

Woden Early Childhood Centre

Parent handbook

Useful information

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'Creating the future'

Where Dreams lead we will follow

Translating and Interpreting service 131 450



Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Welcome | 1 |
| Section 1 Our Centre – Introduction and Philosophy | 2 |
| About our Centre | 2 |
| Philosophy | 3 |
| Centre goals | 5 |
| Methodology | 5 |
| Management Committee | 6 |
| The Centre Director | 6 |
| Section 2 Our Facility | 7 |
| The Facility | 7 |
| Opening times and fees | 7 |
| Child Care Subsidy | 8 |
| The Rooms | 11 |
| Staffing of Rooms | 12 |
| The Environment | 13 |
| The Nature Kindergarten | 13 |
| Section 3 Our Program, Curriculum and Assessment | 14 |
| The Program | 14 |
| Curriculum and assessment | 14 |
| Journal | 16 |
| Portfolios | 16 |
| Positive Behaviour Guidance | 17 |
| Chronic disruptive behaviours | 17 |
| Outdoor play | 18 |
| Excursions | 18 |
| Section 4 enrolling your child at our Centre | 19 |
| Access | 19 |
| Waiting list | 19 |
| Enrolment procedure | 19 |
| Section 5 Procedures once your child is enrolled at our centre | 21 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Arrival | 21 |
| Departure | 21 |
| Signing in and out | 22 |
| Allowable Absences | 22 |
| Immunisation | 22 |
| Safety and Security | 22 |
| Centre Calendar | 23 |
| Discharge and withdrawal | 23 |
| Section 6 Daily requirements for families, children and educators | 24 |
| Clothing | 24 |
| Meals and snacks | 24 |
| Rest and Sleep times | 25 |
| Sleeping outdoors | 26 |
| Toys and personal items | 26 |
| Birthdays | 26 |
| Section 7 When your child is not well | 27 |
| Illness | 27 |
| Medications | 28 |
| Section 8 Family Involvement in the Centre | 29 |
| Family requirements | 29 |
| Family communication | 29 |
| Family library | 29 |
| Policies | 30 |
| Family evaluation of the Centre | 30 |

Welcome

Our primary belief is always the well-being, happiness, and holistic development of each child. Together, through our shared responsibility with you, we can make decisions that will ensure your child is given the best possible start in life. We recognise that parents are children's first teachers and will wherever possible follow their lead.

We have prepared this guide because we feel that it helps us establish a common understanding about what you can and should expect of your child's experience here at Woden Early Childhood Centre (the Centre). We also talk about what we expect of you.

You are your child's most influential and effective teacher. We are here to facilitate varied, interesting, and focused learning activities in a nurturing group setting through respectful care routines and experiences. Your child's development depends on our cooperation and involvement as a team. Everything that your child experiences at the Centre can be included at home and everything your child experiences at home can be built on within the Centre.

It is important that your child knows that you are involved in, and care about, what they are doing here at the Centre. We believe it is important to establish consistency – in children's learning, behaviour guidance, and daily routines, also in our Nature Kindergarten philosophy and in having fun with people who care about you and your child.

You will come to know that we always place the child's best interest first and foremost in everything we practice and do. We believe children learn best through play and support educators who value and sustain children's play. Many of the guidelines in this handbook help us to guide and reinforce this principle. If you have any questions, please talk to us. Remember our goal for your child is that they have a wonderful, natural childhood.

This handbook will provide you with background information on the Centre, including our philosophy, our practices, and the way in which the Centre operates. Your comments are welcome at any time. We encourage all families to be involved in the Centre and discuss any concerns with the room educators or the Director. The Centre's overall goal is to provide your child with the best possible care and support during their time spent with us. To make sure we achieve this goal, we want to work closely with you, to understand your child's needs. We believe spending lots of quality time in the first days are vital in settling your child into our Centre. We ask you to present the Centre as a positive place to be (not somewhere they have to come while you are at work). There are people here who will find your child amazing and delight in the joys of being with them.

You can help us by talking to us often about your child's development, activities, and needs. In this way we can work together to make each day at the Centre a happy and fulfilling one for your child. We hope that you will be able to spend time with educators each day sharing what your child has done during their time away from the Centre. We will also share information about your child's day. This is particularly vital with younger children who cannot yet tell you how they spent their day. A daily journal is available in each room for you to read, it is also on our app.

Section 1 Our Centre – Introduction and Philosophy

About our Centre

Woden Early Childhood Centre was built in 1986 by the then Institute of Technology (now known as the Canberra Institute of Technology). The Centre was built to service the needs of the students and educators of CIT and community users. We are a not-for-profit incorporated association. CIT moved away from the Woden area and the Centre now caters for families living or working in the Woden area.

The Centre is a community-based Early Childhood service that is run by a Management Committee (the Committee) of current parents and educators. The Committee meets monthly, and we encourage all interested parents to participate in the Committee.

We are a 63-place centre offering part time and full-time care for children from birth through to school age.

Families complete a waiting list and based on that we offer care for the vacancies we have. Families can pick up whatever care we have available or continue on our waiting list.

We do advocate for consecutive care for children as it offers predictability.

Unfortunately care is not available at our Centre once your child starts school.

*'Every child has.... The right to be
respected The right to
dream
The right to be loved and cared
for Gifts that should be recognized
and valued The right to achieve their
God-given potential
The need for unconditional love.'*

Philosophy

Woden Early Childhood Centre Philosophy

We would like to recognize the traditional custodians of this land the Ngunnawal people on whose land we build our community on today, we will strive to care for our land as they have for over a thousand years.

"So, I take this word reconciliation and I use it to reconcile people back to Mother Earth, so they can walk this land together and heal one another because she's the one that gives birth to everything we see around us, everything we need to survive". - Max Dulumunmun Harrison

"Racism is a disease in society. We're all equal. I don't care what their colour is, or religion, just as long as they're human beings they're my buddies". - Mandawuy Yunupingu

"Choosing a school for a child is one of the most important decisions parents make. The school - its teachers, curriculum, educational philosophy, and values both explicit and implicit - will affect the child's day-to-day life. It will help shape the child's personality, view of life, behaviour, and destiny as an adult. And it will also deeply affect the lives of the parents and the life of the family as a whole" - Ronald Koetzsch

The educators at Woden Early Childhood Centre want to provide a place for children, where they can **take risks**, have **adventures** and use their **imagination**, to know **joy** and feel gratitude. A place that holds them in good stead as **future citizens** of the world and a place where **creativity** is celebrated and there is a **freedom of spirit** for all involved in the centre. **E.Y.L.F Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners**

"Gratitude can transform common days into thanksgivings, turn routine jobs into joy, and change ordinary opportunities into blessings". - William Arthur Ward

"Creativity seems to emerge from multiple experiences, coupled with a well-supported development of personal resources, including a sense of freedom to venture beyond the known". - Loris Malaguzzi

We believe that when **trusting**, respectful and **loving** relationships are **nurtured** and **treasured** (there is no one in this world like you and that is a celebration), we can actively **support**, challenge and facilitate children's learning with **meaningful** provocations ensuring continuity of learning **E.Y.L.F**

Principles: Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships; high expectations and equity. Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

