



Parent Handbook

**66 Bruce Street
Coolamon, NSW 2701**

PH: 0269273991



Coolamon Early Childhood Centre

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Statement of Philosophy

At Coolamon Early Childhood Centre, we believe that early childhood is a unique period in life, where the foundation for future learning and wellbeing is established. Our philosophy encompasses the core values of our team who believe children to grow and develop at their full potential, feeling safe and supported is vital. We pride ourselves on creating a welcoming and supportive environment for families and children.

We aim to provide an environment, which supports children's emotional, spiritual, social, cognitive and physical development. Through implementing the Early Years Learning Framework we strive for children to feel confident with their identity and develop a sense of "Being, Belonging and Becoming" (ADGE, 2022). Children, families and the community will experience an environment that is rich and reflects home cultures and beliefs of our children's families.

We believe Children:

We are dedicated to maintaining a safe and secure environment in which children can explore learn and thrive. We understand that children's physical and safety needs are fundamental to their development. Our programs are developed to ensure the children's basic needs, as outlined in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, are met. We recognise that children learn through play and we provide an environment that respects every child as an individual.

Our educators believe children are capable learners and recognise that children learn through play. When setting centre play environments, we consider each child as an individual with their own interests and capabilities. We encourage children to express ideas and be active participants in their learning. Our programs are flexible and responsive to the children's current developmental stage and emerging interests.

Children are supported by our educators to feel included and are encouraged to respect differences including home cultures. We recognise the importance of emotional wellbeing in the early years. Our educators feel a strong alliance to John Bowlby's attachment theory, which emphasises the critical role of secure attachments in children's emotional development.

We believe our families:

We place a strong emphasis on building trusting and supportive relationships with families. Our educators see families as a valuable resource. We believe in open communication, collaboration and involving families in their child's learning. Our educators believe each family is unique and their requirements and views are respected. By working in collaboration with families, we ensure that children receive consistent support within the centre environment and at home.

We believe our educators:

Our educators implement the Child Safe Standards and aim to create an awareness of the importance of protecting children from harm. Our team act with honesty and make decisions that are clear and ethical. A safe and stimulating environment is created with our caring and nurturing approach. Our educators pride themselves as active team members and as working professionals ensuring centre policies and procedures are adhered to accordingly.

Our commitment to continuous improvement is reflected through professional development support, mentoring from experienced educators and a team approach to reflection.

Educators aim to honour cultural differences including languages, cultures, tradition and family lifestyle choices. We acknowledge and respect the heritage of Indigenous Australians by promoting awareness of cultural diversity. Our team share with children our respect for Wiradjuri country by integrating Indigenous learning within our centre programs. By respecting diversity among families and the wider community, educators aim to embrace the rights of all children and aim for children to see themselves as competent learners.

We believe our community:

Community involvement is a fundamental part of our philosophy and we believe children learn best when they are connected to their local community. Our centre organises excursions and community based activities to enrich children's involvement within their local community. Our educators aim to empower the wider community to encourage participation of children in events and build positive connections. Through positive connections between educators, families and community member's children will develop a sense of belonging and confidence to interact and learn from each other.

Acknowledgement to Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land, Wiradjuri Country. It is on Wiradjuri country that as a team we provide a nurturing and caring environment for young children to learn and play.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and future who continue to walk with us offering cultural strength, guidance and knowledge, which is passed onto children to hold for future generations to come. It always was, and always will be, Wiradjuri Country.

CENTRE INFORMATION

Centre Telephone Number: 6927 3991

Centre Address: 66 Bruce Street, Coolamon 2701

Centre E-mail Address: cecc@coolamon.nsw.gov.au

Hours of Operation: 7.00am – 6.00pm

Centre Manager: Renae Robertson

Executive Manager, Corporate & Community Services (Coolamon Shire Council): Courtney Armstrong

Approved Provider: Coolamon Shire Council

Opening Hours

The centre operates from 7.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday for 50 weeks per year. We provide booking types to meet the care needs of parents. These are:

- Full day bookings – 7.00am to 6.00pm
- Casual bookings – ONLY offered subject to availability of places and confirmed with payment

Fee Structure

Caterpillar Room: Zero to Two years - \$90.00

Butterfly Room: Two to Three and six months- \$90.00

Preschool Room: Three years and six months to Five years - \$85.00

It is a policy of the centre to have all fees paid TWO weeks in advance at all times. Fees may be paid weekly, fortnightly or monthly in advance. Failure to pay fees may lead to a \$10.00 late fee and cancellation of your child's enrolment. If you have trouble paying your child's fees, please do not hesitate to contact the centre manager as we may be able to help.

Payment of fees:

Child care Payments can be paid by the following means:

- Direct Debit: Direct debits are processed weekly or fortnightly each Friday. If you wish to take advantage of this system, please fill in the enclosed form and returned it to the Centre.
- BPAY – On enrolment each family will be issued with their own Biller Code and Reference Number to make online payments. These numbers will be available to parents on their weekly statement. Payments can be made via internet banking or through the website www.deft.com.au.
- Cheque – Please make payable to the 'Coolamon Early Childhood Centre', fill in a docket at the front desk and put in the payment box
- EFTPOS/CREDIT CARD – There is an EFTPOS terminal at the front counter that can be used to make card payments. Please ensure you print a docket and attach it to your payment slip prior to depositing it in the payment box.
- Cash – The Centre does not accept cash payments. If any parent must make a cash payment for fees they will need to attend the Coolamon Shire Council office.

