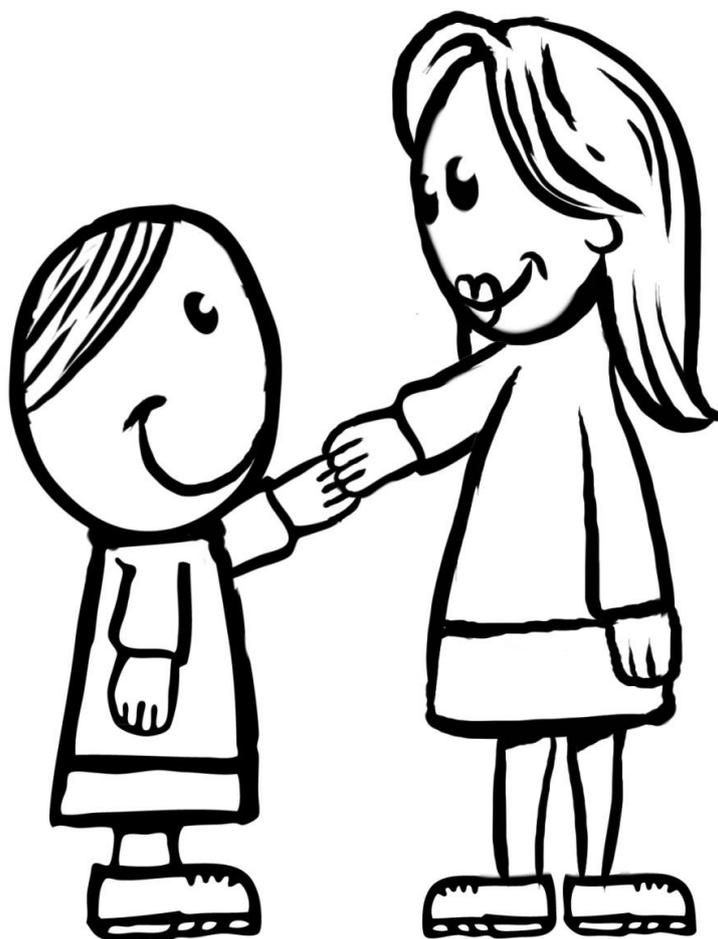




Williamstown
Community
and Education
Centre Inc

2021
Childcare

Parent Handbook



Children's Services Licence ID: SE-00015907

Joan Kirner House and Spotswood Community House
ABN: 67 864 341 860 Inc. Assoc. Reg. No.: A0014000T TOID: 4640

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Welcome

Williamstown Community and Education Centre Inc. provides professional, affordable and accessible childcare in a safe and nurturing environment.

We offer Occasional Care and Activity Group programs.

Our occasional care sessions provide care for children from the ages of one to five years. As each child is an individual with unique interests, abilities and needs, it is our aim to create a stimulating, creative, positive and fun environment for every child.

Our activity groups are age specific, play based programs. Children learn through play and planned activities, have the opportunity to meet new people, create new friendships and develop their social interaction skills.

We believe that early childhood play is the foundation to later learning. Play is a critical part of a child's development. Play allows children to learn, practice and perfect new skills. Play also acts as an indicator of how a child's development is progressing.

Children learn through exploring, experimenting and discovering new challenges each day.

Play is the means through which children come to learn about themselves and their environment. Through the medium of play, children make observations, imitate actions and sounds, explore and memorise and recall new experiences. Children gather information through their senses: Seeing, Touching, Smelling and Hearing.

Therefore we need to provide an environment that is sensitive to children's needs, challenging and developmentally appropriate, providing opportunities for children to play and learn.

These activities include:

Play dough, drawing and pasting	They encourage greater control over children's small muscles. Foster children's aesthetic and creative development.
Water play, finger painting and sand play	These are pleasing tactile experiences. Helps to develop children's imagination and creativity.
Imaginary play (dressing up)	Encourages social skills, language and imagination.
Books	Books encourage language, discussions, concentration and emerging literacy skills.
Home corner	Home corner encourages confidence, self-esteem, language, peer interaction and imagination. It also enables children to work together, communicate and act out thoughts/ideas.