"The wider the range of possibilities we offer children, the more intense will be their motivations and the richer their experiences. We must widen the range of topics and goals, the types of situations we offer and their degree of structure, the kinds and combinations of resources and materials, and the possible interactions with things, peers, and adults". - Loris Malaguzzi

At Woden Early Childhood Centre, **integrity** isn't just a word but something that is strived for and lived by, always. Where **accountability** is an expectation and **mindfulness** is shown at all times. We believe that through this we are teaching our children how to show **respect** and **gratitude**, to others, the environment, and the community and to the traditional owners of our land both past, present and future. We want our children to feel **respected** through all aspect of their day. We want them to know their thoughts and opinions are *valued* and respected, that they are valued as effective communicators. *E.Y.L.F Outcome 2: Children are connected to and contribute to their world; Outcome 5: children are effective communicators*

"We learned about gratitude and humility - that so many people had a hand in our success, from the teachers who inspired us to the janitors who kept our school clean... and we were taught to value everyone's contribution and treat everyone with respect". Michelle Obama

We believe we are providing an environment for our children to grow and develop a strong sense of **belonging** and know we value the **partnership** with them, their families, our community and educators. We know this partnership is the key to the quality care at Woden Early Childhood Centre. *E.Y.L.F Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity; Outcome 2: Children are connected to and contribute to their world*

At Woden Early Childhood Centre, we believe all children have a right to experience *justice*; to be aware of what it is and why it is so important in our community and society in general. We will help them to develop **empathy** for others and have truly **authentic** relationships that are based on trust and gratitude. We believe all children have a right to experience **joy**, to know

happiness, to develop a true appreciation for what is happening in their lives and know that, they are able to contribute to their world and know that they make a difference. We want them to know *gratitude*; to show it and feel it; to *flourish*. We want our children to develop true **resilience**, one that gives them a sense of spirit, so that they can be all they can be. And for them to know that a person should be measured in the deeds they do not just the words they say. *E.Y.L.F Outcome 2: Children are connected to and contribute to their world; Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing*

Woden Early Childhood Centre is a place where educators' voices reflect the centre's philosophy and the educator's personal professional philosophies Where curriculum is guided by the children's voices through educators valuing the importance of **Belonging, Being** and *Becoming* as it guides our daily practices

"The child must know that he is a miracle, that since the beginning of the world there hasn't been, and until the end of the world there will not be another child like him". - Pablo Casals

"Gratitude helps you to grow and expand; gratitude brings joy and laughter into your life and into the lives of all those around you". - Eileen Caddy

*"Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow".
Melody Beattie*

Centre goals

We are committed to attaining the following goals every day:

Providing an unhurried learning environment that develops each child's intellect, interest, and well-being. We resist the inclination to increase academic pressures.

- Children will feel safe, secure, and accepted
- Children will develop and expand their self-worth and social competence
- Children will be given the opportunity to construct knowledge through repeated experiences involving people, resources, and materials
- Children are supported in terms of both their actual development and their potential
- Children will develop responsibility for their immediate and personal environment
- Content of the curriculum will be relevant, engaging, and meaningful to the children, and will be developed by both the educators and the children
- Curriculum objectives will respect each child's individuality. It will be realistic and attainable according to each child's intellectual, emotional, and physical abilities
- Children will be observed as they 'authentically' engage in concrete, meaningful tasks that parallels the curriculum
- Children will develop and expand in the ability to express, represent, and understand thoughts, feelings and experiences of themselves and others
- Children will develop and expand in the ability to make decisions and solve problems

The Centre will be a place of high play affordance.

Methodology

We have been inspired by Friedrich Froebel and the Reggio Emilia Approach and the use of emergent curriculum. This has influenced the way we program, document and implement planned experiences. To guarantee a rich, rewarding program and learning environment there needs to be collaboration between educators, families, and children. This ensures authentic documentation, interpretation, and influences the direction of planning for meaningful play-based experiences.

Using developmentally appropriate objectives, knowledge of children's developmental sequences, and an understanding of the personalities and learning styles of the children and educators formulate and hypothesise what could happen and plans accordingly.

Educators collect materials and resources, pose questions, and create learning opportunities that enable children to not only to engage in, but they can analyse the topic. We believe that when children are immersed in topics that they have a strong interest in, it builds on their knowledge and skills. Educators guide children on the development of theories through encounters with materials, the real world, conversations, group discussions and symbolic representations in multiple forms: such as art, music, foreign language, movement, dance, drama, constructions, and writing.

A typical daily routine includes small and large group times, learning centres, gross motor activities, morning and afternoon tea, lunch, rest time, and integrated specialty areas such as music and art. Throughout the day, educators and children continually monitor and celebrate the achievements of all children often by displaying work, documenting, observations, and providing verbal feedback.

Management Committee

The Management Committee meets monthly and makes financial and policy decisions for the running of the Centre. It is made up of parents whose children attend the Centre, Two educators and the Centre Director. The Director is responsible for the day to day running of the Centre.

The Committee strives to provide an environment where families feel comfortable leaving their children and a place where high quality educators will want to work knowing that they are making a difference in the lives of young children, by providing the best quality care and education.

Parents are encouraged to be involved in Committee activities. Dates of the meetings are emailed out to families and on the Centre's website. Parents are encouraged to attend meetings. Childcare will be provided if needed and a light supper is provided.

The Management Committee, in conjunction with the Centre Director, determines staffing requirements for the Centre ensuring that these are maintained at a level consistent to ensure a high-quality program. Regulations and standards will always be maintained as a minimum and the Centre aims to have additional educator in each room. Management understands and supports the philosophy behind providing continuity of care, and aims to move educators only when required, with the children's care being the priority.

The Centre Director

Reesha Stefek is the Centre's Director. Reesha has been employed at the Centre since 1992 and has been the Director since 1994. Reesha holds a Certificate in Centre Management and a Diploma in Early Childhood Services.

Reesha is passionate about nature, sustainable practices and the outdoors environment as well as embedding a knowledge of 1st Australians.

She strongly believes that children learn through firsthand experiences and believes that open-ended natural resources offer o children the opportunity to be creative while learning.

She wants all children to have a special bond with the educators who educate and care for them. Reesha believes that all children should feel loved, valued, and respected during all times throughout the day.

Reesha is very hands on and feels it is important to develop a close relationship with not only the child but their family as well. She believes that it is vital to work closely with families to ensure that the child gets the best quality care possible.

Section 2 Our

Facility The Facility

The Centre is accessed through a secure, passcode protected door that leads into the front foyer. Our front area includes an office, staff room and programming room. The Centre is purpose- built to meet the emotional, physical, and cognitive needs of young children. Children and families enter our building via the foyer, which may feature children's work and important notices for families. The hallway is used to display project work, calendars, activities, and notices from the rooms. You will also find our educator's tree that displays the name of all educators across the Centre.

Each room is a large open area that has been divided into smaller learning centres, with an open area for whole-group activities. The rooms feature age-appropriate furniture, display areas for children's work, large outside windows, alternating carpet, and vinyl areas, and covered a verandah for outdoor activities.

The playground includes play equipment for climbing and physical activities as well as dramatic play, a garden, a concrete game area, and easels for painting. Children have direct access to shade, water, and a bathroom from the playground.