Refundable Deposit

Each family is required to pay a deposit upon enrolment at the centre. This payment will be refunded once all children conclude their enrolment at the centre and a final account has been issued and paid in full. If an outstanding balance remains on your final account for 7 days, then the deposit money will be used to pay this amount and only the balance will be refunded.

The amount of the deposit to be paid by each family is based on the total weekly fees payable. The different levels are specified below:

- Tier 1 (weekly fees less than \$50) - \$20 deposit
- Tier 2 (weekly fees less than \$100) - \$50 deposit
- Tier 3 (weekly fees greater than \$100) - \$100 deposit

Child care fee assistance

The Australian Government may provide financial assistance towards the cost of your child's care. If you would like to access this assistance please provide the Centre with the following information:

- Your Customer Reference Number (CRN—issued to you by the Family Assistance Office)
- Your child's Customer Reference Number (issued to you by the Family Assistance Office)
- Your date of birth (CRN Holder) and
- Your child's date of birth

This information will be provided to and validated against Department of Education records to determine if you can receive the Child Care Subsidy (CCS). If you do not have a CRN please contact the Family Assistance Office by calling 13 61 50, or by visiting one of their offices.

Child Care Subsidy – (CCS)

The Child Care Subsidy is the main way the government assists families with their child care fees. This is a single, means tested subsidy that is generally paid directly to the service to reduce the family's fees. To be eligible for the subsidy several requirements need to be met including, the child's immunisation status and residency. Three factors that determine a family's level of Child Care Subsidy are; the family's annual income, the activity level of both the parents and type of service the child attends. Families can visit the following website to get an estimate of what they may be entitled to. www.humanservices.gov.au/paymentfinder

Absences from the centre

We understand that sometimes due to illness, family holidays or other reasons children need to have time away from the centre. Please let us know if your child is going to be absent on their usual day/s of attendance. If your child is absent you will need to sign the attendance record indicating your child has been absent. We recommend you provide documentation to support absence days, including:

- Medical Certificates
- Shared Care Plans (signed by both parents)
- Court Orders.

Initial Absence Days

As with most childcare positions, your child's place is reserved when they are away so the day still needs to be paid for. Each financial year, the Family Assistance Office will pay your child's CCS entitlements for the first 42 absence days. These absences can be for any reason, including public holidays. These initial 42 absence days must be used before any additional absences can be claimed (see below).

Additional Absence Days

You may receive CCS for absence days after the initial 42 days each financial year. For all absences beyond the first 42 absent days, CCS will only be paid if you are able to provide evidence to demonstrate the absence has occurred under permitted circumstances. There is no limit on these days but you will be required to provide documentation to support the absence.

Holiday Discount Package

We offer a 50 per cent discount on your gap fee for up to four weeks of holidays per financial year. To be eligible your account MUST be paid up to date (including the Two weeks in advance). Please provide written consent two weeks in advance to ensure you are eligible for our discount and advise the Centre manager. The approved provider may approve special circumstances and waive the above provisions based on the family's needs.

Public Holidays

Our centre closes for all public holidays. It is our policy that fees are payable for the days that your child is booked into the centre. If a public holiday falls on one of the days your child is booked in, fees are still payable even though the centre is not opened.

Overdue Fees

It is centre's policy that if fees are continually overdue and are having to be continually chased a fee of \$10.00 will be charged to your account. To prevent this from happening ensure communication regarding payment of your child's fees is maintained with the Centre manager at all times. In addition if fees are not kept up to date, your child's position at the centre will be reviewed.

Late Fee

We ask for your cooperation in dropping off and collecting your child within our operating hours of 7.00am to 6.00pm. If at any time you have an emergency and are going to be delayed, please contact the centre. Staff can then allay your child's concerns and make plans for their own commitments. To balance additional costs of continuing to provide care after the centre's operating hours a late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged. The late fee is not subject to Child Care Subsidy.

Regular Booked days

To ensure we have sufficient time to make changes to current bookings please provide two weeks' notice of any changes to your child's current booked days or to cancel your child's booking in writing. If your child does not attend their last day of care, you will be charged full fees for the days they are absent.

Casual and Extra days

Everybody is welcome to enquire for casual booking days. If we know of a child's absence, then your child may be able to attend. Please remember casual days are subject to availability your account MUST also be paid up to date (including the Two weeks in advance). Casual bookings will be charged on top of your permanent booked days. We are unable to swap children's booked days.

Christmas Close Down

The centre closes annually over the Christmas period for two weeks. Exact dates are advised separately within the centre. **Fees are not payable during this period.**

Centre Policies and procedures:

Coolamon Shire Council Employees share a commitment to promoting the health, safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people in Council activities as well as the Coolamon Shire community.

Our team at Coolamon Early Childhood Centre lead by example as role models and leaders in ensuring that Council provides a safe environment for children and young people whilst on any Council premises and utilising Council services. The Centre in conjunction with educators and families has developed a variety of policies and procedures to guide child safe practices and meet national regulatory requirements. Please let us know if you have any questions or comments about our policies and procedures. If you would like a copy of any of our complete policies, procedures or forms please don't hesitate to ask. Below is a small overview of important policies and procedures.

Appropriate Clothing and Footwear:

The centre will be providing a range of experiences to stimulate each child's development. This could be in forms of finger painting, mud play, water play and much more. These activities strengthen children's fine motor development and enhance eye / hand coordination through play. It is important that your child's clothing and foot wear supports them to play safely.