Blocks/construction activities	These activities provide the opportunity for children to become creative and imaginative. This is also an appropriate area to encourage problem solving.
Music and movement	Promotes language, turn taking, social interaction communication as well as increases confidence and self-esteem.
Group time	Stories, singing, discussions, games, music, and movement, are all attributes that make up group times.

Session Times and Fees

Program	Session Times	Ages	Enrolment Period	Fees
Occasional Care	Monday 9.15am – 12.15pm Wednesday 9.15am – 12.15pm	12 months and walking to 5 years	Term by Term	\$12 per hour (\$36 per session) Concession/Sibling rate: \$10 per hour (\$30 per session)
Activity Groups	On hold due to COVID			

Note: Sessions do not operate over the school holidays or public holidays.

Session times are dependent on enrolment numbers

Enrolment Procedures

Allocation of Places

Occasional Care places are allocated on a term by term basis. During the sixth week of each term applications open for Expressions of Interest for the following term. All applications are reviewed, allocations are made and families are notified prior to the end of each term.

Casual occasional care may also be offered should places become available throughout the term. Please see reception staff for more information on casual places.

Activity Group places are allocated for the year. Expressions of Interest are accepted from 1st February in the year prior to commencement and offers are then sent out in June/July.

Payments and Documentation

Upon acceptance of a place, a \$100 non-refundable deposit and completed Enrolment Documentation will be required.

Payment of fees will occur on a quarterly basis, with invoices issued at the beginning of each term.

Unfortunately, the Centre is unable to provide refunds for absences/illnesses.

Enrolment documentation must be submitted prior to using the service for the first time. Children will only be able to attend once all required documentation has been submitted and reviewed by the relevant Room Leader/s.

The Enrolment Documentation includes:

- Enrolment Form
- Photograph/Video Permission Form
- Sun Smart Permission Form
- Immunisation History Statement
- Signed Medical Diagnosis (where applicable)
- Signed Medical Action Plan (where applicable)

Arrival and Departure

It is essential that parents/guardians sign their child in and out of the Centre on arrival and departure in the Attendance Book. A signature is required for each child. It is a Victorian Government requirement that this is done. Each child is to be accepted to the Centre by a Childcare staff member on duty and the same staff member notified when the child leaves.

Children will only be released to authorised adults and under the discretion of Centre staff. Should a parent/guardian require their child to be collected by a sibling or another child, written request must be provided. The Centre will then assess the request and make a decision of whether or not it will be allowed.

When picking up your child, ensure all belongings are collected and staff are advised of your departure. Please also ensure that you have signed out and recorded the time of departure in the Attendance Book provided.

Please ensure that your child is picked up on time. If you know you are going to be unavoidably delayed, please contact the Centre. Late pick up charges may apply.

As a safety measure, the doors to exit the foyer can only be opened by the green button on the wall to the left. Please do not allow your child to push this button.

Upon leaving the Childcare room, the Cecil Street exit is to be used.

At drop-off and pick-up times please be mindful of noise and maintain supervision of your child/ren while in the foyer. The Centre is multi-functional where formal learning takes place and there are numerous courses and classes running during these times. Thank you for your co-operation.

Children Settling In

Staff recognise that a child's transition from home to childcare is an important time and will always work to ease that transition so the child can settle quickly.

Staff recognise the importance of both the parents and children's feelings at this time and will accept these feelings and make themselves available to listen and respond.

The child's experience of childcare will be largely shaped by a successful transition into the Centre.

In order for children to feel safe and secure in the Centre environment a settling period will enable the child to get to know the staff, become familiar with the environment and for the parent/s to feel comfortable leaving their child.

