



Mitchell Street Early Learning Centre

FAMILY HANDBOOK



Welcome to our Centre

We bring along a very warm and friendly welcome to our centre. We trust that your child's experience will feel like an extension of your home. By working together we will provide an environment that promotes quality care and education for your child, a place where they will be accepted for who they are, and a place where laughter and play are cherished and where children's innate curiosity is captured and given a chance to grow. We believe that childhood is like no other time in a person's life. It is a time for exploring for creating ... for discovery about one's self ... for meeting the world ... for learning how to learn ... for being accepted. It is a time for growing and a time for being allowed the time to be a child.

Thank you once again for choosing us to care for your child, we look forward to a long and happy association with your family.

Our Philosophy

Our **Mission** is to support, nurture and encourage children's strengths through our play based environment, where children feel empowered to seek out their own learning.

Mitchell Street's unique **philosophy** believes in the benefits of providing holistic approaches through learning experiences for all our children in a child safe, caring and nurturing environment. Mitchell Street's values incorporate the need to honour the family, nurture our children and care for our environment through the use of sustainable practices. We encourage children and families to be active participants in our curriculum.

Mitchell Street ELC offers a nurturing environment providing high quality care and education within a natural setting. Children are encouraged to explore their environment, using their imagination, creativity and individuality. We believe that through developing a sense of belonging and providing opportunity for children to be children they will become confident learners.

Our Values and Aims in relation to children:

In relation to children:

- We encourage a strong sense of identity
- To be confident and involved learners
- To feel secure in their environment
- To encourage children to experiment and explore
- To respect and celebrate culture and promote the cultural diversity
- To share and care for each other
- To promote the cultural safety of aboriginal children
- To promote the cultural safety of linguistically diverse backgrounds
- To promote belonging

Mitchell Street values each child as unique with an importance on learning through play and strongly values the human rights of the child.

In relation to families:

- We will treat and view families as valued partners, collaborators and positive advocates for their children.
- We support parent involvement in all aspects of our daily program and encourage their involvement and feedback.
- We work closely with families to assist them in their wishes and future aspirations for their child.

Our open reception area allows families to speak with management in a friendly welcoming environment.

In relation to staff:

- We appreciate and acknowledge our team as individuals and respect diverse personality traits, beliefs and cultural backgrounds.
- We believe in networking with each other and with experts in our industry in relation to ongoing education for best practices for our children.
- We are dedicated to keeping our team inspired.
- Draw on each other's strengths rather than focus on weaknesses

Our easy going can do attitude is evident in our daily practices and interactions with each other.

In relation to our community:

- Mitchell Street is building a strong relationship with Give Where You Live through both its team and business giving as well as in house fund raising events.
- Throughout the Centre educators liaise closely with external health specialists, jointly working towards positive health outcomes for the children.
- The centre supports a number of community services through donations.
- Regular calendar events in the Centre help raise awareness within the Centre's community for various local and national causes and assist in promoting the Centre's commitment to its local community.

Mitchell Street believes it is important to educate our children using the Victorian Early Years Learning Framework, where play is our children's work and their way of exploring the world around them. We encourage them to be curious and ask questions - why, how, where, when and what. The National Quality Standards, National Law, National Children's Services Regulations guide our practice. We are strong advocates for Child Safe Standards and Mitchell Street is an approved Sun Smart Centre.

Goals

For families, children and communities to have access to a well administered, organized service that meets the local needs by offering quality, best practice, individual programs with developmental outcomes and excellent standards.

For employees to be supported in their professional growth through training, networking, career pathways, respectful communications, encouragement, acknowledgment of skills and problem solving challenges.

Priority of Access

Priorities of Access are set by the Government within the Child Care Benefit Guidelines. Parents who are working, studying and / or actively seeking work or children who are at risk have the highest priority after children identified as being at risk of abuse or neglect. Parents / guardians may need to supply proof of employment, enrolment in a course or registration for actively seeking work to Centrelink and / or the centre.