Some parents are concerned when their child comes home with dirt or paint on their clothes. To prevent this from happening please send your child in playing clothes that are non – restrictive, serviceable and easy to wash. If you are planning an outing after you collect your child from care please bring along a change of clothes.

As children's skin is more sensitive to heat and sun, a sunsafe hat and clothing to protect the skin is necessary when we play outdoors. The following hats meet our sun smart policy:

- broad brimmed hat – brim size of at least 6cm. (7.5cm for adults)
- Bucket style hat – brim size of at least 5cm and deep crown. (6cm for adult)

During colder months your children will continue to experience our outdoor environments so they will need additional warm clothing to protect them from the cooler temperatures. It is a good idea for your child to have at least one complete change of clothes each day they visit our early childhood environment.

If your child is beginning to take the next step from nappies to using the toilet they need to have several changes of clothing to ensure they continue to feel comfortable and confident about this important change throughout their day with us.

By naming your child's clothing you help us to ensure it can be returned to you and your child should they decide to discard it or remove it from their bag during the day. The Centre has a lost property area that is located in the Centre's foyer. Please ensure each day your child attends the centre you check to see if your child has misplaced any items.

Attendance Records

Arrivals and Departures

As part of our commitment to the safety of the children in our care all children **MUST** be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult and signed into the centre each day they attend care.

Before your child starts care

We encourage all new families to accompany their child to the centre prior to starting care and spend as much time exploring the new surroundings as needed. This helps the child to adjust and begin to feel secure within the new environment and to become familiar with the educators.

Items to be brought to the Centre

The Caterpillar room (children aged 6 weeks – 2 years old). Parents of children in this group need to bring the following items:

- Bottles – enough for the day, the Centre cannot re – heat any bottles.
- A drink bottle – filled with water
- Morning tea (provide a piece fruit, vegetable or healthy alternative), Lunch and Afternoon tea
- 2 complete sets of clothes including underpants and singlet's
- Items that your child is attached to i.e. dummy, teddy, blanket, etc.
- Sunhat
- 6 - Nappies
- A set of cot sheets in a labelled bag
- Appropriate clothing for the weather e.g. coat and beanie for winter

The Butterfly room (children aged 2 years old - four years old). Parents of children in this group need to bring the following items:

- Bottles – enough for the day, the Centre cannot re – heat any bottles.
- A drink bottle – filled with water
- Morning tea (provide a piece fruit, vegetable or healthy alternative), Lunch and Afternoon tea
- 2 complete sets of clothes including underpants and singlet's
- Items that your child is attached to i.e. dummy, teddy, blanket, etc.
- Sunhat
- 6 – Nappies or additional changes of clothing for toileting children
- A set of cot sheets in a labelled bag
- Appropriate clothing for the weather e.g. coat and beanie for winter

The Preschool room (children aged 3yrs – 6yrs) Parents of children in this age group need to bring the following items in a bag:

- A drink bottle – filled with water
- Morning tea (provide a piece fruit, vegetable or **healthy alternative**), Lunch and Afternoon tea
- Sun smart hat
- A set of cot sheets in a labelled bag
- 2 changes of clothes including underpants
- Appropriate clothing for the weather e.g. coat and beanie for winter

Please ensure that all items are well labelled.

Arrivals

On arrival at the centre, please:

- Sign in using our digital sign in system. This is available through an ipad and found in the centre foyer.
- We encourage all families to supervise your child washing their hands to start the day fresh and prevent germs being brought into the centre.
- Separate your child's food (morning tea/fruit break, Lunch and snacks) in their room's fridge.
- Please leave appropriate contact details if different from your usual place of work – indicate this to an educator.
- Accompany your child to the appropriate room or outdoor environment and ensure educators are made aware of their arrival.
- If accompanying your child to the outdoor environment, please ensure your child has sunscreen on and a hat.

Leaving your child

Sometimes saying goodbye becomes difficult for both the parent and the child. This is normal behaviour that usually disappears when the child becomes secure and confident in the new environment. Often the tears stop when the parent has left. We recommend that goodbyes are not prolonged, rather reassure your child that you will return and go quickly. This makes the separation less stressful. If you would like to check on **your child's progress through the day, you are most welcome to telephone the centre.**

The centre has an open door policy where all families are welcome to visit and participate at any time. You are most welcome to share an experience or a special talent with us or simply drop in and have lunch with your child and their friends. **You are always welcome!!!**

Departure

At departure time, please:

- Come in and greet your child.
- Discuss your child's day with their Educator.
- Together, say farewell to the adult in charge of the group.
- Sign out (time & signature) each child on the appropriate form set out in the playroom or outside area.
- Please ensure your child and his/her siblings remain with you throughout the departure from the centre.
- We ask families to avoid bringing siblings into the centre at departure times where possible. This assists the centre in implementing our COVID safe plan.
- **PLEASE ENSURE** that ONLY adults open any doors that exit the rooms or building so we can keep all our children safe.

Please note that school age siblings are NOT permitted to collect your child from the centre.

Authorised Persons

Children must be brought into the centre by a parent or responsible adult that is known to the centre manager and/or an educator. Only authorised persons (as indicated on enrolment form) will be allowed to collect children from the centre.

Please notify the staff in writing of any changes regarding the person collecting your child. **Please be aware that authorisation for authority to collect CAN NOT be taken over the phone and must be in writing.** An adult that is not known to centre staff requires photo identification.

