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October, 2011

Dear Parents,

Thank you for choosing to enroll your child at Geelong Children's Centre!

The information in the booklet is published to give you an understanding of how the Centre operates. Please ask staff if you are unsure of any aspect pertaining to the Centre. A copy of this booklet is also on display in the foyer.

Please read it carefully and refer to it as necessary. Once you have read it, fill in all the relevant documents required for enrolment.

The Centre provides excellent facilities, with highly experienced and committed educators to care for and educate your child.

We encourage your participation in any aspect of your child's care. You may come in or call and speak to your child's teacher at any time. Suggestions and feedback are always welcome and will be immediately acted upon.

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

Yours sincerely,

Karin Papworth
DIRECTOR

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VISION

To be the preferred choice for childcare in Geelong

OBJECTIVE

To provide high quality care and education to each child

PHILOSOPHY

Geelong Children's Centre is committed to recognising the importance of the early years in childhood as a time for successful learning and development.

We approach children's learning and development with a holistic view, acknowledging that every child has the ability to succeed. Therefore, we have high expectations for all children to be active learners.

We acknowledge, respect and embrace the differences and similarities within our community and provide children with a curriculum to begin to appreciate diversity. We provide children with meaningful experiences that will expand children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

We recognise children have varied learning styles and interests and that by working in partnership with families we can facilitate children's learning and development in the home and community.

Through our practices we converse with families using a variety of media to ensure shared learning outcomes for children.

We provide children with an environment that encourages and promotes a strong sense of identity, supports children's connection and contribution to the world.

We always act to promote and ensure children's health, safety and wellbeing.

We aim to have constant reflection on all areas of our work and will remain committed to ongoing professional development for staff and management.

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.

A CHILD SAFE CENTRE

Code of Conduct

The Geelong Children's Centre is committed to the safety and well being of all children accessing our service. 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 well being of our staff and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all participants.

The Geelong Children's Centre is a Child Safe organisation that:

- welcomes and respects children, their parents and caregivers;
- respects staff 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.

Staff

- 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;
- implement the early years learning framework
- follow centre policy guidelines around the safety of children as outlined in the Child Protection Policy;
- believe and practise respect for children and their families
- raise all concerns, issues, problems with the Director 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;
- will spend time with all children equally;
- accept all children as individuals;
- will practise primary care giving and work towards fostering relationships with all children;
- will celebrate special events through activities and song;
- will not take children at anytime from the Centre unless permission has been sought from individual parents for their child to attend an excursion.

HOW WE CARE FOR AND EDUCATE YOUR CHILD

Babies' Room

The care teachers 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 system.

The primary care giving system 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.

Care giving is primary in two senses. First, most but not all of the care, nurturing and parent communication is provided by the teacher who is the primary caregiver. Second, 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.

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 encounter. 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 throughout your child's time in care.

We provide two supervised separate sleep rooms so that the babies may sleep peacefully and undisturbed. Staff are proactive in endorsing the SID'S policy.

We also provide breast feeding facilities, all bottles, teats, milk, formulas, disposable nappies, and all linen.

The menu has been developed to follow the 'Kids – Go for Your Life' guidelines 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 and criticism, as we want you and your child to feel at complete ease whilst in our care.

Toddlers' Room

The Toddlers room is staffed by 3 qualified staff and 5 childcare workers.

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 special as individuals, 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 that encourage 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 skills such as climbing, balancing, swinging, digging and bike riding.

We have photo 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. We have two information boards one located just outside the room to let you know items of interest both within the centre and the community. The other 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 newsletters and e-mails.

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 welcome you and your families' participation in every facet of the Toddlers Room and most of all we aim for the children and staff 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 in or outdoors throughout the day. The children have long periods of uninterrupted time to explore the various activities, whilst having the formal learning sessions to give the children skills for these activities.

We provide above required staff child ratios so staff spend lots of time interacting and working 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 excursions, cultural days, bike days, dressing up, special person's day and visits from educational/important people from the community, i.e. police, fire truck, wheel drive association, guide dog association, vet and dental visits, musicians and the animal nursery.

The curriculum is based on the interests and experiences of the children, staff 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 Early Years Learning Framework curriculum is provided for children attending school in the following year. The focus of the curriculum is to provide overall development of the children in order to prepare the children for school and everyday life.

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 interests and their development. The children work with the teacher in small groups as well as individually.