Activity Groups

An Orientation Session is held at the beginning of the year for the children and their parents. This assists with the settling in process as the children familiarise themselves with the new environment. If children are having difficulties settling in, the Team Leader will talk with parents/guardians and may suggest the Occasional Care process listed below.

Occasional Care

All new enrolments will undertake the following orientation process:

- First session child/ren attends until 10.00 am
- Second session extended by 45 minutes if child has coped with first session, Team Leader to advise parent.
- Third session, full session
- First and second sessions may be required more than once if Team Leader feels necessary
- Team Leader may request that parents reorientate if required.

It can be distressing for a child if he/she does not understand where the parent has gone and when the parent will return, therefore the process of saying 'goodbye' to a child is very important. It is always easier to say a quick goodbye. Parents will be encouraged to settle their child into an activity, say goodbye then leave the room. Staff will contact you if your child has difficulties settling. Staff will support and guide all families through the settling in process.

What to bring

- Bag/Backpack
- Beanie and coat during the colder months
- Broad brimmed/bucket/legionnaire hat during the warmer months
- Sunscreen needs to be applied prior to arrival to ensure maximum protection. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure this occurs.
- Nappies
- Change of clothing

- Appropriate clothing and footwear (no thongs or clothing that children could trip over, i.e. long skirts)
- Healthy morning tea for the 3 hour sessions
- Healthy morning tea and lunch in two separate containers for the 5 hour sessions. Please include an ice pack in your child's lunch container.
- For the Activity Group sessions please provide containers that are easy for your child to open and close as it boosts their confidence and promotes independence when they are able to do it themselves.
- Please avoid sending any foods that contain nuts or eggs and please only pack healthy options (no lollies or chips).
- Drink bottle (water only)
- It is very important to ensure that your child's name is clearly displayed on all their personal items, i.e. bag, hat, drink bottle, snack/lunch boxes, spare clothing.
- As we are a not for profit organisation we request you supply one packet of wipes and one box of tissues per family as this helps to keep our costs down.

Snack and Lunch Time

It is a time of ensuring the nutritional needs and dietary requirements of the children are appropriately catered for. Snack and lunch times encourage social interaction with your child and others within the group, it allows for the children to practice their independence, develop friendships and for us all to develop healthy eating habits. Some food suggestions include fruit, vegetables, yoghurt, cheese and sandwiches. Please avoid sending lollies and chocolate.

Please ensure you clearly label your child's snack box, lunch box and drink bottle.

Nut and Egg Free Policy

A Nut and Egg Free Policy applies at Williamstown Community and Education Centre within our childcare programs. Our main concern is the safety and wellbeing of all children, staff and families within our Centre and community.

We aim to provide a nut and egg free environment for the safety of children who have anaphylactic allergies triggered by nuts or eggs in any form.

Anaphylaxis is the most severe form of allergic reaction. It is potentially life threatening and always requires an emergency response.

The key to preventing an anaphylactic reaction is to avoid exposure to the trigger. To minimise the risk factors, please **do not** send any nuts or eggs in your child's snack box or foods containing nuts or peanut products, eggs or egg products in particular:

- Peanut butter sandwiches, dips or crackers
- Egg sandwiches or hard boiled eggs
- Hazelnut spread (nutella) sandwiches or dips
- Biscuits and cakes containing nuts/eggs
- Muesli bars with nuts
- Chocolate bars containing nuts (e.g. snickers)
- Dried fruit and nut mix snack packs

Please ensure that your child's hands and face are thoroughly washed if they have eaten these foods for breakfast before coming to childcare, as peanut and egg residue can also trigger a

reaction. As anaphylaxis is a treatable condition, all staff have regular training that includes the use of an EpiPen in the event that emergency treatment is required.

Parents of children who have a known allergy of any kind must notify all staff about the severity of the child's allergy before attending the Centre. A child cannot commence until a signed Action Plan from a medical practitioner is submitted to the Centre.