Parents with custody orders must provide a copy to the Centre Manager to ensure the safety of all children. Such custody/court orders need to be brought to the Centre Manager upon enrolment.

Guiding Children's Behaviour

Our educators in collaboration with families promote and utilise positive behavioural guidance strategies that assist children in developing socially appropriate and responsible behaviours. Our educators positively guide, role model and encourage each child to use safe and appropriate behaviours when expressing themselves. They also work together to consider the learning environment, program, and teaching strategies being used in the centre. No child will be subjected to any form of corporal punishment, punishment by isolation, or other demeaning, humiliating or frightening punishment. Our centre has implemented and uses a variety of visual aides to help assist the children in our care to learn the appropriate behaviours.

Special Occasions

We recognize that celebrating special occasions is important to children and their families. We love to be a part of our families' special occasions whether it be birthdays, new family members or starting school. We welcome all families to advise us if they would like us to help celebrate an occasion. We advise all families that all food brought into our centre to share with children and educators needs to be accompanied by an ingredients list. This is to ensure the safety of all our children as many of our friends have food allergies or intolerances.

Child Protection

Children have the right to be free from harm and to play and learn and be cared for in a safe and secure environment. Our educators are committed to their responsibility to protect children from any type of harm, understand their reporting obligations and are aware of our risk management strategy which includes practices designed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children is paramount.

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, employees and volunteers implement a Child Protection Risk Management Strategy to ensure the health, wellbeing and safety of all children at the service, protect children from harm and protect the integrity of employees and volunteers. The Strategy includes the following components:

1. Aim (outlined in first paragraph)
2. Code of Conduct
3. Recruitment, Selection and Training Procedures for employees and volunteers which include child protection principles
4. Procedures for handling disclosures and suspicions of harm Reporting and Documenting Abuse or Neglect
5. Procedures for Managing Breaches
6. Risk Management for High Risk Activities and Special Events
7. Strategies for Communication and Support

Our educators are classified as Mandatory Reporters and have a responsibility to report any disclosure of harm or suspicion of harm to children. More in-depth information is available in our Child Protection Policy. Please see the centre manager if you would like a copy.

Child Safety

Coolamon Shire Council has developed a Child Safe Policy. This policy and the Child Safe Procedures outline the commitment and responsibilities all Coolamon Shire Council employees, contracted services, councilors, volunteers and students on work placement will implement to prevent abuse and promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people with whom the Council provides a service.

Part of the policy includes strategies to support children's participation in the services and activities we offer. This includes providing resources for children and young people to provide education about their rights, safe environments, and strategies for staying safe and seeking help when required.

Child-related Accidents and Injuries

We are committed to creating safe environments for all our children. Our centre follows recommended health and safety guidelines and procedures and the required number of first aid qualified educators are on the premises at all times. We encourage children to play and investigate and explore their environment and thus understand that children will take calculated risks to build new knowledge, and to understand and enhance their own capabilities. Sometimes during their investigation and exploration children may have an accident and perhaps sustain an injury. All Child-related incidents or accidents are recorded in an incident report. A report will be prepared for you to read and sign at the end of your child's day. This report provides us with a record that will help us make any necessary changes to reduce the likelihood of a similar incident occurring again. You may also be given a courtesy call following an incident to advise you of the incident and, only if necessary, asked to collect your child.

If your child requires medical treatment other than immediate first aid and we are unable to contact you, we will take any steps necessary to ensure your child is appropriately cared for. This could include contacting the person you have identified as your emergency contact or calling an ambulance. It is important your emergency contact and authorised nominee information is up to date at all times. Any medical/transport costs incurred, including ambulance, will be at your expense.

If your child has sustained an injury at home and educators are concerned the injury may be made worse by your child's attendance at our centre, we may request a medical clearance letter from a medical practitioner prior to your child returning to our centre.

Communication and Feedback

We understand effective and appropriate communication is important between both families and our educators to provide best care for each child. We have provided all families with a family pocket to provide you about centre information, please check it each time you visit. Our centre also uses the digital sharing application Seesaw to share their child's learning with families, send messages and receive feedback. The centre manager assists each family to access this application as part of orientation. We welcome and encourage families input and involvement in their child's learning. This can be verbally with our educators, via phone call or emailing the centre cecc@coolamon.nsw.gov.au. Families are also encouraged to like the centre facebook page Coolamon Early Childhood Centre to keep up to date with centre news and events.

We love to hear your feedback about your child's programs, the learning environments (both indoors and outdoors) and the care we provide for your child. Your constructive feedback helps us improve the quality of the care and learning your child receives. Please let us know if you have any concerns or questions. We aim to

address any concerns immediately in a professional and ethical manner.

Alternatively if you feel your concerns are not addressed or resolved you are welcome to provide feedback to the approved provider Coolamon Shire Council on 02 69 301 800.

All questions are encouraged and welcomed relating to your child's enrolment at our centre; please feel free to make a time to speak with your child's educator or the centre manager to discuss them further.

Education Programs

Our educators are committed to providing quality education and care for young children. Our room programs are implemented and guided using the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (DEWEER, 2009). All children attending our centre are allocated a key educator who oversees their engagement and learning. Learning experiences are planned for children to assist them in meeting the learning outcomes for children as outlined in the framework. Each room has a monthly program that is followed where both planned and spontaneous learning is supported. These programs are visible to families via Storypark and displayed in each room. In addition, each child has individual learning plans and observations recorded to assess and support their development.