The sessions are run four times a week for three hours duration:

Mon 9 a.m. – 12 p.m., Tues/Wed/Thur 1.00p.m. - 4.00 p.m.

From Term 4, children going to school the following year have the opportunity to visit Tate Street Primary School on one day a week introducing them to all aspects of school life, e.g. outside toilets, 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 kindergarten program. If children are enrolled at this centre they cannot access another kinder.

Kindergarten fees are not payable if children are enrolled in the centre's kindergarten.

THE KEY ROLES OF A PRIMARY CAREGIVER

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.

VICTORIAN EARLY YEARS LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Children's learning and development is holistic, advancing simultaneously in the areas of health, cognition, personal and social development and wellbeing. Children's 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 sensitively 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.

ORIENTATION PROCESS

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. 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. We offer a Primary Caregiver for children less than 3 years of age. 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 Committee of Management.

The Director is : **Karin Papworth** (Nominated Supervisor)
Advanced Diploma in Business Management, Maternal and Child Health Nurse

The Deputy Director is **Payal Mahajan**.
Advanced Diploma in Children's Services, Teacher

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 Wednesday, 21st December, 2011, and will re-open at 7:00 am on Tuesday, 3rd January, 2012.

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 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. (Children's Services Regulation).

Parents should immediately notify the Administration staff of any changes in 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.

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** at time and a half for two employees. 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 to discuss. Carers and Administrative staff are unable to approve such changes.

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.

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 DATES

All enrolments will be based on the above Priority of Access Guidelines.

Enrolment of children takes place each year for current and new clients.

Enrolments are based on:

1. Available spaces
2. "First come, first served" basis, with time of enrolment noted on your form
3. All clients are able to enrol only for the same days they have booked for 2011. If you require extra days, these will be allocated as quickly as possible, if available
4. All enrolment and direct debit forms must be filled out correctly and completely; otherwise they will not be accepted. Health Centre book must be sighted at this time.

Current Clients: Monday, 17th October, 2011 starting from 7am till 4pm

New Clients: Monday, 24th October, 2011 starting from 7am till 4pm

MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING OF THE CENTRE

This Centre is registered under the Victorian Children's Services Act, 1996 and operates under the Children's Services Regulations, 2009. The Centre is registered for 92 children, 48 children under 3 years of age and 44 children over 3 years of age.

The operation of this Centre is administered by a voluntary Committee of Management to whom the Director is responsible. There are 5 parent representatives on the Committee. The names of the Committee of Management, including parent representatives, are placed on the notice board in the Centre's entrance.

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, 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 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. There are qualified staff on duty at all times the Centre is in operation with all staff holding current first aid and anaphylaxis qualifications. This Centre employs staff **above** the minimum requirement.

The Centre has a staff of 41, consisting of the Director, 10 Diploma Qualified staff, 27 childcare teachers and 1 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 childcare workers for up to 16 babies aged 0 - approximately 18-19 months. |
| Toddlers' Room: | 3 diploma qualified staff members and 5 childcare workers for up to 32 children aged 18-19 months to 3 yrs. |
| 3-5 Room: | 3 diploma qualified staff members and 4 childcare workers for up to 44 children. |
| Kinder Room: | 1 qualified Kindergarten Teacher and 1 assistant, there may be 2 assistants if required |

FEE STRUCTURE FOR 2012

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 | \$ 372.00 * |
| Daily Fees | \$ 88.00 * |
| Half Day Fee | \$ 53.00 * |
| | Morning - 7:00 am – 12:00 pm |
| | Afternoon - 1:00 pm – 6:00 pm |

* The Committee 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 \$8.80 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 \$2.20.

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 |

Withdrawing your child from the Centre

If you wish to withdraw your child from the Centre, **two weeks' notice** must be given to the Director.

Failure to do this will result in fees for that week being charged in lieu of notice.

COMMONWEALTH CHILDCARE BENEFIT

Our Provider Number is 555 002 453K

The Child Care Rebate assists parents or guardians who are working, studying or training with their out of pocket child care costs. To receive the Child Care Rebate you must claim Child Care Benefit.

The Child Care Rebate is **not income tested**.

If you are using approved child care for work, training or study-related reasons the Government will provide you with 50 percent of your out-of-pocket child care costs, up to the annual cap. From 1 July 2010, the Child Care Rebate annual cap will be \$7500 per child per year, subject to the passage of legislation.

