the educator in charge

Before you leave the centre you are asked to do the following:

- Come into the room and greet your child
- Collect child's belongings
- With your child, say goodbye to the educator in charge of the group
- Document the time, sign and print your name

No child will be released into the care of any persons not known to team members. If team members do not know the person by appearance, the person must be able to produce some form of photo identification to prove that they are the person authorised to collect the child on the enrolment form.

In the event that a child has not been collected 15 minutes after closing time then the parents/guardians will be contacted on the emergency telephone numbers provided.

If the child has still not been collected 30 minutes after closing time then staff will follow the Department of Communities Abandoned Child Procedures including contacting the Child Protection and Crisis Centre 24 hour service.

Additional fees will be charged for a child that remains in the centre after the centre closing time.

In the case that your child is absent we request that you phone the centre if your child is unable to attend their session for any reason. Notice is also required in the incidence of infectious or contagious diseases in the family.

Families receiving Child Care Benefit are allocated 42 absent days for each child per financial year. These absences can be taken for any reason including Public Holidays. Once the child has reached 42 absent days, CCB is not paid for any further absences, unless listed as part of our absence policy.

*“Your child’s safety is our number 1 priority.”*





## Open Door Policy

Our centre is open at all times for families to drop in. You don't need to call and tell us you are coming, you are welcome at any time.

We'd love for you to come in and join in our programs - your participation is valued.



“Children learn more quickly during their early years than at any other time in life. They need love and nurturing to develop a sense of trust and security that turns into confidence as they grow”

# Early Years Learning Framework and our centre

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The Early Years Learning Framework is a National Early Learning Framework for children from birth to five years. As the early years are a vital time for children to learn and develop, the framework has been developed to ensure your child receives a quality educational program.

Educators will use the framework in partnership with families to develop learning programs responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities and recognise that children learn through their play.

The Early Years Learning Framework describes childhood as a time of belonging, being and becoming.

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

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*“Play activities planned by our educators allow children to naturally develop and have the opportunity to guide their own learning.”*

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

- A strong sense of their identity
- Connections with their world
- A strong sense of wellbeing
- Confidence and involvement in their learning; and
- Effective communication skills

Our centre also offers an extensive School Readiness program based on the Framework. The Framework has a strong emphasis on play-based learning as play is the best vehicle for young children's learning providing the most appropriate stimulus for brain development. We aim to guide your child in becoming an effective learner through creating an environment that is challenging and stimulating. The overall aim of our programs is to help your child in developing all areas necessary for success now and in later years.

## ***Watching Your Child's Progress:***

Using the Early Years Learning Framework educators will observe your child's learning so they can build on it and plan the next steps. They will do this by listening, watching and talking to your child. Each child will have their own portfolio or collection of learning. This may contain photos and children's work to show what your child is learning. This learning journey is available for you to view at any time.

Your child's room will also show on-going learning through daily journals/books, photographs, project work, learning stories and a program documenting the day's progress.



## National Quality Framework

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The National Quality Framework is a Government initiative which sets a National Quality Standard creating greater consistency for early childhood education and care services across Australia.

This initiative aims to improve educator-to-child ratios in services, increased skills and qualifications, national regulations and a quality ratings system which will help you to make informed choices about the education and care you choose for your child.

Our centre's aim is to exceed the national quality standard across all areas of our service and each centre has a quality improvement plan in place to show what is happening in our centre to achieve this. This will look at areas such as educational programs and practice, children's health and safety, physical environment, staffing

arrangements, relationships with children and collaborative partnerships with families and communities.

For more information in regards to the National Quality Framework, please speak to your Centre Director or you can also find more information on the website: [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)



## What parents say:

"The staff are great, the food is healthy and the main thing is my children love going to childcare and aren't worried when I drop them off."

- Naomi from Blackburn

"They provide a very safe, happy and caring environment for your children to thrive, learn and most of all enjoy themselves."

- Amanda from Chancellor Park

"It's reassuring knowing that he's spending the day somewhere he now loves, but also that he's with carers that do just that, care."

- Larissa from Narara

"..the staff were fantastic in helping myself and my son through the transition into day care. I couldn't have asked for a more friendly group of ladies looking after my son and helping him learn through his early years"

- Victoria from Heathmont

"My son has been at the centre since he was 7 months old, now 3 he has enjoyed every moment and I know he is in good care when he comes home happy and healthy."

