



Parent Handbook

WELCOME TO RAINBOWS, a home of early learning. We hope the following handbook will be of assistance to you during your time with us.

Rainbows Early Learning Centre is a privately run long day care centre, which is family operated and dedicated to Quality childcare. It offers care to a maximum of thirty two children each day, for children aged between 6 weeks and 5 years.

We aim to provide a high standard of care and are continually committed to raising our standards in accordance with the National Quality Framework. This process is an ongoing effort that will improve our service and bring together the ideas and values of both Educators and Families.

The centre is open from Monday to Friday between the hours of 7:00am – 6.00pm, 51 weeks of the year excluding public holidays.

ORIENTATION: At Rainbows Early Learning Centre we believe that the orientation process and settling in period are an important part of becoming familiar with the centre. Therefore we encourage families talk with educators about what you wish when your child settles into the centre. If time should allow then we advise you to leave your child for short days. Please be aware that most children will show a varying degree of separation anxiety this is normal and may stop as the child becomes familiar with the environment. Please talk to the staff if you have concerns.

TOILETING: Toileting is started when the child is ready with your involvement. This is usually when the child has appropriate physical and language skills/comprehension. Children are encouraged to develop their self help skills as is developmentally appropriate. Please provide plenty of spare clothing at these times that is easy to get on and off (e.g. elasticised track pants or shorts).

NAPPIES: The centre supplies nappies for your children. We do recommend if your child has any skin allergies you let staff know that your child may need certain creams.

COMMUNICATION: Communication between parents and staff is of paramount importance, as we aim to compliment what you are already doing at home. Staff are always happy to converse with you at morning and afternoon times or if convenient telephone and make an appointment with the Director or your child's caregiver.

In each room there is a board which displays the daily programmed activities the children will partake in during the day. We welcome parent's comments in this section which enables us to incorporate ideas into the program.

Any important messages are displayed on notice board in the preschool room, so we ask that you make a point of reading these. Notes and messages may also be put into your parent pocket. (Please be sure to look in there regularly!).

We have a suggestion box for you to make written suggestions, raise concerns and thoughts; this is located in the preschool room. We greatly value your input and rely on your feedback to continue to improve the high quality of our service.

We have a Journal and laptop computer with photos showing what the children have been doing through the day.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE: When arriving at the centre please let a staff member know that your child has arrived. Never leave a child in the room by themselves. They must be attended by an adult at ALL times.

Please ensure that you **sign your child in/out every day**. If your child is away, it is essential that you sign your child's absence when they return to the centre. Please inform staff by filling out an absence/holiday form if you know your child will be away.

Within the enrolment package there is an "Authorisation of collection of child" form. The people that you list on this form are considered the only people other than yourselves as permitted to collect your child. In the instance where you are unable to collect your child on any particular day and the person that will be collecting them is not on the authorised to collect form, you are required to contact the staff and inform them. Staff will then add this person to the list; make a photocopy of their photo I.D. when they come in that afternoon for the records. Your signature will then be required to confirm their permission to collect for future referral.

Please also inform staff immediately if there are changes to contact person, authorised person to collect, medication details or any court orders made.

HOURS OF OPERATION: At Rainbows Pre School the hours of operation are from **7.00am to 6.00pm**.

When collecting your child, please let a staff member know that you are leaving, and don't forget to sign the departure folder please.

If you are going to be late in collecting your child, please endeavour to contact the centre. Also note that a late collection fee of \$3.00 per minute applies for every extra minute that your child remains at the centre after closing time.

HEALTH ISSUES: If your child becomes sick during the day, a staff member will notify you to come and collect your child. To assist in the prevention of cross infection, all toy, linen, cushion covers are washed daily and bathrooms are disinfected twice daily. We follow the suggested guidelines in the *Staying Healthy in Child Care* (5th Ed) Manual, which is published by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

We require your assistance in the prevention of cross infection by ensuring you keep your child at home when they are unwell. As we have a duty of care for all children within the centre if you child returns to the centre whilst still unwell you will be asked to collect them. We have included a copy of our Health and Safety policy in this enrolment package.

If a contagious condition is identified within the centre, parents are notified immediately. A notice is placed near the front gate and in each of the rooms stating the illness and an information sheet is attached on the symptoms and treatment of these.

A medical clearance from your child's doctor IS required upon their return to the centre after having an infectious condition e.g. Chicken pox or measles.

Your child's immunisation records will need to be copied, kept on file and updated. If your child is not immunised please see the Nominated Supervisor as you will be required to provide additional information as set out by the changes in the Public Health Act. If you do not have this documentation we are unable to enrol your child. N.B. If an outbreak of a preventable disease occurs in the centre, you will be asked to keep your child at home until the outbreak has passed - please note fees will still be applicable..