We have created a Sand Room where children can engage in free choice with a wide range of hands-on resources. Children build sandcastles and dig holes deeper and wider than they thought possible, using their large muscles. They tip and pour the sand catching it to bake cupcakes or create ice-creams that are simply delicious. The great thing about sand is that it is open- ended and there is no one way or right way to use sand.

Opening times and fees

The Centre is open from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm, Monday to Friday, for 50 weeks per year. Fees are set by the Management Committee and interested parents. They are payable for all times your child is booked for care, including public holidays. The Centre is closed for 2 weeks over the Christmas - New Year period (fees are not charged for this time).

All fees are required to be paid on the Friday, to coincide with public service pay days. The Centre's bookkeeper sends out emails with your invoice, it is vital that you notify us of any change of email address.

Statements are sent by email, at least by the Monday before fees are due. The Centre uses Direct-debt system to deduct outstanding amounts from approved accounts on that Friday

A late fee of \$50 will automatically be imposed if fees are not paid by the required date. This is a non-refundable fee, to discourage people from paying late.

There is also the risk of losing your childcare place if fees are continually paid late.

Please give a minimum of two weeks' notice for the withdrawal of your child from the Centre. Failure to do so may result in two weeks' full fees being charged. We also request you give two weeks' notice of any change in care.

Child Care Subsidy

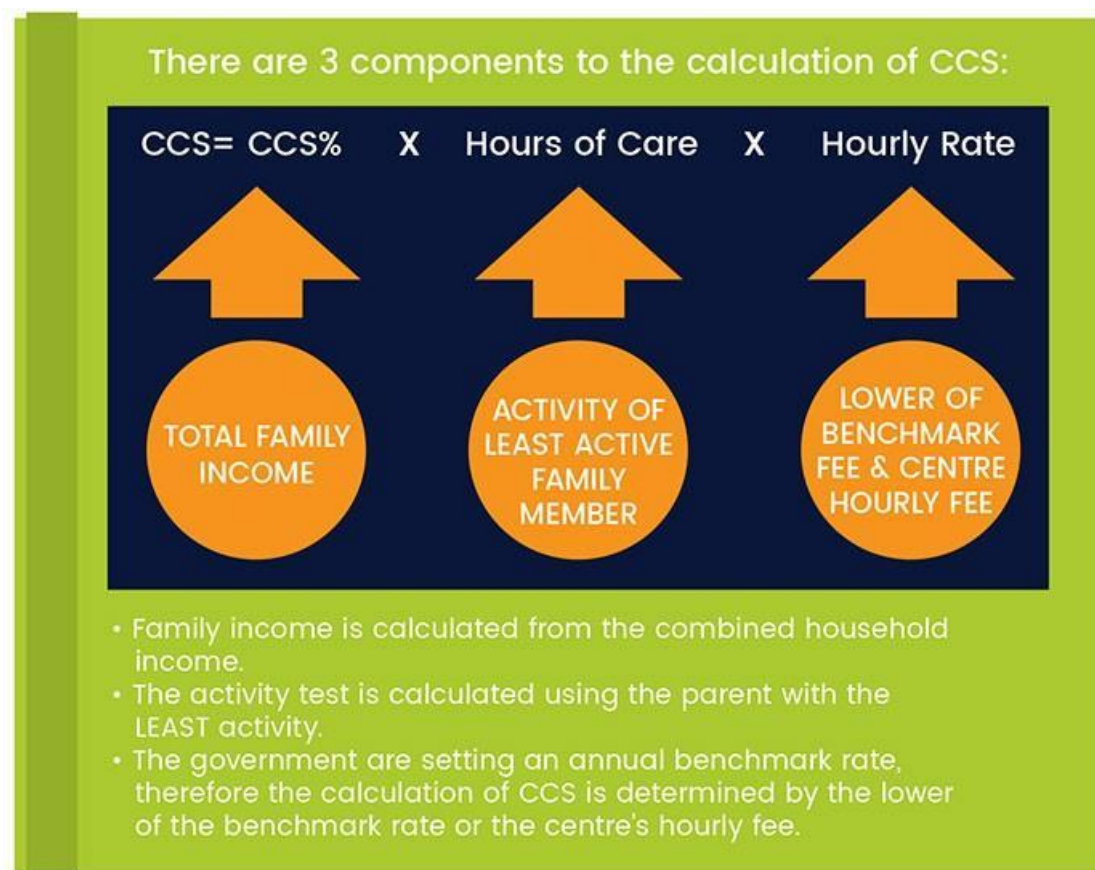
The Child Care Subsidy (CCS): What You Need to Know

From 2 July 2018, the new Child Care Subsidy (CCS) system came into effect. This replaced Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR) arrangement and makes it easier for families to access childcare.

All families will need to register for CCS to ensure their subsidy is in place when the new system begins.

Calculating your CCS

Your CCS will be calculated using three components:



Combined family income

Your family's combined income will calculate the CCS percentage you're entitled to.

Remember, you will need to contact Centrelink when your combined income increases or decreases.

| Your family income | Child Care Subsidy percentage |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| \$0 to \$70,015 | 85% |
| More than \$70,015 to below \$175,015 | Between 85% and 50% The percentage goes down by 1% for every \$3,000 of income your family earns |
| \$175,015 to below \$254,305 | 50% |
| \$254,305 to below \$344,305 | Between 50% and 20% The percentage goes down by 1% for every \$3,000 of income your family earns |
| \$344,305 to below \$354,305 | 20% |
| \$354,305 or more | 0% |

These tax brackets will be adjusted as per CPI every financial year.

Level of activity

CCS is linked to how much a family contributes to the Australian economy through activity. This activity level is calculated from the parent with the lowest number of hours of activity.

| Activity level each fortnight | Hours of subsidised care each fortnight |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Less than 8 hours | 0 hours if you earn above \$69,390 24 hours if you earn \$69,390 or below |
| More than 8 to 16 hours | 36 hours |
| More than 16 to 48 hours | 72 hours |
| More than 48 hours | 100 hours |

What counts as activity?

Under the new system, you will only be able to access the Child Care Subsidy if you are doing suitable activity and the amount of activity will then determine how many hours of Childcare Subsidy you are eligible for.

Activity counts as:

- Paid work (including unpaid lunch breaks)
- Commute time from childcare centre to work (excludes time travelling from home to childcare centre and vice versa)
- Authorised leave (e.g. maternity leave, long service leave, annual leave etc)
- Unpaid leave of up to 6 months
- Unpaid work in a family business
- Setting up a new business
- Study
- Training and study (includes semester breaks)
- Work experience/internships (whether paid or not)
- Volunteering
- Looking for work (e.g., internet research, contacting employers, preparing resumes/letters of application, preparing for and attending job interviews, travel time)

for interviews)

Concerned you won't have enough activity?

There may be some families that lose the level of childcare funding support they are used to as a result of the activity test. However, please note:

- Activity is based on the family's estimate over a thirteen-week period
- For casual/contract/itinerant workers whose hours may vary from week to week, you should pick the week with the highest level of activity in the thirteen-week period and use that as your level of activity
- You can go onto myGov and change your activity level at any time
- While you do not have to verify your activity, the Government has said that it will look to audit about 10% of families each year to seek some form of verification that the activity is valid
- Families earning less than \$64,710 are exempt from activity tests for up to 24 hours care per fortnight

Annual cap

If your family earns \$190,015 or less, you won't have an annual cap on your subsidy.