- Rebecca from West Ryde

"My children have learnt so much. As they are both quite shy, I have noticed a marked improvement in their people skills and they are coming out of their shell and opening up."

- Talia from Coomera

## Room Details and Routines

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Our routines allow times for individual play/learning, small group and large group play/learning sessions. Children's language and literacy skills are further developed during these times as children are involved in storytelling, drama and games. Music also plays a large part during these sessions as children are able to experiment with dancing, singing and exercising their bodies.

Physical spaces are made available for children to engage in rest and quiet experiences. Educators provide a range of active and restful experiences and support children to make appropriate decisions regarding participation.

Each of our centre's rooms is individual and unique and is tailored to suit the age and development stage of your child, the diversity of the educators, children, families, the wider community and are filled full of laughter, fun and educational resources.

Every room caters for all aspects of children's learning including physical, social, emotional, personal, spiritual, creative, cognitive and linguistic. Children's learning is dynamic and complex and the centre's environment is designed for this.

As your child grows and develops so will their needs, interests and abilities. To cater for this, your child will gradually transition to the next room, after consultation with you.

Our transitioning procedure includes communication with families and involves educator's careful assessment of your child's records to ensure they are ready for the next step and then short visits to the new room to ensure a smooth transition.

## Sustainable Practices

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At our centres, our educators and children work together to learn about and promote the sustainable use of resources and to develop and implement sustainable practices. Our centres have an environmental strategy which is consistently implemented at the centre. This can include recycling, use of recycled resources, energy efficiency, water conservation and more. Find out how you can be involved in this by asking the centre director or your child's educators.





## Child Care Policies and Procedures

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Our Centre has a number of policies and procedures pertaining to the care of your child. Our policies are located in the centre foyer and are available to review at any time. Below are some important policies to get you started. For more information on our centre policies please speak with your Centre Director.

### ***Accidents and Incidents***

Our educators take a proactive approach to safety at our services and conduct thorough risk assessments of all play areas so that effective supervision strategies are in place and each child can feel safe and free to explore their environment.

At all times educators are present in the service that hold Senior First Aid qualifications including asthma and anaphylaxis training. Should an accident or sudden illness occur educators will immediately commence first aid and you will be contacted to collect your child or in emergency situations advised of the plan of action regarding further medical treatment.

If, in an emergency, you or your authorised nominee cannot be contacted the Nominated Supervisor will provide the ambulance officers with information regarding your child and a team member known to the child will accompany your child to the hospital and stay until you arrive. Full documentation of the incident will be made.

### ***Health and Hygiene***

Children and educators are actively encouraged to practice good personal hygiene at the service. We believe that this helps to minimise the instances of illness at the service. We also believe that if your child is ill, the best place for them is to be at home where they can recover faster.

If your child presents at the centre with signs of illness the nominated supervisor may advise that they are not well enough to participate in the service's daily activities and you will be asked to make alternative arrangements until they are well or the exclusion period has ended and seek medical advice (you may be asked to provide a medical clearance letter before your child can return).

Should your child become ill at the service observation, documentation and first aid will commence and you may be contacted to collect your child from the service and seek further medical advice (Please note that panadol is not regarded as a first response and can only be administered in emergency situations and with prior written parental consent). It is important that you read the service's medication policy carefully to know the guidelines for educators to administer medication to your child including panadol, prescription and non-prescription medication.

A list of common infectious illnesses, their exclusion periods and policies and procedures related to illness and minimising the spread of infectious diseases are available in the foyer.

### ***Emergency Evacuation***

Emergency evacuations as well as lockdown procedures are regularly practiced and the centre has individual plans in case of local emergencies, including cyclone, flood and bushfire etc. Fire extinguishers are strategically located throughout the Centre. As part of our fire safety measures all children in attendance at the Centre are noted from the attendance sheet. Each child is identified during a fire drill. This is why it is important to ensure that you sign your child 'IN' and 'OUT' of the Centre each day.

### ***Immunisation***

As part of your enrolment process you will be asked to provide details of your child's immunisation status. In the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease it may be necessary to exclude any children who are not immunised for their health and wellbeing. Non immunisation may also affect your Child Care Benefit. For more information please refer to our immunisation, exclusion and notifiable disease centre policy available in the foyer.