The Centre is a shared, community space. The Childcare room is regularly hired by external groups and used to run children's classes as well as children's birthday parties. With this in mind, parents of children with known allergies must be aware that we do not have knowledge of every substance that comes into contact with the facilities.

Asthma, Allergies and Anaphylaxis

- On enrolment it is vital to let childcare staff know if your child suffers from any life threatening illnesses.
- Parents of children who suffer from these are to provide the Centre with their child's Management Plan not more than 12 months old.
- Communication between staff and parents regarding changes/concerns to the child's health is vital.
- Medications supplied must be in the original container, with a written plan, for staff to follow.
- Parents must ensure that their child has adequate supply of appropriate medication at all times, such as relievers, tablets or an EpiPen.

Special Needs

The Centre supports the mainstreaming of children with special needs where it is able to provide appropriate support and where it is in the best interests of the child. These children will be considered individually for enrolment in the Centre, depending on the availability of a space and taking into consideration available support.

Children who already have an official medical diagnosis will be required to provide the centre with current documentation providing that the child is safe and able to be attending care without additional assistance.

Children who seek a diagnosis after enrolment are also required to provide the centre with current documentation providing that the child is safe and able to be attending care without additional assistance.

Hygiene

Please ensure children have washed their hands prior to their arrival. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before and after eating as well as before and after going to the toilet. This is a great way to encourage independence of our children.

Please be aware that we may have children with life threatening allergies and your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Accidents and Illnesses

The Centre is only able to care for well children. Any child who is not able to join in the day's activities should not attend the Centre. If the child becomes ill whilst attending the session, the staff will notify the parent/guardian and the child must be collected immediately. Only a

parent/guardian or emergency contact person can collect the child. Parents need to inform staff of any illness that their child has had over their absence from the Centre. i.e. since their last session.

If an injury occurs that is not serious, it will be recorded on an Accident/Injury/Trauma Record. You will be asked to sign this record indicating that you have been made aware of the incident and what action was taken by staff. Trained staff will administer First Aid. The Coordinator or Team Leader will decide when parents should be contacted immediately. When staff consider urgent medical care is needed, Admin staff will call Ambulance 000. If a parent/guardian or emergency contact cannot be contacted, a staff member designated by the Centre Manager or Team Leader will accompany the child. At no time will the other children at the Centre be unnecessarily disrupted in their routine or activities.

Medication Book

If your child requires medication it must be clearly written in the Medication Book. All the medicine must be clearly labelled. Prescription medicine must be in the name of the child. A medication book is located in the childcare room. If medication has been administered to a child prior to entering the Centre a parent must record the details in the space provided in the Medication Book.

Immunisation

Under the 'No Jab, No Play' legislation, before enrolling your child, we must first obtain evidence that your child is up to date with all vaccinations that are due for their age, or that they are able to receive.

An Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) is the **only** form of documentation accepted for the purpose of enrolling in an early childhood education and care service.

You can obtain a copy of your child's Immunisation History Statement from your myGov account (which needs to be linked to Medicare) or you can call the AIR on 1800 653 809 or visit a Medicare or Centrelink office.

Families who do not hold a Medicare card must call the AIR to request an Immunisation History Statement.

Infectious Diseases

In relation to infectious conditions such as conjunctivitis, gastro-enteritis, worms, head lice etc. it is advised that parents seek treatment from their child's family doctor and keep the child home until they have been treated and are well enough to attend again.

Most contagious diseases require a child to be excluded from the Centre for a period of time. A list from the Health Department is posted on the notice board in the Childcare room and the Centre follows their recommendations.

Sun Smart Policy

Williamstown Community and Education Centre is a Sun Smart Centre. The Centre adopts the Sun Smart Policy as recommended by the Anti-Cancer Foundation to ensure that all children attending the Centre are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays of the sun.

From September to April in Victoria

The average UV Index levels reach three, which is above the recommended exposure levels which can be harmful. During this time, all children must wear hats that protect the face, neck, and ears whenever they are outside. When outside appropriate clothing should also be considered, such as t-shirts and longer style shorts (singlets are not recommended).