The centre implements a variety of external learning programs including the NSW *Munch & Move* program. The initiative supports the healthy development of children birth to 5 years by promoting physical activity, healthy eating and reduced small screen time (e.g. watching TV or DVDs, playing on computers and small hand-held games devices).

Medical Conditions

If your child has a medical condition including Asthma, anaphylaxis and diabetes, you will be required to supply the centre with an ACTION PLAN specific to their needs to be followed in the event of an incident relating to the specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition. In conjunction with the centre manager you will be required to complete a RISK MINIMISATION PLAN and decide on a communication plan between yourself and the centre in regards to your child's medical condition. You will also be required to ensure your child's medication is at the Centre every time your child attends. Alternatively your child's medication can remain at the service. All medication MUST be clearly labelled with a chemist label with your child's name and details for administration of the medication.

Authorisations

Our service and educators will only administer medication to children if it is authorised by parents or another person as authorised on the enrolment form. If there is a medical emergency, we will also administer medication when authorised verbally by a parent or another authorised person, medical practitioner or an emergency service, however we may administer medication during an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency without first receiving authorisation.

Medication under the Regulations includes medication covered by the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989. Therapeutic goods include those for therapeutic use to:

- prevent, diagnose, cure or alleviate a disease, ailment, defect or injury
- influence, inhibit or modify a physiological process.

This covers products like sunscreen and nappy cream.

Administration of Medication (non-emergency)

Educators will administer medication to a child if it complies with our policy requirements and:

1. if the medication is authorised in writing by a parent or another authorised person and
 - is the original container
 - has not expired
 - has an original label and instructions that can be clearly read and, if prescribed by a doctor has the child's name
 - is administered in accordance with any instructions on the label or from the doctor.
2. after the child's identity and the dosage of the medication is checked by an educator who is not administering the medication. This educator will witness the administration of the medication.
3. a separate medication authority form is required for each medication.

Over the Counter Medication (non-prescription medication)

We do not accept written or verbal authorisations to administer Over-the-Counter pain relief medication like Panadol, Nurofen, Ibuprofen and paracetamol unless it has been prescribed by a medical practitioner, or authorised verbally by a medical professional in an emergency as outlined below. Pain relief medication may mask the symptoms of serious illnesses and our educators are not qualified medical professionals.

Exceptions to this are:

Nappy Rash Cream - The parent is to supply their own nappy rash cream which will be clearly labelled with their child's name and used ONLY for that child. An authorisation to administer the nappy rash cream will be completed by the parent at enrolment and updated yearly as part of the centre re-enrolment procedure.

Repellents for bites/stings (eg. mosquito bites) - The parent is to supply their own repellent which will be clearly labelled with their child's name and used ONLY for that child. An authorisation to administer then will be completed by the parent at enrolment and updated yearly as part of the centre re-enrolment procedure.

Creams for non-contagious skin conditions such as eczema- The parent is to supply the cream which will be clearly labelled with that child's name and used ONLY for that child. An authorisation to administer the cream will be completed by the parent at enrolment and updated yearly as part of the centre re-enrolment procedure.

When any non prescription medication is being administered to a child with a yearly authorisation, this will be witnessed by an educator who is not administering the medication.

Anyone delivering a child to the service must not leave medication in the child's bag or locker. Medication must be given directly to an educator on arrival for appropriate storage. Auto injection devices (e.g. Epi pens) and asthma puffers will be stored in cupboards that are inaccessible to children. All other medication will be stored in accordance with the storage instructions on the medication, in a locked labelled container or in a cabinet, or fridge. Non-refrigerated medication will be kept away from direct sources of heat.

Evacuation Procedures

It is our policy to ensure a rapid response to emergencies where an evacuation of people may be required. An Emergency evacuation sign and diagram is displayed at each exit point of the centre. We conduct an evacuation drill at least every three months with the aim of ensuring the children can be evacuated quickly

and easily in the event of a real emergency. If you are present at the centre during an evacuation drill, we ask you to participate in this procedure.

Food and Nutrition

Our educators respect the cultural and religious expectations and values of children and their families at the centre. To ensure we are informed about your child's dietary requirements we ask you provide us with written information detailing any food/s that need to be avoided and any suitable alternative foods. Children will enjoy their meals in relaxed and pleasant environments where they have the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations with their friends and teachers. As we do not provide any meals at the centre we encourage families to consider healthy options when packing their child's lunchboxes. We ask all families to bring a piece of fruit, vegetable or a similar healthy alternative e.g. sultana's to have at morning tea to start of the day. Our Preschool Room has a bowl where morning snacks can be left for morning tea. We invite all families to place their individual item in each morning as you join us for the day (please write your child's name on their item). Families are informed of their child's food intake daily. This information can be found on the daily record sheets found in each room.

A supportive, physical environment is provided to families choosing to breastfeed. This can be discussed with the centre manager on enrolment. The centre also supports families providing breast milk for bottles and have procedures in place to for safe storage and heating. Please see the attached Food, Nutrition and Beverage Policy for more information or speak to one of our friendly educators.