If your family earns between \$190,015 and \$354,305 Centrelink will cap your subsidy. This means the Government will subsidise your fees up to the annual cap of \$10,655 per child each financial year.

Withholding

Centrelink withholds 5% of your subsidy. This is to help reduce the likelihood of you getting an overpayment. You're able to vary this amount to suit your circumstances.

You can do this up to twice a year using your Centrelink online account through myGov. If you'd like to change it more than this, call the Families line 136150.

What you need to do

- Register for CCS through your MyGov account and provide Centrelink with:
 - Your projected family income for f/y
 - Your activity level
 - The name of the Early Learning Centre your child is enrolling at
- You will then receive a notification from Centrelink informing you of your CCS
 - Percentage
 - Hours of subsidy

Questions or Concerns?

Please talk to the Centre's Bookkeeper who will be able to assist you with any questions or concerns you may have

The Rooms

“Sometimes the smallest things take up the most room is your heart”

This is how we feel about your child!

The Centre has four large rooms. Each room is divided loosely into different age groups in order to provide developmentally and age-appropriate programs that met the needs of each child in the room.

| | |
|--|---|
| Nursery Birth to 18 months 3 educators: 8 children Ratio in the birth to two years is 1 educator to 4 children (2 -8) | Intro to Pre-school 2.5 to 3.5 years 4 educators: 18 children Ratio 2yrs to 3yrs 1 educator – 5 children Ratio 3yrs to 6yrs 1 educator – 11 children |
| Toddlers 18 months to 2.5 years 5 educators: 15 children Ratio in the under 2yrs 1 educator – 4 children Ratio 2yrs to 3yrs 1 educator – 5 children | Pre-school 3.5 to school age 3 educators: 20 children Ratio 3yrs to 6yrs 1 educator – 11 children |

Please take the time to get to know the educators caring for your child and keep them up to date on your child's needs. Feel free to ask the educators about your child's day.

Movement of the children between the rooms, while roughly determined by age, depends primarily on the individual child's readiness to move to an older group, and if space is available. Placement of each child is given individual consideration. The child's social and cognitive abilities, age and development, individual circumstances, educators and family recommendations, and room availability will all be taken into consideration when making placement decisions.

Each child's readiness to progress is determined through consultation with families and educators in the relevant rooms. You are encouraged to discuss this process with the educators in your child's room. Please remember if there aren't vacancies in the next room, we are unable to move your child up, however each room programs for individual children, therefore each child's needs are met no matter what age they are or what room they are in.

***“We didn’t realize we were making
memories we just knew we were having***

Staffing of Rooms

Educators are employed by the Centre through a rigorous interview process. Extensive experience and/or excellent credentials are required but form only part of the selection process.

Our Centre consists of a team of professional childcare workers who are chosen for their skills and/or experience. They provide the highest possible care and education for children enrolled at the Centre. The photos and names of the educators working in your child's room are displayed in the front foyer on our Educator Tree.

Placement of educators is evaluated yearly. Restructuring of staff may be undertaken according to the ability, availability, personality, and teaching style of each of the educators and current educator positions. We strive to keep some of our educators with the same group of children as they move up to the next room.

A Diploma-qualified educator oversees each room, we also have a teacher qualified educator in our Intro to Pre School Room and Pre School Room. These Room Leaders are responsible for each room's overall running; this includes the program, journal, and portfolios. There is always an educator with a first aid certificate on the premises. It is our expectation that all educators employed with us have a current first aid certificate or obtain one soon after commencing at the Centre and that most will have completed training regarding asthma management and anaphylaxis.

We recognise the development of children is directly tied to the quality and qualifications of the educators who work with the children. We believe Woden Early Childhood Centre educators are exceptional because of their:

- genuine love and respect for children
- desire and ability to teach children
- educational philosophy

To ensure educators are staying in touch with current practices and research, they participate in professional development throughout the year. Appropriate training is paid by the Centre. All educators have or are actively working towards a Certificate III or Diploma in Early Childhood Services along with a current first aid certificate.

***‘The first five years have so much
To do with how the next 80 turnout’***

Bill Gates

The Environment

We consider the environment to be our 'additional educator.' Therefore, careful consideration and thought by the educators are essential parts of planning a challenging, age appropriate environment. Children's interactions with their environment, combined with educators' questioning and discussion, is essential to meeting children's cognitive needs.

From our outdoor verandah and beautiful outdoors to our carefully displayed documentation and learning centres, we are continually reflecting and setting up areas to engage and challenge the children. Woden Early Childhood Centre's rooms are organised into distinct focus centres. These centres are Math, Writing, Art, Library, Discovery, Sensory Table, Dramatic Play and Blocks. Each focus centre in the room builds specific skills and creates an environment that stimulates imagination, creativity, socialisation, exploration, and discovery.

Children are also surrounded with supplies and resources that enable them to construct, represent and test theories. Large blocks of time are given to explore in learning centres so that children may fully develop their ideas and thoughts.

The Nature Kindergarten

Our front playground is a place for children to embrace nature. We have tried to provide a bush-like environment that the children can explore, contribute to, and enjoy being part of. The children take responsibility for this area and have made suggestions on what they want in the environment and how they will spend their time. It was created for, with and by the children.

We plan to extend the Nature Kindergarten concept in the back playground.

We believe it is important that children learn a love of nature in the early years and that they can care for the earth and our country and our space.

Each room goes 'out and about' - this can mean a walk in the local area, a stroll down to the park, a picnic on the grass areas or a walk to watch the storm water drain after a heavy rain. We find the children love the sense of freedom these outings offer. They love finding new treasures, creatures or plants and their excitement is contagious. It is also an opportunity for children to be physically active in a large space.

This theme runs throughout the Centre, with rooms accessing nature resources and toys. These toys and resources are open-ended and therefore the children can use their imagination to create whatever they have in mind.

***'There is a garden in every childhood,
An enchanted place where colours are
brighter, the air is softer, and the
morning***

More fragrant than ever again” - Elizabeth Lawrence

Section 3 Our Program, Curriculum and Assessment

The Program

Here at Woden Early Childhood Centre, we follow a child-centred approach, where each child is valued for who they are. Our Centre aims to provide a home-like (loving and supportive) atmosphere within a caring, stimulating environment. We aim to build a secure and trusting environment in which your child can develop and enjoy themselves.

‘How one handles success or failure is determined by their early childhood’ – Harold Ramis

We believe that children learn self-discipline through sharing and cooperation with others.

The educators plan programs and activities to meet the individual children's needs and interests. All programs are flexible, and educators build on child-directed activities.

Each room records activities that have taken place throughout the day. This is done through the daily journal. This is displayed in the rooms and on the Centre's APP. Families are encouraged to take time to read it.

Educators in each room record information about each child's development, interests, and abilities, which form the core of the child's Learning Stories. This information assists educators in planning an overall program that is based on individual needs. Please arrange with the Room Leader to discuss this information, whenever you wish.