MEDICATION: Our medication policy is Located in the Policy folder; (Please read through this thoroughly). Medication forms are to be filled out each day. Please see staff when medication is brought in. Parents are to complete & sign the correct forms for short/long-term medication. Once the form is completed staff will sign and date. These forms are located in the first aid areas of the centre. Medical conditions – in the situation where your child has a specific condition i.e.: asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, anaphylactic – written plan of action by the child's practitioner will be required and updated 6 monthly. Please ask staff for relevant forms.

CLOTHING: When dressing your child for Pre School please remember the types of activities your child will be involved in during the day. Painting, group times, sitting on the carpet, playing in the sandpit, climbing, running outside, toileting etc..Please dress your child in clothing that is appropriate for all types of play. Shorts and pants that have an elastic waist are an excellent idea. Often children leave going to the toilet to the last minutes because they are too busy playing. This usually results in accidents because they cannot undo buttons and zippers in time.

Please bring a change of clothing for your child, each day they attend.

All children are **required** to wear a hat during outdoor play, so please ensure your child has one everyday. In winter your child needs to have a jacket/adequate warm clothing.

All clothing needs to be **labelled** with your child's name. We will endeavour to return any lost property, but without a name it makes it very difficult. We cannot be responsible for any lost property.

Please do not bring: clogs, thongs, gumboots, singlet tops/dresses. If your child does wear a singlet top please make sure they have a t-shirt to put on for outside play.

TOYS / EQUIPMENT: Every month the centre allocates money to the service for new equipment purchases. Please do not bring toys from home to the centre. Toys from home, apart from usually encouraging inappropriate behaviour, often get lost and broken. Educators will not accept any responsibilities for toys brought from home.

REST TIME: A rest time is available to all children during the day from 12.00PM (or as needed). 0-2 year old children are provided with their own bed and linen. All linen are washed daily, 2-6 year old children need to bring their own linen daily. The lights are dimmed, soft music is played and we encourage the children to bring their comforters with them. Sleep times are recorded for each child on the sign-in sheets.

We understand that all children may not need a sleep so to cater for this we have quiet activities to participate in after they have a quiet rest/relaxation period

MEALS: The centre provides all meals during the day. Morning Tea, Lunch, Afternoon Tea Late Afternoon snack. The menus are developed in accordance with nutritional guideline and ensure all basic food groups are included daily. If your child has any food allergies or special dietary needs, please speak to the cook or to a staff member and note this on your enrolment form. We will do our best to accommodate these needs. You will need to provide written documentation of the dietary requirements/ or allergies.

A copy of the weekly menu is displayed on the kitchen door in the Nursery and on the parent notice board in the foyer. If you have any menu suggestions, maybe a copy of your child's favourite meal, please feel free to give the recipe to the cook or place it in the suggestion box.

Infant bottles need to be labelled with formula/breast milk ready make up. They need to be given to staff and notified of the times for their next bottles.

BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT: At Rainbows we aim to manage children's behaviour in a positive way. We will discuss any problems we maybe experiencing in relation to behaviour with you.. It is important to communicate to educators any changes at home, stresses or problems that may have an effect on the child's behaviour. We will discuss and develop strategies that can be used at the centre and home to address any inappropriate behaviour.

NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK: In December 2009, all Australian Governments agreed to a new National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care. This means that all Australian children, regardless of their location, will get the best possible start in life through high quality early childhood education and care and school age care services. The Framework will help providers improve their services in the areas that impact on a child's development and empower families to make informed choices about which service is best for their child.

The National Quality Framework includes:

- a national legislative framework that consists of the *Education and Care Services National Law* and *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
- a National Quality Standard
- an assessment and rating system
- a regulatory authority in each state and territory who will have primary responsibility for the approval, monitoring and quality assessment of services in their jurisdiction in accordance with the national legislative framework and in relation to the National Quality Standard.
- the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

ACECQA, the new national body is responsible for providing oversight of the new system and ensuring consistency of approach

DAILY ROUTINE: A copy of the daily routine is up on display in each room. The routine is flexible and provides time for children and staff to pursue interests that arise. The children have the opportunity to mix with all children during the morning and also have time where they are divided into their age/stage of development. This enables activities and experiences to be planned that will meet their individual and group needs, strengths and interests.

CURRICULUM AND PORTFOLIO PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING: As the caregivers of your child, the staff are required to record regular observations and formulate objectives on your child's overall development. In doing so the staff are able to determine your child's strengths, emerging skills and interests. They are then able to plan for individual activities and incorporate these into the weekly program. This year we are trialling the use of discs being used as a portfolio - this is part of our commitment to using less paper in the centre. If you wish to see these records, please see staff to organise a date and time so staff can sit and talk about your child's progress.