Children with Food Intolerance or Anaphylaxis

Food intolerances can be common in the 0-5 year age group. Our centre is a nut free zone and families are asked to check food labels to ensure children aren't exposed to nuts while in our care. We are also mindful of intolerances to eggs for children under 2 years and ask families to avoid packing children this age whole eggs or mashed egg sandwiches. Popcorn is also avoided in our 0-3 age group as it can be a choking hazard.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING THESE ITEMS TO THE CENTRE:

- Any sort of NUTS
- Peanut butter sandwiches
- Nutella sandwiches
- Dippers of nutella or peanut butter
- Egg sandwiches
- Whole eggs

The centre does not have a supply of extra food and where a child is found with any of the above ingredients or products they will be removed from the care environments to ensure the safety of all our children. You may therefore be phoned to supply your child with the appropriate food.

Hand Washing

Hand hygiene can play an important role in the spread of infection; it is one of the most effective ways to control the spread of infection and decrease germs. Correct hand washing procedures are implemented at

the centre by children and educators. Children are supervised whilst washing their hands before meals, after using the toilet, after messy play, after wiping noses or coming in to contact with bodily fluids and as required throughout the day. We encourage all families to wash their child's hands upon arrival to the centre and before they go home to reduce the spread of germs. Your help and support is very much appreciated.

Infectious diseases and Unwell children

We are committed to minimising the risk of transmission of infectious diseases by quickly and effectively responding to a suspected or identified infectious disease. To minimise the spread of infectious diseases, anyone with or displaying the signs of an infectious disease will be excluded from the centre for the period recommended by 'Staying Healthy in Childcare' (available to glance at in the centre foyer) or until a medical practitioner has provided a clearance letter to state they are no longer infectious and are well enough to return to the centre.

If your child is suspected of, or has been confirmed to have an infectious disease, please notify the Centre Manager so the appropriate arrangements can be made to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children, families and educators at the centre. We will also advise you of any infectious disease in the centre (whilst maintaining strict confidentiality) by placing a notice in the foyer and/or emailing the information to families.

To prevent the spread of infectious diseases we encourage families to fully immunise their children in accordance with the Department of Health and Ageing National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule and provide a copy to the centre upon enrolment and each time your child's immunisation schedule is updated. Please be advised that The Public Health Amendment (Vaccination of Children Attending Child Care Facilities) Act 2013 which states that under the changes to the Public Health Act 2010, before enrolling a child, all child care centre's must obtain documents from parents/guardians that show the child:

- is fully immunised for their age, or;
- has a medical reason not to be vaccinated, or;
- Is on a recognised catch-up schedule if their child has fallen behind with their vaccinations.

PLEASE NOTE: it is an offence to enrol a child who is unimmunised due to their parent's conscientious objections.

To ensure your child is comfortable, if they are unwell, we encourage you to make alternative arrangements for their care. If your child is showing signs of an illness or infectious disease while in our care, we will contact you and request that you collect your child. Furthermore if your child develops a temperature whilst at the Centre, you will be phoned to collect them. The Centre implements a 24 hours exclusion to ensure children are returning well. If your child starts antibiotics the centre also implements a 24 hour exclusion to prevent the spread of infection and ensure the child gets adequate rest whilst being unwell.

Don't hesitate in ringing the centre for further advice.

Medication

To ensure the safety of your child when medication needs to be administered we ask that you are familiar with our medication administration procedures. If your child needs medication during their time at the centre, to ensure their safety it is expected the following requirements are followed:

- All medication must be in its original container showing the medication name and expiry date as well as

the recommended dosage instructions.

- All prescription medication must be clearly labelled by a pharmacist with your child's name, the required dose and frequency for it to be administered.
- All non-prescription medication must be clearly labelled by a pharmacist with your child's name and date of birth, the required dose and frequency for it to be administered. These directions must not vary from the recommended dosage. This includes nappy rash creams.
- Medication is given to an educator on arrival at the centre and is not left in your child's bag.
- A consent form is completed for each dose of medication. All families are required to sign the medication form at the start of each day outlining the requirements for the medication to be given.

Inclusion Support

Children have common needs, strengths and abilities but sometimes they may have some additional needs. As Early Childhood professionals there are times we require extra support, such as an additional educator, adjustments to programming, and modified environments or equipment to provide an inclusive environment that is effective and developmentally appropriate for a child within our care.

After your child has enrolled in our service there may be an occasion where an additional need or medical condition is identified. Certain considerations need to be made for a child with specialised needs and an inclusion support application may be required at that time.

Sun Safety

We are committed to Sun protection and are part of the Cancer Councils Sun Smart program where we have been labelled a SUNSMART service which we are proud of. Our educators role model and promote sun protection measures with children and families through learning opportunities as part of these programs. All children are encouraged to wear hats and suitable clothing in outdoor environments and are provided where needed the appropriate clothing.

To make certain your child is suitably protected from the sun; please provide your child with the following items:

- A sun-safe hat and protective clothing that covers as much of your child's skin as possible. Suitable hats include –
 - Broad brimmed hat – brim size of at least 6cm. (7.5cm for adults)
 - A bucket style hat – brim size of at least 5cm and deep crown. (6cm for adult)

Baseball caps do not have broad brims or cover your child's neck and ears and therefore does not meet our requirements as part of our sun smart policy. If your child is wearing a baseball cap, educators will replace this with a sun smart hat.

- If your child has known skin allergies to certain sunscreens, we encourage you to provide a sunscreen that is suitable for your child to ensure they are comfortable and you have peace of mind. If no alternative sunscreen is supplied educators will apply the centres sunscreen as per our sun smart policy.