The centre will keep a Waiting List that includes the family's status according to the Priorities of Access. When a vacancy exists within the centre, the Centre Manager will check the Waiting List and offer the vacancy to the family from the highest priority (one being high) who has been wait listed the longest. The centre will give priority to siblings of children already enrolled at the centre, where the family priority is level one. This will assist the family unit with continuity and consistency of care.

Child Care Benefit

Parents may apply for Child Care Benefit (CCB) through Centrelink. The amount of CCB paid is based on the family's gross income. The family MUST register for CCB and notify the centre of the family CRN, claiming parents date of birth, child CRN and child date of birth.

If no CCB arrangements have been made by the family, FULL FEES will be charged.

The child attendance record must be signed each day for your child's attendance in order for CCB to be claimed for your child.

Enrolment & Payment of Fees

- All accounts must be one week in advance at all times
- If you are still waiting for your CRN, full fees must be paid until the CRN has been issued and Centrelink has advised the centre at which time your account will be backdated with the CCB.
- For New Families to enroll at the centre, a completed Enrolment Form and Ezidebit Form MUST be returned before the child can start and two weeks bond paid via EFTPOS.
- If you enroll your child and then do not commence care at the centre, the two weeks bond paid will be retained.
- Fees will be debited via Ezidebit on a weekly basis as indicated on the Ezidebit Form. The amount debited from your chosen account will be **the amount that is due on your childcare account on the date of each scheduled debit** (1st week of care and an additional payment so as the account is 1 week in advance).

Further information regarding Ezidebit is available from the Centre Manager who will discuss the process in detail with you to ensure you are fully informed of this payment method.

If you are having trouble paying your fees, please do not hesitate to contact the Centre Manager, as we may be able to help.

Account Statements will be generated from the computer system at the end of the week and emailed to a nominated email address.

CCB payments that are due will be directly deposited into the centre's nominated bank account and credited to your account.

Fee Arrears Protocol

All families are to keep their fee payments one week in advance at all times.

If fees remain in arrears after discussion have been had with the Centre Manager, service will be withdrawn. This means that children will not be able to attend the centre until the account is paid. If fees remain outstanding past the time allotted for payment, and no repayment plan has been commenced, the centre will cancel the enrolment and engage the services of a Debt Recovery Firm or Solicitor.

Late Fees

LATE FEES will be charged if your child is picked up after the advertised closing time of the centre. These will be charged at \$1.00 per minute for each minute that your child has not been collected after the closing time. The late fees will be charged to your account and no CCB can be claimed for this fee as it is after the closing time of the centre.

Absences

If your child is going to be absent for any reason, please inform the centre by 9.00 am.

CCB will be paid for 42 absences per financial year (including public holidays). In order to claim these days and the CCB payment, you must sign for the absence day on the sign in / out sheets. To claim CCB for days of absence over and beyond these days documentation to support the absence must be provided. This includes medical certificates, rotating rosters, notification of school closure etc. (please see you Centre Manager of the FAO website for more information on additional absences).

Family Holidays

Families can apply for 4 calendar weeks pro rata of bookings of 50% reduction in their gap fee giving a **minimum of 2 weeks' notice prior to going on holiday**. The 50% holiday discount will only apply to families that have applied for the discount within the required notice period. **All requests for holiday discount must be made via email.**

The discount will only be applied to families that are following the centre's fee policy, by keeping their fees one week in advance prior to their holidays.

Casual Days

Casual bookings for Extra Days are welcome as we understand that families may need care on days outside their permanent bookings subject to availability.

Change of Enrolment Days or Cancellation of Enrolment

Families are required to give TWO WEEKS notice in writing of intention to withdraw children from care or to make a change to booked days.

Your bond of two weeks in advance will go towards these last two weeks of care, if your account is up to date. Any credit owed to you at the end of the two week notice period will be refunded in full or if the account is in arrears then full payment must be made prior to ending care. If your child does not attend in the last two week notice period, full fees will be charged as no CCB can be claimed.

Orientation

Once a new family has accepted a position for their child at the centre, an Orientation Visit will be organised at a time that is agreeable to the family and the centre. The new family will be given a tour of the centre and introduced to staff by the Centre Manager.

