



Mildura Central
EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

FAMILY HANDBOOK



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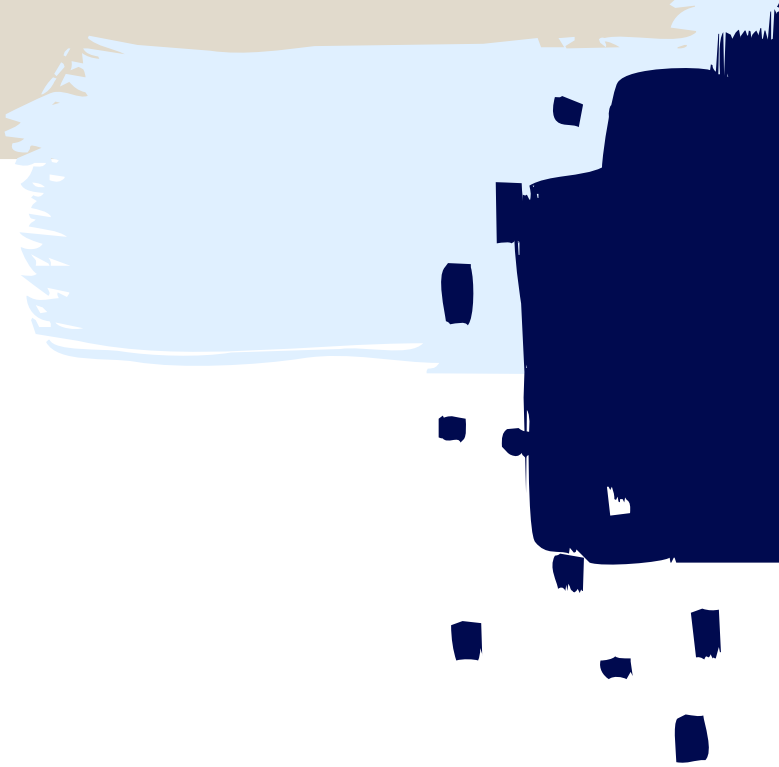


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WELCOME

We recognise that early childhood is a time when foundations are laid for future health, learning and wellbeing. For this reason, Mildura Central Early Learning Centre employs professional educators that focus on building your children's social, emotional and physical wellbeing, while teaching them to be respectful to others and the community in which they live. Supporting and strengthening all of these aspects of the child gives them the best foundation for their future.





Our curriculum is fun and exciting within a safe and secure environment and links to the Victorian Early Years Learning Framework and the National Early Years Framework. We understand that as parents you strive to create a caring and safe environment for your family, and it is only natural you seek the same standard for an early learning centre. Your child's transition from home to one of our early learning centres should be seamless and it will feel like a home away from home where they are comfortable, happy and inspired.

We support working families by being open up to 12 hours per day, Monday to Friday, 52 weeks a year, to offer the convenience and flexibility that busy families need. From six weeks of age until they are ready to attend school, your child will receive the highest quality education and care. All our educators and teachers are qualified in early childhood education and have considerable early learning experience. Our kindergarten and preschool teachers have university qualifications.

Our Educators have access to the best resources, expertise and professional development to allow them to deliver the highest quality education and care to your children. We look forward to welcoming you and your family.



OUR VISION & PHILOSOPHY



OUR VISION

We strive for all children to achieve their full potential by offering the education, care and nurturing they need to grow and have a great start in life.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We are committed to educational excellence for every child through the delivery of high quality early years curriculum. Our pedagogy promotes school readiness and achievement of learning outcomes by applying our knowledge and experience of how children learn and play.

We understand the importance of education and believe that childhood is a unique time of life which should be valued and enjoyed. We recognise that early childhood is a time when foundations are laid for future health, learning and wellbeing.

We use a Reggio Emilia inspired approach to meet the objectives outlined in the National and Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Frameworks; including emphasis on literacy, numeracy, music and movement and social development. In a Reggio Emilia learning environment, children learn meaningful skills that support them through their future education and life. Our teaching methods are linked to the National Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care & School Age Care to ensure that a consistent and high quality early childhood education curriculum is provided.