Educators provide a balanced program that will meet all the developmental needs of your child. This is grounded in belief that every child should receive an education designed to meet each child's individual needs. If you have any concerns about your child's development no matter how small, chat to your child's Room Leader or the Director.

Our goal is that the child's record reflects the authentic child and that it is something that is treasured for years to come. Please feel free to add to your child's record through the APP.

We welcome your comments and encourage your involvement in the activities in your child's room. If you can assist in any way, educators would love to hear from you.

“I believe that we learn best when we, not others, are deciding what we are going to try to learn, and when, and for what reasons or purposes.... What then do we do about it? How can we create or help create these conditions for learning?” John Holt

Curriculum and assessment

Woden Early Childhood Centre's early childhood educators implement a responsive, emergent, negotiated play-based curriculum and assessment system that focuses on the development of the whole child. We are guided by the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). The purpose of this framework is to enable the child to develop in the following areas: Being, Belonging and Becoming

***'Just when the caterpillar thought the world
was over She became a
BUTTERFLY'***

Developmental Objectives

We achieve the Centre's goals effectively by incorporating experiences that challenge children at the developmentally appropriate level. We use objectives that are time- tested and age-appropriate to help the educators facilitate each child's growth in developmental areas:

1. Personal, social and character development
2. Physical development
3. Math development
4. Science development
5. Expressive, receptive and representational development
6. Higher level thinking

The objectives for most areas are progressive stages that children are known to typically follow. These stages are not age dependent, as children develop differently and usually in spurts between the ages of 2-8. The purpose of the curriculum is not to have the child reach the last stage but to nurture and challenge the child in his/her current stage with quality.

"Cherish these moments – tomorrow they'll be memories"

Content

We will teach knowledge and skills through the children's interests. Educators observe and reflect upon the mutual interests of the children to develop corresponding projects. The educators engage the children in planning activities that are purposeful and meaningful to them.

With the educators' guidance, long term projects chosen, are those that generate a sufficient amount of interest and uncertainty to provoke children's creative thinking, problem solving and are open to different avenues of exploration. The length of each unit of study is dependent upon the interest of the children.

***"There is always one moment in childhood when the door opens and lets the
future in."***

Assessment

Educators create a developmentally appropriate and interest-based record of each child's learning through the Centre's app. The record includes both written observations and copies of original works that represent the child's thought processes. These works typically illustrate skills in specific areas, such as language and literacy, math and play development. This documentation is an important part of our Authentic Assessment process, which is a comprehensive approach to evaluating children's actual current skills, knowledge, behaviour, and accomplishments.

Using the curriculum objectives, the information in the documentation and an understanding of the individual child's learning and interests through assessment and projects, the educators develop information that will enable the child to grow and develop at his/her challenge level.

Twice during the year, the educators provide families with an assessment of the child's learning. These are the mid-year summaries and end of year summaries, they provide an overview of the child's learning over the previous six months.

Families can request conferences at any time to discuss the child's needs and accomplishments. Families are encouraged to visit and volunteer at the Centre throughout the year.

Everyone benefits from room visits. Families are invited to take an active role in the child's education, including viewing the app on a consistent basis and providing feedback to educators

Journal

The day's events are documented in a journal. These are a snapshot of the day and display highlights of the day within the room. It forms as an evaluation of the program as well as documentation that links to the children's record. All educators contribute to the room journal and, again, families are asked to provide comment and feedback.

"Each day of our lives we make deposits in the memory banks of our children"

- Charles R Swindoll

The Centre APP

Each child's development is documented in an individual record on the APP. Information about the room is sent out daily. Families are encouraged to contribute to their child's record with information of holidays, family events and visitors. The child's record is a wonderful link from Centre to home. Educators enjoy reading the contributions that families make in their child's record. We hope you will love and treasure it as much as we have your child.

"Children see magic because they look for it"

Positive Behaviour Guidance

One of the most common questions families have is “How do you guide the children’s behaviour?” Firstly, we provide a demonstrative atmosphere for children, one that exhibits encouragement, consistency, and mutual respect. Secondly, we like to use the most powerful influences children can have – their peers!

Children develop self-respect, self-discipline, and cooperative behaviours by being an active participant in resolving their conflicts. Together, educators and children create ways to prevent conflicts, learning techniques used to resolve conflicts (with peers), and being given natural and logical consequences when conflicts arise.

Our goal is to prepare children for school, to impart skills to enable them to become responsible for themselves and gain an understanding of others. Non-punitive guidance helps children by setting clear, consistent fair limits, valuing mistakes as learning opportunities and redirect to a more acceptable behaviour or activities while sharing about their feelings

Chronic disruptive behaviours

We make every effort to work with the families when children are having difficulties in the Centre. At the same time, we are here for all children. Therefore, we will require the following course of actions when any child displays chronic, disruptive behaviour that is determined to be upsetting to the wellbeing of any child (including themselves):

1. Initial consultation

The Director and educators will ask the family to meet for a conference. The identified problem will be discussed, evaluated, and defined on paper. An individual plan containing goals to resolving the problematic behaviour will be jointly established with families, educators, and professional support people. The family will be actively involved in creating approaches toward solving the problem, and in carrying out these approaches. The family and Centre will reinforce and support each other.

2. Second consultation

If the initial plan does not adequately address the identified problem(s), the family will again meet with the Director, educators, and professional support people. Another attempt will be made to further define the problem. Additional avenues for addressing the problem will be discussed. Together, we will outline refined approaches to solving it. A timetable with specific goals for progress will be documented, along with consequences if the behaviours do not show improvement.

3. Suspension or discharge

In very rare cases, when agreed-upon approaches have been followed and sufficient progress has not occurred, the child may be discharged at the sole discretion of the Director. The Director may immediately discharge a child at any time if the child exhibits behaviour which is extremely harmful to themselves or others. This would be a last resort.

Outdoor play

Our playground is designed to be a place for children to learn, explore and stretch their imagination. We encourage children to spend large amounts of time playing outdoors as it can help their motor sensory, social, and cognitive development. Engaging in the outdoor has a positive impact on children's general health and wellbeing

Benefits to Outdoor Play

Playing outside is excellent for helping children practise their physical abilities, such as running, jumping, skipping, playing ball games not only strengthen muscles, but can also help with gross motor skills, hand-eye coordination and overall health and wellbeing.

Experiencing outdoor play helps children take risks and learn about their own abilities. They can discover how high they can climb, how well they can balance.

Playing outdoors is helpful for encouraging creative thinking through imagination.

Outdoors, children can enjoy unstructured play, where they can make up activities and games on the spot with what they find around them – a log can be a pirate ship sailing the seas, or a stick can be a magic wand or a fishing rod – or anything they can imagine. Playing games like 'Hide and Seek' are fun and important for children's development as they assist with language skills and social and emotional learning.

Being outdoors also helps children connect with nature and the environment. We use the opportunity of going outside, to talk to the children about the natural world. For example, how plants grow, the changing of the seasons etc.