The parent/guardian will speak to the Team Leader/Qualified Staff Member of their child's group about specific needs and the developmental level of their child. The Team Leader will make written notes and explain the communication methods, routine and program for the child's group.

The Centre Manager will explain about signing in and out of the centre, the fee structure, Child Care Benefit funding, location of accounts, how to pay your fees and parent account statements.

Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to be involved within the centre in the following ways:

- Sharing information about your child with the staff to allow better understanding of your child's individual needs.
- Attending social and educational events at the centre.
- Giving feedback to the centre about the service provided.
- Assisting to review the Policies and Procedures Manual on an annual basis.

Communication

Families are the most important influence on young children's lives. Staff and families need to work together to share information and achieve the best outcome for children's care and education.

The centre needs to know if the service offered is meeting the needs of the customers (families and children). Families need a formal, as well as an informal, way of communicating the things that the centre and staff do well and the areas that need improvement. Both positive and negative feedback assists the centre to grow and facilitates continuing improvement.

Our Centre has a "Compliments, Comments and Complaints" Box at Reception so that families, visitors and staff can write their thoughts (anonymously, if preferred). Any investigations will be handled with consideration to privacy and confidentiality. No retaliation against the lodger of the comment will be undertaken. Feedback will be given to the writer, if the name was supplied.

Open Door Policy

We have an "Open Door" policy at our centre and families are encouraged to visit the centre and speak to the Centre Manager about any issues (comments, concerns, compliments) that they may have.

Code of Ethics

The Australian Early Childhood Association is a peak early childhood organization focused on providing support for services of young children. This organization has produced a Code of Ethics that covers expectations of staff towards children, families, others and self.

Families are encouraged to read this Code of Ethics on the noticeboard at reception.

Policy Compliance

It is through consistency of service and compliance with regulatory and policy requirements that the centre will be able to provide "excellence" in programs and administration. This will be achieved by having a written framework of policies and expectations; developing staff knowledge, skills and awareness of the policies and expectations related to their position; having written information for families and a formal orientation to the centre; monitoring staff and centre compliance to the regulations and policies; and, counselling, training and advising staff on improvements if non-compliance is found.

Families can assist in this process and are encouraged to use the Compliments, Comments and Complaints Form to tell the Centre their views and experiences. All concerns will be confidentially investigated and rectified. Feedback will be given to the families.

Communication with Families

Families come from a diverse range of backgrounds and skills. Centre staff acknowledge the importance of the family and their values / beliefs. A partnership between the family and centre staff is vital for providing care that is meaningful and effective – culturally and educationally.

On enrolment, families will be invited to share information about their child so that staff have insight into the child's developmental level plus care and educational needs. Decisions made jointly about care and programming will be documented and implemented.

On a daily basis, staff will share meaningful information about the child's day with the family, e.g. Sleeping, feeding and toileting pattern.

Regular newsletters will be provided for all families and staff.

Multicultural Diversity

The children within the centre come with a wide range of backgrounds, skills and knowledge. Staff will have an open and caring attitude to diversity and inclusion within the centre. Cultural sameness and diversity will be celebrated.

On enrolment, staff will gather information about the family and children to enhance understanding of the background, culture and expectations of the family. The cultural and linguistic background of each family will be respected and acknowledged.

The program will offer many opportunities for children to explore similarities and differences across the diversity of cultures.

Gender Equity / Non-bias

It is important that children are exposed to a wide range of experiences that value their choice within the environment. Staff will respect children's skills, abilities and knowledge and ensure that interactions and materials within the centre support gender equity and non-bias principles.

Staff will consult with families about their expectations for care and education and discuss the centre's policy of inclusion and equity.

All children will have equal opportunity to experience all areas of the play environment. Staff will respect children's choices and encourage the development of self-confidence, self-awareness, empathy and acceptance within each child.

The centre will ensure that posters, books, equipment and displays are inclusive of all people, regardless of gender, abilities or background.