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL: The staff at Rainbows Kidz Pre School aim to work with parents in preparing the children for school. This will begin when they first start at the centre and join the 3-5's room. The centre has a transition to school program that is implemented into daily experiences. Specific skills that are desirable upon entrance to kindergarten are focused upon during individual activities, small groups, routine tasks and structured experiences. The children have the opportunity to develop an understanding of concepts as they engage in both concrete and abstract experiences.

INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION: Parents and the family are welcome at the centre at all times. They are invited to share their skills/interests with the children and staff or just experience a day at the centre. Rainbows Kidz Pre School work as a team and parents are part of this team. For any team to work effectively and efficiently there needs to be open lines of communication.

PARENT LIBRARY: The centre has a parent library that is available to all parents which is located in the foyer. It contains a variety of resources covering nutrition, child development, accreditation, health and safety, centre policies, immunisation just to name a few. This information takes the form of videos, books, fact sheets, pamphlets and general information. You are welcome to look through the library and take any pamphlets of interest or if you require a copy please see staff.

FEES

The centre's full daily fee is:

0-3 yrs - \$93.00

3-6 yrs - \$88.00

(Childcare Benefit and Rebate is available to certain families - please contact the Family Assistance Office on 136150 for further information).

Fees are to be paid fortnightly or weekly in advance. All fee payments are through Ezy Debit. A receipt will be issued during the week.

MAKE UP DAYS: Make up days are offered for Public Holidays only. As we are required to maintain ratios at all times, make up days can only occur if there is a position available within the centre. To request a make up day we are required to have at least 48 hours notice. Staff will endeavor to meet the request for make up days but cannot guarantee that a day will be available. Make up days must be used within the current year and are not carried forward to the next year. Please note that all fees must be up to date before you can utilise make up days.

We accept fees paid on the first day of attendance for care one week in advance. This will be kept as a bond. Any parent who is one week or more in arrears will be jeopardising their child's place at the centre.

NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL: A minimum of two weeks written notice is required before your child is withdrawn from the centre. Notice **MUST** be given in writing (either fax, email, or by filling out the centres form) and signed by the parent and a staff member. Notice for withdrawal cannot be given over the phone. Should notice not be given, and then the equivalent of two weeks fees will be charged to the parent. **N.B. During the months of December and January one months notice is required for withdrawals. If notice is not given then one months fees will be charged.**

Please note that you will be required to sign your child in and out for the last day of their attendance at Pitt St Kindy. If this is not done you will be charged full fee for their last two weeks attendance. PLEASE NOT THIS IS A REQUIRMENT OF DEEWER, NOT THE CENTRE.

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE: This centre is registered with the Government child care benefit scheme and will be providing this facility to the parents of the service. Please contact Centrelink on **Ph: 136 150** and notify them of the exact date that your child will be enrolling so that you will be registered for your percentage. You must supply the service with your CCB number and percentage.

POLICY FOLDER: Our Policy folder is located in the parent library in the foyer. Please feel free to take a seat in the staff room and have a cuppa while you read through it. This policy folder covers all areas relating to all aspects of childcare and how we feel is the best and safest way to cover them in our daily practice. Policies are reviewed annually or when changes to legislation occurs. Policies are distributed for staff and parental review. We love feedback.

FINALLY: We hope that this booklet has assisted and informed you of our daily running and policies. Please feel free to talk with the staff about any queries.

We look forward to building an ongoing relationship with you and your child at our service. This will enable us to provide the best possible care for your child.

The centre also extends their wishes hoping that your child's time here in our service is a great and valuable learning experience that will foster their growth and development for the years to come.

GENERAL INFORMATION/THINGS TO REMEMBER: Updating your child's immunisation records and contact information is extremely important. Please ensure you present this information to the Director.

The following is a list of what to bring:

0-2 years

- 1 piece of fruit – every day
- If using milk formula, required bottles for the day either made up or with correct formula in sterilised bottles
- 2 sets of play clothes including a jumper
- All nappies (minimum of 4 disposable)
- Pull ups for children being toilet trained
- A dummy if required
- A Drink bottle, clearly labelled with child's name
- A wide brim hat, clearly labelled

2-6 years

- 1 piece of fruit every day
- A change of clothes
- A sun hat (legionnaires), clearly labelled with child's name
- Pull ups for sleep time if applicable to your child.
- Sheets for rest time
- A Drink bottle, clearly labelled with child's name
- Wide Brim Hat, clearly labelled

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me on 6571 2225.

Thank you

Melissa Matthews
Nominated Supervisor