We believe that children are capable, inquisitive and active learners who play a crucial role in education. It is our role as educators to support and scaffold the children's development and learning. We believe in allowing children to learn through exploration, inquiry projects and open-ended play. We value an inclusive, supportive and stimulating learning environment that evokes imagination and creativity, while providing opportunities for problem solving and independence. Collaboration between children, educators and families is valued and enables us to better understand the child as a whole.

We believe in documenting the children's experiences to make their learning visible to our community and provide the children with opportunities to reflect, share and build on their understanding.

Our Reggio Emilia approach has the following key principles:

- The Image of the child
- Relationships
- Teachers & Educators
- Environment
- Families & the Community
- Curriculum & Documentation



IMAGE OF THE CHILD

We view children as active learners who are involved in their own acquisition of knowledge. Each child arrives at our service with their own experiences, knowledge, personality, interests and needs. Children learn through play, exploration, problem solving and sharing of knowledge through social play.

We have an uncompromising commitment to nurturing active bodies and creating healthy minds through a holistic approach to early childhood development. We strive to deliver this by creating an environment that empowers, challenges and provides opportunities for children to develop to their full potential.



RELATIONSHIPS

It is the educator's role to facilitate and support the child's learning. Small group interactions are encouraged and children are provided with opportunities to collaborate and create inquiry projects. Independence and problem-solving skills are encouraged to help children resolve social conflicts and build relationships. Children are regularly engaged in discussions that encourage them to reflect on their own social interactions and develop their social skills.

We aim to promote relationships that support children to:

- » feel a sense of belonging through promoting a strong sense of identity which allows them to feel safe, secure and supported;
- » see themselves as constructive contributors to the community;
- » see themselves as valued and unique;
- » engage in caring and respectful relationships;
- » develop resilience, knowledge and confident self-identities;
- » be active participants in their learning and in creating their environment;
- » be competent and confident learners;
- » be respected and recognized for their strengths, interests and abilities;
- » provide input over the direction of their learning;
- » have endless opportunities to express and embrace their individuality; and
- » be encouraged to play and this is valued as children's work.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

ROLE OF TEACHERS & EDUCATORS

In the Reggio approach, the Teacher is considered a co-learner and collaborator with the child and not just an instructor.

Educators are encouraged to facilitate the child's learning by planning activities and lessons based on the child's interests, asking questions to further understanding and actively engaging in the activities alongside the child.

We recognise the importance of open and honest communication, team work and collaboration between families and Educators and strive to form positive relationships with all. We acknowledge that learning is life-long and are committed to professional development.

Educators and the service formally acknowledge and commit to the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics and Child Safe Standards. We will uphold the outlined ethical principles and professional standards to guide decision making and practice.

In our interaction with children our Educators will:

- » Have a passion for children's learning;
- » Focus on maintaining the health and safety of the children and the environment;
- » Demonstrate personal excellence and team work in their role as teachers and nurturers through exploration, fascination, examination and provocation;
- » Have positive interactions and relationships with children and families;
- » Facilitate an emergent curriculum based on the Reggio Emilia approach. This approach to teaching young children puts the natural development of children as well as the close relationship they share with their environment as the centre of the philosophy; and
- » Act with integrity and honesty and offer flexibility to each child, their family and their peers.



ENVIRONMENT

We view the environment as the third Teacher. It should be creative, supportive and inclusive so that children feel comfortable and safe.

Our environment is designed to provide children with opportunities to work together in small groups or independently, and reflects the local community and the families who use our service. The children are encouraged to move freely through the classroom to explore the areas that interest them. We feel technology and computers are an essential learning tool for today's child, and they are incorporated into the child's learning environment.

FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY

We work to support families in their parenting role and share with them information of benefit to their child's development. We encourage families to be actively involved in the life of the service.