Children with Additional Needs

It is the policy of the centre to protect and foster the dignity of children with additional needs by ensuring that staff treat each child as an individual, valuing their unique attributes and qualities.

The centre has a commitment to the inclusion of children with additional needs. These children may include children with physical impairments, intellectual delays, medical conditions, behavioral challenges, diagnosed conditions or conditions undergoing assessment by a medical professional.

Facilitating Inclusion

- Centre staff will work together with families and support agencies to actively support the inclusion of a child with an additional need.
- Children with additional needs will be integrated into the daily activities and routines of the centre.
- The centre will provide an environment that is safe and understanding, all children will be encouraged to develop positive self-esteem and self-image.
- Communication strategies will be developed in consultation with families.
- Where possible, the physical environment will be adapted to better meet the needs of the individual child.

Existing Children who develop an Additional Need

In some cases children may be diagnosed with an additional need whilst enrolled at the centre. Staff and families must work together to support the child, arrange for assessment and make any necessary changes to ensure the additional needs of the child are being met and that the child's safety and well-being are being catered for. All relevant documentation including an Additional & Special Needs Form needs to be completed in conjunction with the Centre Manager and a Doctors Certificate and/or Action Plan provided by the child's Doctor.

Learning and Development

When children feel comfortable and encouraged in their surroundings they are able to build strong relationships and explore the learning opportunities offered.

Creating an Atmosphere for Learning

Staff will greet all children and families on arrival with warmth and friendliness, using their names.

- All rooms at the centre will be inviting, challenging, uncluttered and aesthetically pleasing. Activities will be presented in an appealing way.
- Staff will encourage and support children to try new experiences.
- Staff will consider the cultural needs, background and temperament of each child.
- Staff will talk to children about their day and what is to happen next.
- The noise level will be minimal to allow many engaging activities to occur simultaneously.
- Staff allow siblings within the centre to spend time with one another.
- The program will cover all areas of a child's development.

Encouraging Physical Development

- Daily structured and free active play is a significant part of the program every day.
- Outdoor equipment will be flexible so that variety, challenge and interest can be offered for children.
- Staff will encourage children to try new skills while ensuring that the challenge is within their capabilities.
- Staff will offer opportunities for children to practice balance, flexibility, climbing, skipping, crawling, eye-hand co-ordination, rolling, walking, grasping.
- Staff will offer music and movement sessions, games and other fun, playful activities every day within the program.
- The active play experiences will be inclusive of all children.
- Staff will be actively involved in active play experiences to promote children's engagement.

Encouraging Language and Literacy Development

- Staff will talk to children about a wide variety of topics.
- Staff will interact with children during routine times such as nappy changing, toileting and meal times and make these occasions fun.
- Children will have a variety of art and craft experiences to allow creative expression.
- A child's home language is encouraged and supported.
- Resource people can visit to assist with home language and settling for new children with limited English language.
- Written and spoken language, other than English, is used to foster children's interest.
- Singing, chanting, questioning, rhymes and stories are used to support language development and children are encouraged to participate.
- Children are encouraged to listen to the spoken word and understand its meaning.

Encouraging Social and Emotional Development, Creativity and Choices

- Staff will know each child as an individual and provide experiences that will interest them, provide humor and give them success.
- Staff will encourage emotional development by positively reinforcing the way they interact with others, respecting their choices and acknowledging their abilities and efforts.
- Self-esteem will be promoted through staff modelling acceptable behavior / interactions and initiating discussions about feelings.
- Opportunities for dramatic play will be varied and interesting.
- Children will be able to self-select the play materials that interest them from thoughtfully arranged storage at their level.
- Children will be encouraged to play games together, share, negotiate, appreciate and co-operate with each other.
- Children's work will be appreciated and thoughtfully displayed within the centre using photographs, models and recordings.

Encouraging Cognitive Development, Curiosity and Logical Thinking

- Children will be encouraged to think, reason, question, problem solve and try their solution.
- Staff will include children's ideas, suggestions and interests when planning the program.
- Opportunities will be offered for children to practice numeracy, sequencing and predicting skills.
- A variety of construction materials will always be on offer.
- Staff will ask open-ended questions so that children can explain and express their opinions.