How is the Child Care Rebate paid?

There are four ways to receive your Child Care Rebate:

- Direct to your approved child care service paid fortnightly
- Direct to your bank account paid fortnightly
- Quarterly payment to your bank account
- Annual payment to your bank account

When you choose a payment option, this option will be applied for the entire 2011-2012 financial year.

Fortnightly payments

From July 2011 you have the option to receive your Child Care Rebate paid fortnightly either directly to your child care service provider or directly to your nominated bank account. The frequency of the fortnightly payment depends on how frequently your child care service provider submits your child care attendance records. For some families this will mean a fortnightly payment but for others it will actually be paid weekly.

Where you are receiving the higher than zero rate of Child Care Benefit and you choose the Child Care Rebate fortnightly payment option, the Family Assistance Office will withhold 15 per cent of the payment to ensure that you do not accumulate a debt or overpayment within a financial year. The balance of these funds withheld will be reconciled at the end of the financial year (when your tax returns have been lodged and all your child care attendance information has been received). Any outstanding amounts will be paid as a direct payment to your bank account.

Where your Child Care Benefit entitlement is zero you will receive your full 50 per cent Child Care Rebate as a fortnightly payment up to the annual cap. As you do not receive Child Care Benefit during the year, there is no risk of a debt after the end of the financial year reconciliation process.

Quarterly payments

The Child Care Rebate will be paid quarterly once the Family Assistance Office has received your child care attendance details from your approved child care service/s. Quarterly payments will be paid to you automatically if you receive your Child Care Benefit as reduced fees, at the zero rate, or more than the zero rate unless you nominate to receive fortnightly payments.

Annual payment

The Child Care Rebate is based on your Child Care Benefit entitlement. If you choose to claim Child Care Benefit as a lump sum payment, you will not receive your Child Care Rebate entitlement until the end of that year, once your Child Care Benefit entitlement has been determined.

www.mychild.gov.au

Registered Childcare and Ceiling on hours

It is the parents responsibility to notify the Director or Administration Staff if they have other children who receive approved and registered care elsewhere, or children who are enrolled with approved and registered providers of Before and After School and Vacation care.

The ceiling on the number of hours you can claim for Childcare Benefit is 50 hours per week (which equates to full time care). The Centre may allow 1 day of care for non-working/studying parents but this is only if there is a vacancy under the Commonwealth Priority of Access Guidelines.

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, eg 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.

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.

Arriving late for care

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

COMMUNICATION

The Committee 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 staff 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 well being 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 benches and 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 the Children's Services Specialist Team, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and Barwon Inclusion Support Agency.

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. Please do not "sit" on the complaint as it only becomes worse.

1. If a **parent** 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 rectified by the Director, the complainant should put the complaint in writing to the Committee of Management. Further action would take place as soon as practicable after the complaint is made. A member of the Committee would contact the parent and discussion would take place with a representative of the Committee of Management, the Director and the parent concerned, or in such other way which satisfactorily deals with the complaint.
3. If the parent still feels that the complaint has not been handled adequately and there is no resolution, the parent would be directed to the Children's Services Adviser, **Department of Education and Early Childhood Development**, Barwon-South West Region, 237 Ryrie Street, Geelong. The parent may make the complaint in writing or arrange an appointment to see the Children's Services Adviser.
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 Children's Services Regulations, the Director will notify the **Secretary of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development** within 48 hours of the complaint being made.
5. If staff have a complaint related to the breaking of regulations, they may make contact with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.
6. The Centre also operates a Fair Hearing Committee.

Parents if they wish to, can use the suggestion box which are located in each room, and remain anonymous.

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

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Babies | 2 changes of clothes, disposable nappy for going home. |
| Toddlers | If toilet training, several complete changes of clothing and shoes. Disposable nappy for going home. |
| Pre-Schoolers | Spare set of clothes. |

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, 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

Staff and all children need to 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 uses gloves where necessary.

Immunisation

The Centre actively encourages the immunisation of all children who enrol at the Centre. Parents are obliged to record and regularly update their child's immunisation status which will be recorded on the child's individual enrolment records.

If parents are conscientious objectors they must supply the Centre with the relevant documentation signed by their doctor.