Sleep and Rest

We acknowledge children as individuals who have different needs. We recognise children's individual growth and learning occurs at different times and in different ways. Because of this children may need to rest or sleep at a time that is appropriate for them to ensure they build sufficient energy to continue their participation in

the early learning program. We support the individual rest and sleep requirements of each child. We welcome your help in understanding these requirements and any other information that will help us to ensure your child is comfortable. Please share with us your expectations for your child's rest and sleep. We recommend and implement safe sleep practices in accordance with Red Nose guidelines at all times. This includes babies under 7 months old are not recommended to be sleeping with soft toys in their cots. Information regarding safe sleep practices can be accessed through Renae at the centre.

Food, Nutrition and Beverage Policy

NQS

QA2	2.1.3	Healthy lifestyle - Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
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National Regulations

Regs	77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
	78	Food and beverages
	79	Service providing food and beverages
	80	Weekly menu
	90	Medical conditions policy
	91	Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents
	162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
	168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures

EYLF

LO3	Children recognise and communicate their bodily needs (for example, thirst, hunger, rest, comfort, physical activity).
	Children are happy, healthy, safe and connected to others.
	Children show an increasing awareness of healthy lifestyles and good nutrition.
	Educators promote continuity of children’s personal health and hygiene by sharing ownership of routines and schedules with children, families and the community.
	Educators discuss health and safety issues with children and involve them in developing guidelines to keep the environment safe for all.
	Educators engage children in experiences, conversations and routines that promote healthy lifestyles and good nutrition.
	Educators model and reinforce health, nutrition and personal hygiene practices with children.

Aim

Our service aims to promote good nutrition and healthy food habits and attitudes to all children and families at the service. We also aim to support and provide for children with food allergies, dietary requirements or restrictions, and specific cultural or religious practices.

Related Policies

Additional Needs Policy

Enrolment Policy

Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy

Medical Conditions Policy

The Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, volunteers and students will:

- ensure children have access to water and offer them water regularly during the day.
- ensure children are offered foods and beverages throughout the day that meet their nutritional and developmental needs and any specific dietary requirements. These requirements may be based on written advice from families (eg in the enrolment form) or as part of a child's medical management plan.
- ensure routines are flexible enough so that children who do not eat during routine meal or snack times, or who are hungry, are provided with food. Educators will not force children to eat food they do not like or more than they want.
- Provide guidance to families for children's food to be consistent with the Government's -

- Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/n55>

A Summary of the Guidelines is available at

http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/n55a_australian_dietary_guidelines_summary_book_0.pdf

and/or

- Infant Feeding Guidelines 2012

http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/n56_infant_feeding_guidelines.pdf

A summary of the Infant Feeding Guidelines is available at

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/n56>

- Provide guidance to families to follow the guidelines for serving different types of food and the serving sizes in the Guidelines and may use the Australian Government "eat for health" calculator <http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/eat-health-calculators>.
- encourage families to provide healthy food for their children at home which is consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines, talk to families about their child's food intake and voice any concerns about their child's eating
- provide cooking experiences that are safe and prepared hygienically by following the relevant procedures set out in the Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy.
- provide food and beverages that minimise the risk of children choking.
- provide families with daily information about their child's food and beverage intake and related experiences.

- feed babies individually.
- provide age and developmentally appropriate utensils and furniture for each child.
- ensure meal times are relaxed, pleasant and timed to meet most children's needs.
- integrate learning about food and nutrition into the Curriculum.
- never use food as a punishment, reward or as a bribe.
- encourage toddlers and young children to develop their sense of agency by feeding themselves independently and developing their social skills at meal times.
- model and reinforce healthy eating habits and food options with children during eating times.

The Nominated Supervisor will provide staff with training in nutrition, food safety and other cultures' food customs if professional development in these areas is required.

Breastfeeding, Breast Milk and Bottle Warming

Healthy lifestyles and good nutrition for each child is paramount. We encourage all families to continue breast feeding their child until at least 12 months in line with recommendations by recognised authorities, and will feed children breast milk supplied by their families.

Educators and mothers who breastfeed at the Service

We support mothers who wish to breastfeed at the service by providing a quiet, relaxing place with a comfortable chair for mothers to breastfeed or express milk. Educators will take into account mothers' preferences for privacy and make the staffroom available in these circumstances.

All reasonable efforts will also be made to support educators who continue breastfeeding their child when they (return to) work at the service. For example, an educator returning from maternity leave may have a meeting with the Nominated Supervisor to discuss:

- more flexible work arrangements
- the provision of lactation breaks for the educator to express milk or breastfeed her child. Educator to child ratios will not be compromised during these breaks.

Breast milk procedure

Breast milk that has been expressed should be brought to the service in a clean sterile container labelled with the date of expression and the child's name. We encourage families to transport milk to the service in cooler bags and eskies. Educators will:

- put the breastmilk in the fridge as soon as families arrive at the Service
- refrigerate the milk at 4° Celsius until it is required

- warm and/or thaw breastmilk by standing the container/bottle in a container of warm water
- test the temperature of the milk before giving it to the child
- consult individual families for instructions if they do not have enough breast milk to meet the child's needs that day
- return any unused breastmilk to families when they collect their child. Educators will not store unused milk at the service

Safe Storage and Heating of Babies Bottles (Please display)

Our service will not use microwaves because milk may not heat evenly.

Bottle Warmers

Our service will use bottle warmers that have a thermostat control to heat Infant Formula/Cow's Milk/Breast Milk.