Programming

Each child will be viewed as an individual who will develop and learn at his / her own pace along a continuum of growth in all areas of development – cognitive, language, physical, social, emotional and self-help skills. Each child has different potential and ability within the multiple intelligence areas and staff will challenge and extend these skills and interests.

Staff will speak to families, at enrolment and frequently thereafter, to assess the skills, needs and interests of each individual child and to understand the expectations of the family. This information will be documented.

Staff will keep observational records, in a variety of forms for all children. Samples of children's work, including photographs, can form part of the records kept.

All records remain the property of the centre and must not leave the premises without the prior approval of the Centre Manager. A child's progress will be shared with the family, informally and formally.

Parents can request access to their child's records. A mutually agreeable time will be set up for parents and Room Leader to meet and discuss the information.

Staff will plan an outline for the daily structure which:

- Balances individual, small group and whole group activities / tasks.
- Balances indoor and outdoor as well as quiet and active activities.
- Allows large blocks of time for children to complete projects.
- Is flexible to accommodate changing needs and interests of children.
- Allows for transitions to routine times such as eating, toileting and resting.
- Staff will use observational data on individual children as a basis for planning developmental and educational programs for the children that:
 - Are age-stage appropriate.
 - Consider the Centre's philosophies and goals.
 - Cover all areas of development and intelligences.
 - Consider the needs and interests of all children.
 - Consider gender equity and cultural diversity.
 - Consider environmental issues, such as recycling, water conservation.
 - Provides sufficient variety and quantities of equipment / activities.
 - Encourage children to think, reason, question and experiment.
 - Reflects the Early Years Frameworks guidelines.
 - Follow the child safe standards

Staff will use short term and long term outcomes as a basis for planning individual, small group and large group activities. Planning will be cross-referenced to individual observations and broad goals.

Older children will be encouraged to participate in the planning process by contributing ideas, setting goals and assisting with evaluation.

The weekly program will be displayed for parents to view and have input into. Parents will be encouraged to write their ideas / contributions for the program/s either in a communication book or within a section of the weekly plan.

The program will be evaluated on a daily, weekly and individual basis according to the goals and outcomes that were set. Evaluation will include staff observations, records, children involvement, enjoyment and learning, meeting of desired outcome, and feedback from families.

An annual Questionnaire to families will ask for feedback about the range of services / programs offered at the centre. The collated information will be shared with all families and used as a basis for future planning.

Transition to School

Staff in the 4-5 year old age group will actively observe, plan and evaluate the children for skills and knowledge necessary for a smooth transition to formal schooling.

Staff will liaise with local schools, obtain their enrolment information and have this information available for parents within the centre via noticeboards and newsletters.

If possible, the Centre Manager will organize an excursion to visit a local school that is within close proximity of the centre.

Staff will liaise with parents / guardians about the child's development and readiness for transition to school.

Excursions / Visitors

The program within the centre can be enhanced by outside sources of information, materials and entertainment. These will serve to extend the children's knowledge and experiences and provide stimulation for their creativity.

Staff will ensure that any planned excursion / visitor has the approval of the Centre Manager and families. Staff will note the reasons / benefits and outcomes for the children.

If an excursion / visitor is to be organized, staff will ensure that all families have signed a permission form and are aware of any additional costs.

Photography

There are many achievements that children reach during the day that are difficult to capture. Artwork can be placed on the board but often construction creations are packed away at the end of the session. Photography is a way of capturing these important successes for children.

Staff will take photographs of children's work / achievements throughout the day for display within the centre and discussion with families.

When they enroll, families will be asked to sign consent for their child to be photographed/video taped at the centre and the photograph / video footage used within the centre to show achievements (video evenings, newsletters). Staff will keep a list of children that details permission or denial for photographs / videotaping.

Students on placement at the centre cannot photograph the children unless separate parent consent has been obtained from the family.