Based on current recommendations from Health Authorities, when a vaccine preventable disease is present or suspected in the Centre, parents of all unimmunised children at risk of contracting the disease are notified and those affected children are excluded from the Centre during the outbreak of some infectious diseases.

Illness

The primary responsibility of staff in this Centre is to maintain the health and well being of all children. High standards of hygiene practices and frequent washing of staff and children's hands is practiced at the Centre. This is the most effective way to prevent infections to children and staff. There will be times throughout the year when your child becomes ill. We expect parents to be honest with staff in letting us know if their child has been awake for most of the night, has had a temperature, vomiting, diarrhoea or any other illness.

If your child has been ill during the night or is obviously ill they should not come into day care. 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 suddenly due to illness.

Children with obvious infectious illness are 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 and parent. Staff will make provisions for the comfort and care of the unwell child, until they are picked up by parents.

The Director or person in charge is the only authorised persons 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 person in charge.

It is not possible to prevent the spread of all infections and illnesses within Centres. However, some illness from infectious disease can be prevented.

THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF IN THIS CENTRE IS TO MAINTAIN THE HEALTH AND WELL BEING OF ALL CHILDREN.

Staff are alert and aware of common signs of illness, monitor children closely and consult with other staff. Staff complete an 'Illness Incident Form' recording the signs of illness and action taken. The parent must read and sign this form on collection of their child.

The following illnesses are a guide only. If you are in any doubt, please phone the Director of the Centre.

Not able to come

The illnesses below are highly infectious and will spread rapidly to other children. Children may not come to the Centre with the following illnesses.

- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Gastroenteritis
- Chicken Pox
- Conjunctivitis
- Hand, Foot & Mouth
- Slap cheek syndrome

Able to come

Children with the following illnesses are able to come to the Centre.

- Slight cold
- Other infections that are being treated by antibiotics or other drugs.

Head Lice

If your child is found to have live head lice, you will be advised by telephone to enable treatment to commence as soon as possible. See head lice policy on enrolment form.

A GUIDE TO COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

This limited list is compiled by the Health Department of Victoria and is adhered to by our Centre. If a child appears to have a communicable disease, parents will be asked to remove the child from the Centre to protect the other children and staff. For all other diseases, please contact the Director.

| Conditions | Exclusion of cases | Exclusion of Contacts |
|--|--|--|
| Chicken Pox | Exclude until fully recovered or for at least 5 days after the eruption first appears. Note that some remaining scabs are not a reason for continued exclusion | Any child with an immune deficiency (e.g. leukaemia) or receiving chemo- therapy should be excluded for their own protection |
| Conjunctivitis | Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased | Not excluded |
| Cytomegalovirus Infection | Exclusion not necessary | Not excluded |
| Diarrhoea | Exclude until diarrhoea has ceased or until medical certificate of recovery is produced | Not excluded |
| Hand, Foot & Mouth disease | Until all blisters have dried | Not excluded |
| Haemophilus type b (Hib) | Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received | Not excluded |
| Hepatitis A | Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness. | Not excluded |
| Hepatitis B | Exclusion is not necessary | Not excluded |
| Hepatitis C | Exclusion is not necessary | Not excluded |
| Herpes (cold sores) | Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing where possible. | Not excluded |
| Human immuno-deficiency virus infection (HIV/AIDS virus) | Exclusion is not necessary unless the child has a secondary infection | Not excluded |
| Impetigo | Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing | Not excluded |
| Influenza and influenza like illnesses | Exclude until well | Not excluded |

MEDICATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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

- No medication is administered unless the parent or lawful guardian has given the Centre written permission to dispense the medication.
- All medications must be kept in the original container within date and bearing the child's name.
- Verbal authorised 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.

On the record of administration the parent must authorise:

- Child's name
- Parent permission/signatory
- Name of medication
- Time and date last administered
- Time and date next administered
- Circumstances to be administered e.g. ear infection
- Correct dosage

Please note

- Medicine which is out of date will not be administered
- Medications will not be administered to the child if the medication has another name on the medication.
- If parents request a higher dosage than is recommended for the age of the child, staff will only administer the amount specified as appropriate for the child's age.
- Medication cannot be written up as "administer when needed". Specific symptoms must be listed by the parent so that staff can administer the medication when signs/symptoms are clearly evident in the individual child.