- The service will use the bottle warmer as per the manufacturer's instructions.
- Educators will ensure that bottle warmers are inaccessible to children at all times.
- Bottles will be warmed for less than 10 minutes.

Sources

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

My Time, Our Place Framework for School Age Care

National Quality Standard

Safe Food Australia, 2nd Edition. January 2001

Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood

Infant Feeding Guidelines 2012

Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013

Eat for health: Dept Health and Ageing and NHMRC

Food Standards Code

Food Safety Standards www.foodstandards.gov.au

Food Safety Standards for Australia 2001

Food Standards Australia and New Zealand Act 1991

Food Standards Australia New Zealand Regulations 1994

Food Act 2003

Food Regulation 2004

NSW Food Authority

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011

Australian Breast Feeding Association Guidelines

Staying Healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services

Review

This policy may be reviewed at any time or as required in the event of legislative changes. Unless otherwise required the policy will be reviewed at least once every two years.

Date Implemented: 14th May 2019

Date for next review: May 2021

Date Reviewed: 30th March 2020

Date Implemented: 31st March 2020

Date Reviewed: 22nd February 2021

Date Implemented: 25th February 2021

Date for next review: February 2023

Date Reviewed: 21st February 2023

Date Implemented: 14th March 2023

Date for next review: February 2025

Our Educators



Renae Robertson is the Centre Manager, Educational Leader and Early Childhood Teacher. Renae holds a Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care and a Bachelor of Teaching (Birth to Five Years) that was completed at Charles Sturt University. Renae has worked in the early childhood profession since 2007. Renae has had experience working with children of all ages and held leadership roles in several services. Renae is trained in Child Protection and is Nominated Supervisor of the service. Renae oversees all centre programs in her role as Educational Leader.



Karina Bourke is a Room Leader within the service. Karina is currently working with the Caterpillar children who range from zero to two years old. Karina holds a Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care and has worked in early childhood education since 2005. Karina was a part of the opening team at Coolamon Early Childhood Centre. Karina is a Responsible Person of the service and trained in Child Protection.



Cathy Booth joined the team in 2017 as an assistant educator. Cathy is the room leader for our Butterfly Room (Junior Preschool) caring for children aged 2-4 years. Cathy holds a Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care and has previously worked in outside school hours care and casually within the preschool sector. Cathy is one of the centre's responsible people and is trained in Child Protection.



Nichole Coleman is the centre's second Early Childhood Teacher and is the room leader for our Preschool Room. Nichole has over 17 years experiences working in early childhood and joined the team in October 2021. Nichole holds a Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care as well as a Bachelor of Education (0-5 years) degree. She is part of the centre leadership team and is training in the role of Educational Leader to support Renae in mentoring and guiding centre learning programs.



Jayde Cameron has been a long term educator at the service starting in 2005 and is qualified in Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care. She works alongside Nichole in the Preschool Room as an assistant educator. Jayde is part of the centre leadership team in the role of responsible person and is training in Child Protection.



Samantha Costello started at the service in 2019 as a school based trainee and completed her Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care in a two year period. She is currently studying her Diploma qualification. In January 2021 Samantha was successful in gaining a permanent position at the service. On return, she will be working as an assistant in the Butterfly Room working alongside Cathy, Sophie and Jennaya.



Leah McKinnon started at the centre as a casual educator in 2018 and holds a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care. She is employed in a permanent role at the service as an assistant educator and works as a floater assistant. Leah is taking some maternity leave in 2024 and will return later in the year, she is currently studying her Diploma qualification.



Jennaya completed her work placement at the centre in 2019 for her Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care. In 2020, Jennaya joined the team as a casual educator before becoming a permanent employee in 2021. Jennaya works as an assistant in the Butterfly Room alongside Cathy, Sophie and Sam.



Rebecca Vogt joined the team in May 2021 as a trainee educator. Bec has recently completed her Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care as part of her traineeship. Bec works with all age groups across the service covering lunch breaks and release time for key educators to complete documentation.



Sophie Griffith joined the team in September 2021 as a trainee educator. She has recently completed her Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care. Sophie is moving on to study her Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care. Sophie has taken on the role as assistant educator in our Butterfly Room, working alongside Cathy, Sam and Jennaya. Sophie is also beginning on the job training this year in the role of responsible person of the service.



Aleesha Carl joined the team in 2022 as a trainee educator. She is currently studying her Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care. She is an educator in our Caterpillar Room, working five days a week alongside Karina, Brianna and Amanda.



Katherine Priest joined the team in 2022 as a trainee educator. She is currently studying her Certificate III in Early Childhood education and Care with future goals of completing a degree in Early Childhood Education. Kath works alongside Nichole, Jayde and Maddie in our Preschool Room. She is also working one day a week in our 0-2 years room to gain practical experience with younger age groups. Katherine contributes to centre programs in the shared role of Munch and Move Co-ordinator.



Brianna McInerney joined the team in 2023 as a trainee educator. Brianna is currently studying her Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care. She works in the Caterpillar Room (0-2 years) alongside Karina, Aleesha and Amanda.



Amanda Winters joined the team in 2022 as a casual educator. Amanda is currently completing her Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care. She works with our 0-2 years (Caterpillar Room) age group two days a week alongside Karina, Aleesha and Brianna.



Maddie Kovacs joined our team in 2023 as a trainee educator. She is currently completing her Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care. She works in our Preschool Room as an assistant with Nichole, Jayde and Katherine.