Food Safety

All premises where meals are prepared for children will be licensed with the local council and staff preparing food will have completed a "Safe Food Handling" course. All deliveries of food will be checked, food prepared will have temperatures monitored and storage of food will comply with food safety regulations.

Mealtimes / Snacks / Water

When children gather together to eat and drink, an opportunity for social interactions and language development exists. Staff will create an atmosphere that is relaxed and home-like by setting tables, playing background music and assisting children with self-help and hygiene skills.

Water will be available at all times and children encouraged to drink, especially in the hot weather.

Individual needs for food and drink will be considered, along with regular snack and mealtimes in the daily schedule. Details of food eaten will be supplied to parents, in written format for babies and toddlers.

Nutrition / Cultural Considerations

The centre promotes healthy eating as per the healthy eating pyramid (less fats and more fresh fruit, vegetables and grains).

Staff will consult with families about the nutritional needs and cultural preferences for their children. Staff will monitor Individual children's preferences for food and serving sizes.

Staff will note food allergies and preferences for all children, as communicated to them by families.

Our menu will reflect the variety of foods recommended for young children and a diversity of culturally appropriate foods. The menu will be placed on the noticeboard for parents to view.

Incidents / Accidents

Children are naturally inquisitive and curious. They learn by touching, mouthing and "doing". Staff will balance the need for challenge and risk taking with support and consideration for safety and well-being.

Staff will supervise children, redirect play that could cause harm to a child, remove any items / equipment that could cause harm and report any problems with equipment, fixtures or the building immediately to the Centre Manager.

Any injury to a child during the day will be notified to the family by phone during the day. First aid will be administered, if needed. Medical assistance will be obtained, if necessary. Parents are asked to give permission for emergency medical aid, within the Enrolment Form.

An Incident and Accident Form will be completed and parent/guardian asked to sign this report at the end of the day to verify that they have been notified of the incident.

Children at Risk

Child

Child abuse is any act of omission or commission that endangers or impairs a child's physical / emotional health and development. Child abuse can occur across all cultural, ethnic, occupational and socio-economic groups.

Staff in child care centres have an obligation to monitor the health and well-being of all children in their care. Staff must report their "suspicions" and the grounds/evidence that supports this to their State Department for investigation.

Any allegation of child abuse made against a staff member will be reported, within 24 hours, to the State Licensing body for investigation.

Mitchell Street adheres to the Child Safe Standards.

Custody Issues

Parents must inform the centre when there is a custody issue. Staff will maintain a non-judgmental approach with both parents. If there is a custody order or a Protective Assistance order, the centre requires a copy of this legal document. Staff are obliged to follow these orders and inform the Police if the orders are violated. Staff cannot follow parent instructions unless supported with copies of the above legal documents. The presence of a court order must be recorded on the child's enrolment form and a copy provided to the centre.

Sick Children

Children, staff and visitors who enter the Centre must be well enough to fully participate in the activities of the day. Sick children and staff need to be excluded from the Centre until well.

The Centre Manager or nominated person in charge reserves the right to refuse entry to any child or staff member who comes to the centre obviously unwell. The Centre does not have separate facilities or staffing levels to care for sick children.

The following symptoms are warning signs that the child / adult is unwell:

- Severe, persistent or prolonged coughing (child goes blue in the face and makes a high pitched croupy or whooping sound after coughing).
- Breathing difficulties (noisy, wheezy).
- Yellowish skin or eyes.
- Irritated eyes, red eye lining or puss discharged from eyes.
- Unusual spots or rashes.
- Vomiting and /or diarrhea.
- Temperature over 38 degrees Centigrade.

Children, staff and visitors who become ill during the day will be sent home. Parents will be phoned to collect their child as soon as possible.

It is suggested that parents arrange for a relative or friend to be available for emergency care for times when a child is ill and unable to attend the centre.

Some illnesses may require medical attention and an absence from the centre until completely recovered. A Doctor's clearance may be necessary at the end of the isolation period, before child / staff / visitor can return to the centre.