### ***Medication***

If your child requires medication whilst in care, a medication record must be filled in and signed by a parent. The medication must be in original

packaging and accompanied by a prescription label / doctor's letter (for non prescription medication) which states who the medication is for and the dosage. Medication must be handed to a staff member and will be stored in a locked cupboard. Under no circumstances is any type of medication to be left in children's bags. Please refer to the Medication Policy for further information.

### ***Nutrition***

We understand the important role we play in meeting the nutritional needs of children while in care. Children who attend a full day of long day care will be offered at least 50% of their recommended daily dietary intake while in care. We also have a commitment to assist families, who provide their children's meals to develop healthy food attitudes and habits. Guidelines around healthy eating when food is supplied at the service or when families provide the food can be found in the foyer or by asking a friendly team member.

### ***Cultural Diversity***

As Australia is a culturally and linguistically diverse nation, we recognise the diversity of all cultures and provide opportunities for all children to develop an understanding of these cultures. Therefore, we aim to help foster in each child an awareness and acceptance of other cultures through integrating multiculturalism into our programs.

It is important to understand that cultural awareness is not tokenism, but is incorporated into our program on a daily basis. This can be achieved through providing and offering a range of books, music, cooking crafts, singing, clothing, play equipment and other subtle means.

Where possible, all parent information can be translated into required languages advised by families upon enrolment. The centre will provide the Interpretation Services contact number for families to access if needed.

### ***Confidentiality of Centre Records***

We value your privacy. For more information on our Confidentiality of Centre Records policy, please head to our centre website or ask your Nominated Supervisor for more information.



## Sun Protection

Our centres take care to protect children and team members from direct exposure to the sun. This is extremely important as children are very vulnerable to sunburn, which can increase their chances of skin cancer by almost 50%. This is one of the most common forms prevalent in Australia and skin damage from sunburn can never be repaired.

Our centres abide by all state regulations and the child care building code in regards to the amount of manufactured and natural shade available in the playgrounds. Shade structures are maintained and regular maintenance and safety checks are conducted as required, initiated by the centre director.

We recommend that parents pack clothing for children that will protect them from the sun, including a hat, longer sleeved t-shirts instead of singlets and loose clothing which covers all of their body (i.e. no midriffs or bare backs).

Sunscreen will not be applied to any child without prior written permission from the parent as per the blanket permission form guidelines relating to the use of Foreign Substances. Sunscreen will be applied to children 20 minutes before going outside and regularly re-applied.

Literature on sun care is available at the centre and for more information on the centre's Sun Protection policy, please ask the Centre Director.

## Clothing

Please dress your child in play clothes that wash easily, so that your child may enjoy all the activities. In choosing what your child should wear to the centre, please consider the following:

- Your child will be working with messy materials such as paint, glue, water and sand so must be able to stand a little wear and tear.
- Clothing must provide some protection and be comfortable for both indoor and outdoor experiences.
- Children will be climbing, running, jumping and swinging so they will need clothes that neither restrict their activity nor reduce

their safety (e.g. Slippery shoes, long skirts)

- Children will need clothes which allow them for growing independence i.e. pants that can come off easily for toileting.
- Please name all clothing and footwear.

## Priority of access

One of the main reasons the Australian Government funds child care is to meet the child care needs of Australian families. However, the demand for child care sometimes exceeds supply in some areas. When this occurs, it is important for services to allocate places to those families with the greatest need for child care support.

To ensure that the centre adheres to the guidelines issued by the Australian Government, priority of access to child care will be given according to children falling in the following categories:

Priority 1: A child at risk of abuse or neglect

Priority 2: A child of a single parent or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under section 14 of the New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999

Priority 3: Any other child

In relation to priority 3, there are some circumstances in which a child who is already in a child care service may be requested to give up their place or change days at the service in order for the service to provide a place for a higher priority child, but only if the parent is notified of this policy upon enrolment AND the service gives parents 14 days' notice of the requirement for their child to give up their place or change days.

Within the main categories, priority is also given to children in:

- Families with low incomes
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- Parents or children with disabilities
- Families from non-English speaking background
- Single parent families
- Socially isolated families