All parents are responsible for applying SPF 30+ to their child during the summer and daylight saving months. It is recommended that it be applied 20 minutes before attending child care. Sunscreen will then be re-applied by staff every two hours while children are in the sun.

Children will be encouraged to use available areas of shade for outdoor play activities. Staff will act as role models by wearing appropriate hats and clothing outdoors, using a 30+ sunscreen and seeking shade whenever possible.

The Sun Smart policy will be reinforced in a positive way through information on notice boards and print material for all users of our Centre. SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen is provided for all staff and children.

You will be required to sign a Sunscreen Permission Form at the beginning of the year to allow staff to apply sunscreen on your behalf.

From May to August in Victoria

The average UV Index levels are below three. To help maintain winter vitamin D levels, sun protection is not required during this time.

Photographs/Video

Throughout the year, photographs/video may be taken of your child participating in their sessions. They may be used for Centre displays or included in Centre publications and advertising materials such as Centre newsletters, brochures, website, Facebook, Instagram and annual report. Your child may also be asked to participate in newspaper/media or external publications.

You will be required to sign a Photograph/Video Permission Form as part of the enrolment process.

Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme

Williamstown Community and Education Centre complies with the Child Safe Standards introduced by the Victorian Government in January 2016 which includes the Reportable Conduct Scheme which came into effect for Neighbourhood Houses on 1 January 2019.

The Child Safe Standards are designed to ensure that organisations that work with children take steps to create a culture of child safety and protect children from all forms of abuse. The aim is to drive continuous improvement so that protecting children from abuse is embedded in everyday thinking and practice of leaders, staff and volunteers.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme aims to improve how organisations respond to allegations of child abuse and child-related misconduct. The scheme ensures independent oversight of workplace investigations into allegations of child abuse, facilitates information sharing between key organisations and builds on existing workplace misconduct and child safety systems.

Evacuation Process

Detailed evacuation procedures are located in the childcare room. This includes a map of the Centre building with exit and assembly points clearly marked. The staff and children practice regular evacuation procedures so everyone is familiar with the process. If children are evacuated, families/ carers will be contacted as soon as possible.

Equal Opportunity

Staff treat all children equally, regardless of gender, religion, race or ability. Staff provide equal opportunities for all children to develop their full potential. This means that all learning experiences provided are accessible to all children.

Staff

Williamstown Community and Education Centre are proud of their caring, supportive and professional staff. All staff members hold the required early childhood qualifications, have valid Working with Children Checks, are first aid trained and renew their CPR and anaphylaxis training annually. Throughout the year staff attend a variety of in-services, courses and workshops to enhance their professional development, maintain compliance under the Children's Services Regulations and to keep up to date with new initiatives.

Grievance Procedure /Concerns

As a parent of young children, you may have issues/concerns that you wish to raise. The following guidelines have been developed to assist you to deal openly with any issues that may arise.

If the problem is in relation to your child or their daily routine, then the childcare room leader is your first point of call and should be approached. All discussions will be confidential and dealt with in a professional manner.

The Operations Coordinator or Centre Manager is also available to discuss issues that you feel strongly about regarding your child. If the Coordinator or Manager is unable to assist with the matter, please address your issue in writing to the President of the Committee of Management.

Complaints and concerns about issues such as security, staff, health and safety should be directed immediately to the Centre Manager.

Donations

As we are a not for profit organisation we are always very thankful for any donations. If we could start each term by each family donating one box of tissues and one packet of wipes this would be greatly appreciated.

Williamstown Community and Education Centre is endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient, therefore please note that donations made to our Centre are tax deductible.

Policies and Procedures

Centre Policies and Procedures can be found on the Centre's website at:

<http://www.williamstown-spotswoodcc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/WCEC-Policies-Procedures-Forms-and-Plans-V25.pdf>

Contact

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