An Exclusion Table of Infectious Diseases covering all infectious diseases is available. This gives information to families and staff about exclusion times.

If an outbreak of an infectious disease occurs in the centre, families will be notified verbally and with written notices. All infectious diseases (children and staff) will be logged in the Infectious Diseases Log and monitored.

Parents must inform the centre staff if their child has been exposed to any infectious disease. This is for the safety of other children, staff, visitors and pregnant mothers.

Dental Care

The centre will promote healthy eating habits, lots of fresh fruit, minimal sugary items and plenty of water to drink. Older children will be encouraged to have a drink of water after eating to rinse the mouth. Water will be swallowed.

Apples are served after lunch to promote dental care.

Infection Control

Infections are spread in the following ways:

- Airborne droplets (coughing and sneezing).
- Throat and nose discharge.
- Fecal, hand and mouth.
- Skin contact.
- Urine.
- Blood and body secretions.

Staff will use standard precautions which include the following:

- Regular, effective hand washing (staff, visitors and children).
- Wearing gloves when handling bodily fluids (nappy changing, handling breast milk, administering first aid, cleaning blood / fluid spills).
- Using a mask when giving CPR.
- Covering lesions on staff and children.
- Regular cleaning of the premises and surfaces throughout the day.

Immunization

The incidence of many diseases has been greatly reduced and the general health within the community improved due to immunization. Immunization gives the body a memory of the infection without the risk of the natural disease. Children and staff who are fully vaccinated are less likely to carry infectious diseases into the centre.

Families will be asked to provide information about a child's vaccination status on entry to the centre (Immunization Details). Families will be asked to keep this record updated by bringing in the statement printed from Medicare or the mygov.au website to verify vaccinations. Parents who choose NOT to vaccinate their child must sign the declaration at the bottom of the Immunization Details Form.

Families and staff will be notified of an outbreak of an infectious disease verbally and via written notices.

All families will need to abide by the No Jab No Play legislation

Medications

Staff have a "duty of care" and a "lawful duty" to ensure that ONLY the correct medication is given as per instructions from the treating doctor.

The following conditions MUST be present in order for designated senior staff to administer medication/s requested by the family:

- A Doctor's letter is to be left at the centre stating the child's name, illness, medicine and dosage, route of administration and times to be given for medication that is to be administered for a period of four weeks or more.
- All medication must be in the original container provided by the pharmacy and labelled showing the name of the child, date of issue and instructions.
- Parent / guardian is to write the medication request, each day, on the child's Medication Request Chart, sign the sheet and give the medication to a staff member to be placed in a safe place, out of reach of children.
- If a nebulizer is to be used, a family member must instruct staff in its use.
- NO herbal or non-prescription medications will be given without a Doctor's / Naturopath's written order.
- Medications belonging to other siblings or out of date medications WILL NOT be given.
- If a child is known to have severe asthma attacks or severe allergic reactions, parents will be requested to fill in the Emergency Medication Plan of Action Form and supply a Doctor's letter stating the emergency medication / action to be taken.
- Staff will take every care with administration of medication by checking the parent request, medication, dose, route of administration and time to be given. Two staff will check every medication and ensure the medication is given to the correct child. Both staff will sign the Medication Request Chart.

Paracetamol Administration

The parent / guardian must give prior permission for the administration of a single dose of paracetamol (Enrolment Form)

- The child's temperature must be over 38 degrees Celsius and the parent / guardian contacted for verbal consent. The parent / guardian must collect the child from the centre as soon as possible.
- Staff will document the times, temperatures and conversations.
- Two staff will check the age-appropriate dosage and administer this to the child. A record of the drug administration will be made on the Medication Request Chart.

Rest Time

On enrolment, staff will consult with the family to find out the child's normal pattern for sleep and rest so that continuity can occur at the centre. Staff will follow individual sleeping / rest patterns for babies and toddlers. Staff will sit with infants and toddlers to settle them for sleep. Sleeping times will be recorded on the Day Sheet – Information for Parents / Guardians.