POLICY ON ADDITIONAL MEDICAL NEEDS

Any child that has additional medical needs, e.g. Diabetes, Asthma, Anaphylaxis, Allergies or must provide the following:

- An individual **Health Management Plan** prepared by the child's doctor or specialist outlining the child's condition, the signs and symptoms, and when and how medication is to be administered. The Health Management Plan is to be signed by both the parent and doctor, and must be updated as required or yearly.

All staff will be made aware of the child's medical needs and the plan of action to be implemented. All staff observe and respond to signs of illness/need for medication in consultation with the person in charge.

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 individual Management Plan. 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.

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 licensee. It also applies to other relevant members of the service community, such as 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 by a trained adult 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 qualified staff member in charge is notified immediately and the accident is recorded on the Accident Record Sheet. 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 Early Childhood Development under the Children Services Regulations.

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

BLOOD SPILLS POLICY

In the event of a blood spill, staff follows 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 towelling. Hands are thoroughly washed after this procedure. If there is blood on clothing or bedding it is immediately removed and thoroughly washed.

INCLUSION POLICY

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

Educators aim to ensure an environment that welcomes children and parents regardless of race, religion, ability, culture or additional needs. We aim for a sense of belonging, participation between all members of the group, and offer a balance across all areas of child development, learning and experiences, avoiding bias and reflecting cultural diversity.

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 work as a team involving the child's parents in all areas of communication, programming and Centre activities.

Educators share the vision of providing high quality care in a secure, responsive and enjoyable environment. Educators aim to recognise, appreciate and respect children for their individual needs, interests, strengths and abilities they bring to the dynamics of group care. Educators aim to provide integrating experiences for all children involved in our Centre programs.

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY

Positive guidance is used when directing children's behaviour by offering children choices of activities, re-directing children to other activities or experiences, and suggests alternative outlets for children to undertake and express their feelings in more appropriate and acceptable ways. Staff encourages 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 in doing so. Educators support one another by developing strategies to prevent further negative behaviour. Educators maintain eye contact remaining at the children's level whilst talking to them in a calm and appropriate tone of voice. Staff are empathetic in their approach to behavioural issues and change their manner according to the situation.

Children are respected as individuals and are not subjected to any form of punishment. 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.
- Management strategies are discussed with parents/guardians.
- 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.
- 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 will be organised to review the child's progress and improvement.
- If the unacceptable behaviour continues & all strategies & 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

DENTAL CARE POLICY

The Centre provides parents with updated information and advice on dental health care and healthy food choices to prevent dental decay and gum disease. This information is available at any time from the foyer.

Staff 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 and healthy food choices.

NUTRITION POLICY

Australian Guide to Healthy Eating. Dietary guidelines for children and adolescents in Australia 2003. 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 at our accreditation meetings.

The Centre aims to meet 50% of your child's daily food requirements as recommended by Start Right Eat Right program and Kids – Go for Your life. Australian dietary guidelines for food provided is as follows: - www.NationalHealthMedicalResearchCouncil.GOB.au/Publications 2003.

- Milk foods - 3 serves = approx. 300 mls
- Bread and cereals - 2 serves = 60 grms
- Fruit - 1 serve = 150 grms
- Vegetables - 1 serve = 75 grms
- Meat and meat alternatives - 1 serve = 45 grms
- Fats and oils - 1.5 serves = 7 grms

Menus are planned with the dietary guidelines for children and adolescents in Australia NHMRC 2003. 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.

Staff 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, staff 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. Staff 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 medical plan and an emergency action plan including an Epipen® and Anapen (adrenaline auto-injectors).

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:
www.allergy.org.au/aer/infobulletins/hp_anaphylaxis.htm.

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.

Special occasions such as birthdays are catered for - please see the staff in your child's room.

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 cows 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 formulas for babies and makes up their daily bottles. Bottles are heated in the microwave and tested on staff's inner arm's skin for correct temperature.

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 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 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: tuna, 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. We have four staff members who are trained as Food Safety Supervisors. All staff 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 staff.

The Nutrition Policy is reviewed yearly in consultation with parents and staff, and recommendation from the following sources.

- *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia 2003*
www.health.gov.au/nhmrc/publications
- *Kids – go for your life! Start Right Eat Right program.*
- *Victorian Government DHS October 2005*

This Nutrition Policy was updated on June 2011. To be reviewed June 2012.