We take every opportunity to extend our learning to the outside. Children are taken outdoors, daily weather permitting. We limit outside playtime during the summer on high UV days and during high temperatures. It is extremely important to dress your child appropriately for outdoor activities, as children will be taken outdoors, daily weather permitting. Layered clothing is a good idea during the winter. When weather does not permit us to go outside, the children will be able to use their large muscles indoors or on the back verandah.

“And at the end of the day, your feet should be dirty, your hair messy and your eyes sparkling” - Shanti

Excursions

All children occasionally attend planned excursions that are directly related to and are part of the curriculum or something that the children show a strong interest in. Parents will be notified of excursions in advance and will be required to sign a permission slip unless it is an incidental excursion in the local area, then permission will have been given already. Families are strongly encouraged and are welcome to join their children on excursions. A mobile phone, first aid kit and a copy of children's emergency numbers will be taken on each major excursion.

We see this as an opportunity to be seen by the community, to engage in the community and be a part of it.

We have expectations of the children, and they are aware of these and behave in appropriate ways. It is a wonderful experience for all involved.

What one loves in childhood, stays in the heart forever. ~ Mary Jo Putney

Section 4 enrolling your child at our Centre

Access

Priority of access to places is given to siblings of current users. Other places are available to the public.

Waiting list

The child's family are encouraged to visit the Centre. During this visit, the family will be given a tour of the facility, and our philosophy and our approach are shared at this time.

We encourage children to visit on this day so that they develop a sense of belonging, visiting times are from 9:30 am to 10:30 am, Monday to Friday.

The purpose of the visit is twofold: First, it allows the family an opportunity to evaluate the appropriateness of the Centre considering their educational and developmental goals for their child; secondly, it allows Woden Early Childhood Centre to provide families with the relevant information on the Centre and the room the child may attend.

Enrolment procedure

Woden Early Childhood Centre has an open enrolment policy. Our goal is to give children the best educational environment our resources can offer, without any discrimination regarding race, gender, disability, religion, national origin or ethnicity. We believe we offer quality care and want children to have the opportunity to access it.

Enrolling in Woden Early Childhood Centre requires you to complete and return all forms in a timely and thorough manner. Many of our requirements are a licencing requirement. Enrolment is a three-step process that takes time and protects the best interests of your child. Children may not attend at Woden Early Childhood Centre until the ENTIRE process is completed.

Enrolment and Acceptance

To successfully enrol your child in Woden Early Childhood Centre, you must receive an enrolment pack in person from a senior staff member.

1) Read the Woden Early Childhood Centre parent handbook (this booklet)

The handbook gives you information about the Centre. We hope that all your questions will be answered by reading this handbook. However, please do not hesitate to ask us any additional questions that you have.

2) Fill out and sign the Woden Early Childhood Centre enrolment form.

The Woden Early Childhood Centre enrolment form must be completely filled out. The information on this form is needed to comply with the ACT licensing regulations. In addition, emergency information given will keep your child safe and secure. Please be sure to note all allergy and medical conditions on this form. After your child is enrolled, it is our expectation and your responsibility to please keep the requested information current.

3) Provide immunisation records.

To satisfy health regulations, all children must show a current record of immunisation and we will need a copy of your child's immunisation records. We are happy to make a copy for you. These records must be submitted to the Centre each time your child is immunised.

Families who choose not to have their child immunised must complete a letter with Centrelink to still receive childcare subsidies. Please note children who are not immunised will be excluded from the Centre during any outbreaks of diseases that are currently immunised for. This is to protect the unimmunised child as well as reduce the risks to other children in the Centre.

4) Complete the Woden Early Childhood Centre emergency details form.

While you may have already provided some of the information on the enrolment form, we ask you to please repeat it on the emergency details form so that we may keep it in an easily accessible place. We access these forms in an emergency and use them to quickly obtain pertinent information when children are unwell.

***ALL FORMS ARE DUE THREE BUSINESS DAYS PRIOR TO THE CHILD'S STARTING.**

5) Payment of fees.

Upon admission to the Centre, families will need to pay for the first two weeks of care in advance. Each fortnightly payment is due in advance. Fees are paid by direct. Please familiarise yourself with the current policies for late payment and late pickup fees, as well as other useful policies.

Fees are evaluated annually by the Management Committee. All families are encouraged to be part of this process.

Section 5 Procedures once your child is enrolled at our centre

Arrival

All people entering and exiting the building must do so through the secured front door.

Parents are not able to enter the premises to drop off their child prior to the opening time of 8.00 am.

We require you to sign your child into the Centre via the CCSM Kiosk in the front foyer.

When arriving at the Centre with your child, please ensure that they are left in the care of an educator. This will provide your child with the opportunity to say goodbye to you and the educator to welcome your child. It is important that parents establish a healthy, short, and smooth good-bye routine. We ask you to allow enough time to encourage your child to place their belongings in their locker, wash their hands and, when appropriate, apply sunscreen

The educators will invite the child into the group and help make the transition from home to childcare a positive one. Please do not expect to engage educators in long conversations during your morning drop off as this is a very busy time and other children will require the educators' attention upon arrival. If you need a conference with educators, please set up an appointment time so that they can spend sufficient time with you in private.

Departure

Parents should make educators aware that the child is leaving. Children will only be released to legal guardians and persons on the authorised pick-up list. It is important that you keep this list current. If anyone else is to pick up your child, we will only release the child if we are notified by the family in writing and given the correct identification information. We will ask for proper identification. Please let family and friends know that they will be asked for photographic ID if we have not met them before. The name and contact phone number of this person should also be recorded on the CCMS Kiosk in the front foyer. Please let the office know if you require someone other than those recorded on your CCMS Kiosk Form.

Persons under the age of eighteen are not allowed to collect children from the Centre.

All children must be collected and off the premises by 6.00 pm. There is an automatic fine imposed on families who are late in collecting their children. **The fine is \$15 for the first five minutes or part thereof, and \$5 for each minute after 6.05 pm.** Although these fines are severe, the consequences of your arriving late are serious. Penalty rates must be paid to educators staying back. It is a requirement that a minimum of two educators stay with the child until they are collected. If an educator cannot stay and can't contact anyone, we are legally required to contact the ACT Welfare Duty Officer, however we hope that this never happens. We will always do what we believe is in the best interest of the child.

Signing in and out

There are two Kiosks in the front foyer. Families have completed a Kiosk Form that provides the Centre with the names of people who may bring their child into the Centre or pick them up from the Centre. The first time the person comes into the Centre they will be asked for photographic ID and then assisted to assess the Kiosk, through the phone number for them that has already been provided by the families. The person will create their own password and then be able to sign in or sign out the child.

Allowable Absences

All children in care are allowed 42 days 'Allowable Absences' this is where the Government will assist in the payment of your child's care. Please note that these days also include Public Holidays. Any days after the 42 days 'Allowable Absences', the family must provide evidence of why the child was absent (this would be a Doctor's Certificate). If evidence is provided, then the Government will pay its share of the fee for that period.

Immunisation

It is a requirement that all children who attend the Centre, be fully immunised and up to date for their age. The Centre must have copies of current immunisation records for all immunised children. Copies of immunisation records are kept on file and must be provided to the Centre after each immunisation. Children who are not immunised will be excluded if the Centre has an outbreak of a communicable disease. This policy is required to comply with health regulations, and also to minimise cross infection.

