



Family Handbook

Welcome to Rainbows – A home of Early Learning.

We understand just how difficult it can be choosing the right place for your child and hope the following handbook will be of assistance to you.

Rainbows Early Learning Centre is a privately run long day care centre. We are family owned and operated and dedicated to Quality Early Learning. We offer care to a maximum of 56 children each day, aged between 6 weeks and 5 years. At Rainbows ELC we recognise the importance of quality early childhood learning practices and settings, and acknowledge the importance of stimulating play experiences, and learning environments which positively supports all children to develop to their full potential. 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.

Orientation: - At Rainbows ELC 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 and please call the centre as many times as you want during the day to check how your child is.

Toileting: - Toileting is started when your child is ready. 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). If you are thinking your child may be ready to begin toileting please talk to your child's primary caregiver.

Nappies: - We provide nappies for children who require them. If you would like to bring cloth nappies for your child please can you please pack at least five cloth nappies a day and ensure you bring a "Wet Bag" for the staff to return the nappies for you to take home that afternoon.

Communication: - Communication between parents and staff is of paramount importance, as we aim to compliment what you are already doing at home. 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 feedback any aspect of the centre.

Any important messages are sent out via email and on the entryway into the centre. We have a suggestion box for you to make written suggestions, raise concerns and thoughts; this is located in the pre-school room. We greatly value your input and rely on your feedback to continue to improve the high quality of our service.

Arrival and Departure: - . When arriving at the centre please ensure you leave your child in the direct care of an educator. We endeavour to make this time, not only safe and secure for your child, but a valuable means of exchanging information. We will endeavour to be available and responsive to parents at this time. If

educators are engaged with another parent or involved with an activity with children please speak to another educator who can relay the message. If you wish you can contact a specific educator via phone during the day

Please ensure that you **sign your child in/out every day via the Kiosk**. If your child is away, it is essential that you sign your child's absence when they return to the centre. Please inform staff if you know your child will be away. From January 2019 it is a federal requirement that the time each child is signed in and out is recorded. If you are going to be late in collecting your child, please endeavour to contact the centre ASAP. 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

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 add this person to the list. 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 operations: - At Rainbows ELC we are open from 7.00 am to 6.00 pm for 51 weeks of the year.

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, 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 your 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.

Medical Conditions: – in the situation where your child has a specific condition i.e. asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, anaphylactic – a written plan of action by the child's practitioner will be required and updated 6 monthly. A risk assessment form will also be developed by the Nominated Supervisor and Parents.

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 so busy playing. This usually results in accidents because they cannot undo buttons and zippers in time. Skirts and chunky shoes often limit climbing and other physical activities. 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 and Equipment – 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 as needed. 0-2 year old children are provided with their own bed and linen. All linen is washed each time a new child uses the cot (cot sheets, mattress protector). Cots are washed at this time as well with hot soapy water to kill germs; 2-5 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 in the kitchen and our cook will post any updated menu's on the centres facebook page. 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. They can be placed in the kitchen to be made up as needed. Please ensure you have filled out the baby routine forms that are in the enrolment packs. If there are any changes to your child's routine please advise an educator.

Behaviour Support: - We aim to manage children's behaviour in a positive way. We will discuss any problems we may be 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 Programming and Planning: - We aim to develop and plan a curriculum in partnership with children, families and the community in a way that supports a child's sense of belonging, being and becoming. We use an online portfolio system called "Keptme" which enables parents to connect anywhere and anytime to share their children's milestones and curriculum participation. Please see the "Kept Me" form located in the enrolment pack.

Transition to School: - The staff at Rainbows ELC aim to work with parents in preparing the children for school. This will begin when they first start at the centre and be further development 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 other family members 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. At Pitt St Kindy we 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 and 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. Alternatively if you would like to use our internet to look up information on children please feel free to speak to a staff member who will help you.

Fees: The centre's full daily fee is:

- 0-3 \$102.00
- 3-6 \$ 97.00\$75.00 enrolment fee - including a centre hat and shirt.

(Childcare Subsidy is available)

Fees are to be paid weekly, fortnightly or monthly in advance. All fee payments are through Debit Success. 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, via email, or by filling out the centres form, and signed by the parent. Should notice not be given, and then the equivalent of two weeks fees will be charged to the parent. Please note that you will be required to sign your child in and out for the last day of their attendance at Boombalee Kidz. If this is not done you will be charged full fee for their last two weeks attendance. PLEASE NOTE THIS IS A REQUIRMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, NOT THE CENTRE.

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. If a make up day has been booked and the child does not attend the centre on that day then the parents forfeit the make up day. Please note that and all fees must be up to date before you can utilise make up days.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS): If you have not registered for CCS previously you will need to call the Family Assistance Office on 136150 to register your child. You will be asked to submit a activity test which will determine your CCS percentage as well as the amount of claimable hours you will receive. You can find more information on the CCS on www.humanservices.gov.au or www.mygov.au There is also an " Express Plus Centrelink" App which can be downloaded on your smart device.

If you have previously registered for CCS you can log on to your myGov account to update where your child is attending. Once this has been done can you please bring in, or email, the notification that is generated.

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. Polices are distributed for staff and parental review. We love feedback.

We hope that this handbook 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 and 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)
- 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 65712225 or rainbows@kidzchildcare.com.au

Thank you,

Melissa Matthews.
Nominated Supervisor
Rainbows ELC