Parent Code of Conduct Policy

The development of the Parent Code of Conduct policy at the Geelong Children's centre is enabled (or governed) by the:

- Children's Service Act 1996
- Children's Services Regulations 2009
- Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004

Purpose

At a licensed Children's Service which is also a workplace, legislation, regulations and Geelong Children's Centre policies apply to, or have effect when parents and carers are involved with us.

These requirements include occupational health and safety; Children's Services provisions and other child protection measures.

Scope

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

Policy Statement

Everyone is 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 carers are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with being a positive role model to children while displaying support for the program and centre staff.

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 carers 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

Policy on Sexual Harassment

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

Introduction

When you enrol your child at Geelong Children's Centre, we request you to complete the enrolment form which includes personal information and contact details.

Geelong Children's Centre is committed to ensuring that the confidentiality of the information given to us is maintained at all times. 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 collected after 1st July, 2002. More limited rights apply in respect of information collected prior to this date. 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. Breaches of any confidential nature may mean dismissal of that staff member.

Clothing Policy

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

1. Singlet t-shirts
2. Singlet dresses
3. Jeans
4. Tight fitting short or long pants(with buttons).
5. Belted pants

3-5 aged children

These children should NOT wear:

1. Tight jeans or belts
2. Singlet t-shirts
3. Singlet dresses.

If possible please dress your children in older clothes to enable them to partake in all activities e.g. sand pit, water play and painting. Some activities result in clothing being stained.

The Centre requires all children and staff to wear hats 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. The Centre has a large array of clothing in case of emergencies.

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.

All children's clothes must be named at all times.

The Centre provides written information to parents regarding the type of clothing that is suitable for children.

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 discuss with children their interests in clothing, and staff model dress eg. Wearing of hats, proper shoes.

Staff provide a variation of suitable dress up clothes and consider health and safety issues when choosing dress up clothes.

Staff advise of children's comfort as regards, under or over dressing in all weather conditions – appropriate fabrics are advised to families.

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 families differences.

This policy is maintained by staff observing and taking action on children's clothing comfort.

Source: "Sun Smart" - Cancer Council 2006

Swinburne University Dec 2005

Evacuation Procedures of all Rooms

- Person in charge immediately notifies the appropriate authority.
- Staff in each room take sign in and out attendance book of children in care, collect children's medication, contact details and mobile phone.
- Staff are familiar with all exits and evacuation procedures in all rooms. First Aid Kit is collected from the office.

Babies Room

1. Staff gather all children together and proceed outside to far corner of playground. Office staff to assist.
2. Staff check the two sleep rooms and bathroom for any babies.
3. The in charge person collects sign-in book, side gate key and any medications. Staff check off all children and staff against sign in and out attendance book.
4. If fire is in Babies' Room, assemble on front nature strip.
5. Staff and children do not re-enter the building until "all clear" is given from the Director.

Toddlers

1. Staff lead children out of room to grass area furthest away from fire.
2. Staff take sign in and out book, medications, contact details and mobile phone.
3. Staff shut all windows and doors.
4. In-charge staff check all areas of room are empty, e.g. sleep room, main room, bathroom and shut door on the way out.
5. Children and staff are checked against sign in and out attendance books.
6. Staff and children do not re-enter the building until "all clear" is given from the Director.

3 – 5 ROOM:

1. Staff lead children out of room to grass area to the far right hand corner of the 3-5 room yard (near the gate to the Toddlers room).
2. Staff take sign in and out book, medications, contact details, mobile phone and keys to side gate.
3. Staff shut all windows and doors.
4. In-charge staff to check all areas of room are empty, e.g. main room and bathroom, and collect keys and shut door on the way out.
5. Children and staff are checked against sign in and out attendance books.
6. Staff and children do not re-enter the building until “all clear” is given from the Director.

Centre Evacuation Procedure

1. Director of the centre on site takes charge and decides who does what
2. Call 000;
3. Inform 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”);
4. Seek advice from ESMU, your Regional Office, Local Government Area or local Diocese.
5. 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;
6. Take the children’s attendance list, contact numbers, mobile phone, medications, staff roster and your Emergency Kit/First Aid kit;
7. Once at assembly area, check all children and staff are accounted for;
8. Call 000 and inform them of your location at the outdoor assembly area;
9. Focus on safety and well-being of staff and children;
10. Wait for Emergency Services to arrive or for further information.