Safety and Security

Emergency and Lockdown drills are routinely practiced with the children. If an emergency does occur, we hope the practice drills will help children handle the situation with little panic or distress. In any emergency, families will be notified as soon as possible. If the building becomes unsafe for children to stay, the children will be taken to a safe venue e.g. The Woden Plaza.

The Centre continually takes part in providing a safe and secure place for your child by consistently carrying out our safety policies and procedures, educating the children and educators, and routinely maintaining and inspecting the building. However, should an incident or accident occur, we hope your patience and understanding will make the accident less traumatic for your child and the Centre's other children. All incidents and accidents will be documented in writing and presented to the families, please let the educator know if you require a photocopy.

In the event of a serious accident, emergency procedures will be immediately taken. The families will be contacted immediately and your authorisation for medical attention on your child's enrolment form will allow us to swiftly attend to your child. The Centre will contact the ACT Ambulance Service for safe transportation to hospital in emergency situations. We must also inform the ACT Government's Children's Education and Care Assurance, within the Community Services Directorate.

ONLY the people you have noted on the Emergency Details form will be allowed to collect your child. If you have not given us written permission, we will not release your child. By law, we must release the child to any parent or legal guardian, unless we have a court order preventing us from doing so. Photo IDs will be checked.

Centre Calendar

Upon enrolment, families are able to access a monthly calendar via the Centre's website, www.wodenchildcare.com.au. The monthly calendar outlines specific dates when the Centre has planned events. This is updated as needed throughout the year.

“Every passing moment is another chance to create memories, and life is full of moments, make them beautiful and memorable” Layla Black

Discharge and withdrawal

The Director of Woden Early Childhood Education Centre reserves the right to discharge any child from the Centre for any of the following reasons:

- Non-observance of Centre rules and guidelines as stated in the parent handbook
- Physical and/or verbal abuse of educators or children by family members or child
- Non-payment, or excessive late payment of fees

Two weeks advance, written notice to the Director is required when withdrawing a child from the Centre. If two weeks' notice is not given, the family is financially responsible for payment of two weeks of fees following the last day of attendance.

Section 6 Daily requirements for families, children and educators

Clothing

Dress your child in washable and sturdy **play** clothes. Messy activities are planned every day, and your child will want to participate. We do buy washable art supplies. If your child is toilet training, he/she should wear clothing that is easy to pull on and off by themselves.

Your child's shoes must be sturdy and well-fitted. The children will run, climb, jump, etc.... Being able to fully engage in these activities will build your child's self-confidence. Runners are suitable because they can be easily cleaned and easily dried if they accidentally get wet. Educators agree that thongs and clogs should not be worn to the Centre. They are awkward for running and climbing or your child may trip during active play.

All children need an extra set of seasonal clothing left in their bag and clearly marked with the child's name. Younger children will need at least two changes of clothes and extra training pants. We recommend bringing a jacket to the Centre during the autumn, winter and early spring as weather changes can occur unexpectedly. Lost clothing can be a problem, so please help us by clearly marking your child's name on jackets, sweaters and other layered clothing. Disposable nappies need to be supplied if your child is using them. We provide and apply 15+ sunscreen; however, families are welcome to supply their own sunscreen if their child has sensitive skin.

Meals and snacks

Food supplied by the Centre will be nutritionally sound, with variety in colour, textures, and tastes as well as being culturally diverse. We want to make mealtimes an enjoyable, healthy learning experience for all.

It is our belief that children at this age have a variety of likes and dislikes and therefore we offer them a range of foods and encourage them to experience different foods.

We also believe nutrition plays a key role in a child's ability to participate and learn. To ensure that each child is well nourished and content, we provide morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. We also believe that young children need to be taught good food habits which will continue throughout their lives, therefore we join them at mealtimes and role model good eating habits.

Mealtimes are a social time, and we want children to develop a positive feeling around meals and foods.

The Centre employs a cook to provide healthy, child friendly meals. A menu is displayed in the front foyer, and is shared on the Centre APP.

Meals and snacks are served on a regular rather than rigid schedule. We have fridges and microwaves to ensure that food is stored and served at the appropriate temperatures.

We ask if you provide your child's food (due to allergies/cultural reasons) that all foods come **fully prepared**, in child- sized portions (cut-up/sliced/peeled) and packaged in non-breakable and easy-to-open containers.

All lunch boxes, bags and drink bottles need to be **labelled** on the outside. Lunch needs to be refrigerated; it is the family's responsibility to put the lunch in the refrigerator. This is only for families choosing to provide their child's lunch.

We provide a well-balanced lunch that meets dietary guidelines.

- Protein sources
- Either two vegetables and one fruit, or two fruits and one vegetable
- Grains such as savoury biscuits, pasta or bread
- Dairy products such as cheese or yogurt
- A healthy drink such as milk or water.

We do not allow soft drinks, gum, lollies, sesame seeds or nuts in the Centre.

Each snack will be served with fruit and water or milk. The children participate in serving their snacks and meals as much as possible.

You are welcome to bring cakes etc, to celebrate special occasions such as birthdays, please remember **No Nuts or Sesame Seeds**.

We also cook with the children as part of the rooms' programs.

Guidelines to mealtimes in the different rooms have consideration for rest times, as outlined in the next section.

Rest and Sleep times

Most children need sleep during the day, while a few may only need to rest their bodies. All children are offered an opportunity to rest or sleep. Children who do not require a sleep, will be offered the opportunity to rest and then the opportunity to participate in quiet individual activities while others are sleeping. See your child's educators for specific times.

In the Nursery there are three sleep rooms with cots, so the babies can sleep when they need to.

In the Toddlers and Intro to Pre School room children sleep on stretchers during rest time. In the Pre-school room children are encouraged to rest after lunch on a sleep mat. Some of these children still may need a sleep during the day.

Some children have a special cuddly toy, dummy, or blanket, which helps them settle during rest periods. It is helpful to bring this with your child. Nursery families will need to provide sleep suits for the children.

For rest time your child will need a warm blanket for winter and a lighter one for summer. This blanket should be brought from home.

Every effort is made to accommodate families' wishes with regards to rest time, but sometimes the children have other ideas.

Sleeping outdoors

The Toddler Room, Intro Room and the Pre-School Room children all sleep outside under our beautiful verandah, we have been doing this since 2014. We have sun blinds that shelter the space from the hot sun and winds. Soft music fills the air as children rest or drift off to sleep. The Toddler and Intro children sleep or rest on stretcher beds, while the Pre-School children sleep on rest mats. The Centre supplies sheets and families are asked to provide bedding appropriate to the weather.

Educators are mindful of the weather and will sometimes provide rest/sleep times indoors. This might be because it is too wet, too hot, or extremely cold. The educators have found that the children sleep better and wake up more refreshed when they sleep outdoors.

Toys and personal items

Each child has a specially marked cubicle space in their room for bags, jackets, extra clothes, blankets, and treasured art projects. Please check your child's locker each day to take home all items.

Sometimes children need to bring special toys or newfound treasures to the Centre to use as a "bridge" between home and the Centre or they may want or need the security of something of their own in a Centre. You can help the educators bridge your child's security level from home to Centre by placing such toys in your child's cubby, to be brought out under the supervision of the educators. We do not want any special toys or items lost or broken.