Infants will be placed to sleep on their back, with feet at the end of the cot and no pillows, doona's or bumpers in the cot. If an infant is at risk of SIDS, the family can provide a sleep monitor (checked and tagged by an electrician) to be used at the centre.

Staff will set a quiet, comfortable atmosphere for children at rest / sleep time – quiet music, dim lighting, a favorite blanket or soft toy. Beds will be placed at least 30 centimeters apart to allow staff movement between them and to keep emergency exits accessible.

Older children will be encouraged to assist to make their bed. Shoes and restrictive clothing will be removed for comfort.

Older children may choose to stay resting or move on to quiet activities such as stories, books, puzzles, drawing, in an area slightly away from resting / sleeping children.

Staff will regularly check sleeping children by walking around the room (every 5 minutes) to ensure they are resting / sleeping comfortably. Sleep checks for infants will be recorded on the Checklist for Sleeping Infants Form which will show a time and initials of the staff member conducting the check.

Children will be encouraged to dress themselves after waking and move quietly to an activity area.

Suitable Clothing

Families are asked to provide clothing that assists children to dress and undress themselves, thereby encouraging independence. All clothing MUST be labelled with the child's name.

Families are asked to dress their children in clothing suitable to the variety of activities at the centre, e.g. older clothing that won't inhibit play and learning. Please supply spare clothing, in case of accidents.

Staff will encourage independence with dressing and be on hand to assist with more difficult items such as buttons and shoelaces. Staff will respect family requests for clothing to meet their cultural needs and for preferences such as shoes to remain on during the day. Staff will provide clothing protection (aprons) for messy activities.

The centre will keep a supply of spare clothing for children in case a change of clothing is needed.

Sun Smart

Australia has a high incidence of skin cancer. The ultra-violet rays of the sun can cause skin cancer and damage to the eyes.

All children and staff use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above from the beginning of September to the end of April. During these months, particular care is taken between 10 am and 2 pm (11 am and 3 pm daylight saving time) when UV Index levels reach their peak during the day.

- From September to April, direct sun exposure is minimized where possible particularly during the peak UV periods of 10 am – 2 pm or 11 am – 3 pm daylight saving time. We understand that it is not realistic nor practical to keep children indoors during the entire middle part of the day and just ask that carers are mindful of peak UV times and vary outdoor schedules and ensure a variety of sun protection measures are used, experiences are set-up in the shade etc. The management committee makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the centre / preschool grounds.

The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and outdoor activities. Children are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside 'SLIP SLOP SLAP'

Mitchell Street is a recognized active member of Sunsmart

Toileting

Staff will consult with families about a child's readiness to commence toilet training. Staff will observe the child for signs of readiness that include dry nappy for long periods of time, a growing awareness of the need to pass urine and a wish to imitate other children who are toileting.

Staff and families should have a relaxed, sensitive attitude to toilet training. Staff and family will consult about the type of training aid to be used – toilet or potty. Children will be given a book or toy while sitting on the potty / toilet and staff will remain close by or sit and talk with child.

Families may supply a "pull up" nappy pants to encourage independence when toilet training has commenced. Staff will assist children to wash hands after toileting.

Older children will be encouraged to use the toilet as needed and follow hygiene practices of flushing the toilet and washing their hands. Staff will remain close by to supervise.

Fire and Emergency Evacuation

The evacuation procedure will be practiced at least every two months, on different days of the week and at different times of the day. The evacuation process will be evaluated for effectiveness each time and improvements made as necessary.

The centre has a Written Evacuation Plan that all staff and families must be familiar with. A building plan showing nearest exits will be in all areas of the centre, e.g. every teaching area, office, staff room etc.

Supervision of Children

Staff will be alert to possible dangers within the centre and ensure they can see and hear all children at all times.

The Centre Manager will ensure that sufficient staff are on duty to comply with licensing requirements in regard to qualifications of staff and staff to child ratios.

Additional Information

For any additional information please feel free to contact the centre on (03) 5245 7670, additionally updates, helpful information and changes to our policies can be found on our website – www.mitchellstreetlc.com.au