Items that directly relate to topics of study (such as a photo or book from home, nature items, or an unusual family item) are appropriate for sharing and discussing. On these occasions we will work with you and your child to make it a positive sharing experience.

Experience has shown us that lots of toys from home can create problems at Centre. We ask you to encourage your child to leave personal belongings at home or in the car. There are five personal items we won't allow the children to bring to the Centre: These are violent play items (i.e. toy guns), gum, hard candy (choking hazard), books and movies with inappropriate language or violence, and personal money.

Birthdays

If a birthday is being celebrated away from the Centre and the entire group is not invited, please ask the educators to quietly put the invitations in the selected children's bags. If the entire group is invited, please feel free to bring invitations to the Centre or display one large invite in the room.

Children are invited to celebrate their birthdays at the Centre. If parents choose to bring a birthday treat, we prefer a treat that can be eaten by every child and that is child-sized. Please notify us ahead of time so we can plan a snack or lunch around the treat and inform you of any allergies. Cupcakes work really well.

Parents are able to donate a book, puzzle, etc. to the class on the child's birthday. This way, the birthday child has the honour of giving, not just receiving, on their special day. If you wish to donate an item, educators can give you ideas of an item that the class would enjoy.

Section 7 When your child is not

well Illness

Children who are ill with a contagious disease or a high fever should not attend the Centre. If a contagious disease develops at home, please notify the Centre immediately.

Families will be notified of any injury that occurs at the Centre. The Centre will also notify affected families if a child becomes ill at the Centre with a contagious disease (e.g., chicken pox or head lice).

We cannot admit an ill child, if one or more of the following exists:

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in group care and education activities including outdoor play.
2. The illness results in a greater need for care than educators can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care
3. The child has one of the following, unless medical evaluation by a health-care professional indicates that you can include the child in the Centre's activities:
 - a) Temperature range of 37.2 - 38 degrees or greater, accompanied by behaviour changes or other signs or symptoms of illness
 - b) Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhoea, two or more vomiting episodes in 48 hours, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behaviour changes or other signs that the child may be severely ill; or
4. A health-care professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious; or
5. Communicable diseases that exclude a child from care as defined by Staying Healthy in Child Care. You can access this information from the Centre Director or online. An infected child may not be readmitted until the exclusion period has finished.

With other contagious and non-contagious illnesses (e.g. ear infection), children must be free from symptoms and able to cope in group care. If your child is not well enough to play outside, he/she should be cared for at home. This is to allow your child ample time to recover and stop the spread of illness to the other children.

Children needing to go home due to illness or injury will be removed from the group and placed in a quiet spot in the room. They will have constant supervision until an authorised person arrives to take the child home. We ask that families pick up their children from the Centre within the hour or as soon as possible. This helps to reduce the spread of infection and diminishes the stress to your child.

We will call you if we feel your child may be coming down with an illness or is generally not coping. This communication allows you to be prepared in advance and alleviates the time the child will have to wait for their parents.

The Room Leader or Senior educator will decide if the child is well enough to remain at the Centre on the following two criteria: whether the child has an infection which may spread to other children; and if not, whether the child is well enough to cope with group activities.

Upper respiratory tract infections are the most common illnesses in young children. All children in childcare are at obvious risk of contracting infections. Parents need to consider suitable back-up support to enable them to keep their child at home when appropriate. If you are unsure whether your child should attend, sometimes it is best to bring them, and if they aren't coping over the course of the day, we will ring you.

If we must send your child to the hospital for emergency care, a staff member who knows your child will accompany and stay with them until you arrive. It is your responsibility to ensure you have ambulance cover.

Please note that we reserve the right to send a child home based on our observations of the child's illness as it pertains to Centre activity or spread of illness.

Medications

Because of the great responsibility involved in giving medication to children, we ask that families, rather than educators, give any necessary medication to their children whenever possible.

If families require educators to administer medications, they must be signed in on our medication form in your child's room. The medication is to be stored in a fridge out of the children's reach. Medications will be dispensed by Room Leaders or senior educators as instructed by the family on the medication form. Only over-the-counter medications, and those prescribed by a physician with a pharmaceutical label and instructions, will be administered. All medications will be given according to the stated label directions, or as amended by a physician. All medications must be in the original container. For prescription medication the container must be labelled with the child's name, date, pharmacy name, and administration directions (dosages and times). Any prescription medication without this information will not be given to children by the educators.

On the enrolment form, we provide a section where you may give the Centre blanket permission to give your child Panadol® if their temperature reaches 38° C or above. This service is provided to ease your child's condition while they wait for an authorised person to pick them up from the Centre. If the child has been in the Centre for less than four hours, then we will ring and ask if they have had Panadol® within the last four hours. Please let educators know if you have given your child Panadol® or any other medications prior to their arrival at care.

Section 8 *Family Involvement in the*

Centre Family requirements

The participation and involvement of every family at our Centre is one of the key elements of our Centre's dedication to the children. We ask that every family strive to meet the following requirements to maintain the high level of education for every child:

Volunteer in our Centre, please chat to your child's educators or the Director for specific ideas on ways you may volunteer. Suggestions are:

- Making and organising materials for children
- Fundraising and social events
- Sharing an expertise
- Listening and reading to children
- Gardening
- Providing items that relate to study areas
- Planning and guiding a special activity for outdoor play (i.e. painting)

Family communication

Other than newsletters, emails, parent/educator evenings and social days, and the Centre's APP, parents are encouraged to keep an ongoing communication with their child's educators. When picking up and dropping off your child, make communications short. Feel free to schedule a meeting if you need a longer time to converse.

Please send important messages in writing e.g. via email on the APP as verbal statements sometimes get forgotten or lost.

When you have questions or concerns, we ask that you first communicate with your child's educators. If you believe that the educators' response is inadequate or unsatisfactory, please contact the Director.

Remember, parents are encouraged to ask questions and make suggestions.

You are your child's first teacher. Open communication is the key to providing the children with the best environment possible. Children know and pick up on cues from the adults in their lives. Establishing a healthy parent-educators relationship makes children feel loved and secure.

Family library

We do have some printed information available to families but are happy to 'Google' other up-to- date information on request. Please speak to the Director if you have any needs that we can help you with.

Policies

Centre Policies are available to families on our website, these are the most up-to-date ones, as we have an ongoing cycle of updating policies. Policies are reviewed by a Sub-Committee and then ratified by the Management Committee. Policies are usually updated in groups of eight, if you are interested in being on the Centre's Policy Sub-Committee please speak to the Director.

There is a Policy Folder in the Front Foyer.

Family evaluation of the Centre

At any time, you are welcome to provide us with an evaluation of the Centre, this can be done via email or a conversation with the Director

Finally, welcome again to our Centre (our big loud family). We hope you and your child enjoy the wonderful experience that is Woden Early Childhood Centre. We want this to be a place to create childhood memories, where lifelong friendships are made, and a creative spirit is encouraged and supported.

“Childhood is not a race to see how quickly a child can read, write or count. Childhood is a small window of time to learn and develop at a pace which is right for each individual child”