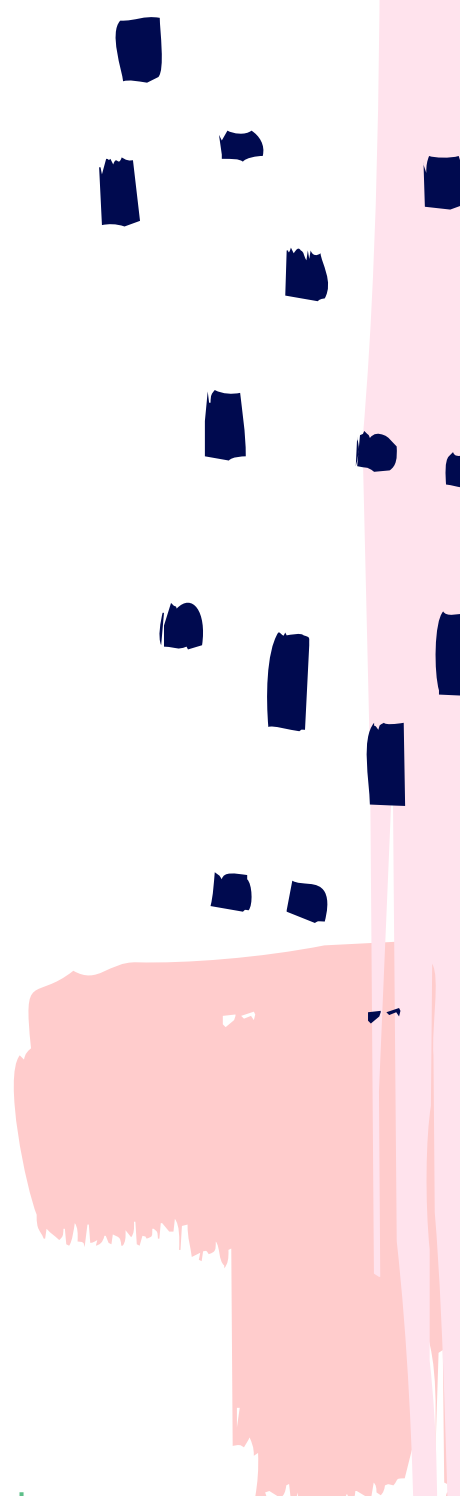
Through sharing cultures, ideas, knowledge, strengths and differences, we develop partnerships with families that are beneficial to the child's learning and development. We incorporate a model of a family grouping which allows siblings to be together.

Working in partnership with parents and families we will:

- » create relationships of respect, trust, communication, consultation and information sharing;
- » understand the importance of a child's home and family community;
- » recognise parents as their child's first and most influential teachers; and
- » recognise the skills and interests of families and incorporate their beliefs and values into our centre.



We feel it is important to connect to our local community and its resources to create avenues for learning opportunities, and encourage children to connect and contribute to their world.



CURRICULUM AND DOCUMENTATION

The children's experiences are documented to make their learning visible to all.

This is achieved through a portfolio presentation approach. We document using photos, comments, art work and learning stories. Recording of this information leads to informed decision making about the provision of materials and future experiences for the children.

Children's achievements are evaluated against the Early Years Learning Outcomes. We provide Child Reflection Reports and Transition Statements that document each child's learning and development.

We create a curriculum that empowers children to make choices, promote peer relationships and to provoke thoughts and imagination. Through observing and listening to the children we question and suggest new possibilities and encourage them to search and explore meaning in whatever they do.

Our curriculum supports:

- » having a play based emergent curriculum;
- » numeracy, literacy, music and movement, science and social development;
- » children developing knowledge and an understanding of technology and computers;
- » promoting physical activity, health and wellbeing;
- » adopting intentional and spontaneous teaching methods to optimise learning;
- » child lead and initiated experiences;
- » structured but flexible routines;
- » family participation and input to allow the Educators to pursue the child's interests;
- » scaffolding experiences and projects to extend children's learning;
- » developing school readiness;
- » reflecting and evaluating our practices; and
- » keeping up to date with leading research on early childhood education and innovation.



We periodically evaluate and reflect on our practices to continuously improve in all areas of the service.

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

We recognise and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of the land on which our early childhood services are offered.

We are committed to building partnerships based on trust, respect and recognition of the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. On a foundation of equity, integrity and respect we create high quality early learning experiences for all children.

COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Our organisation has a strong commitment to child safety, wellbeing and protection, through the implementation and adherence to the Child Safe Standards and the Information Sharing Scheme. The commitment extends to all children in our service and community with an aim for children to feel safe, secure and supported.



LEARNING AT MILDURA CENTRAL EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND CURRICULUM

We recognise that early childhood is a time when foundations are laid for future health, learning and wellbeing. We use a Reggio Emilia inspired approach to meet the objectives outlined in the National and Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Frameworks; to enhance each child's emotional and developmental competence in the following ways:

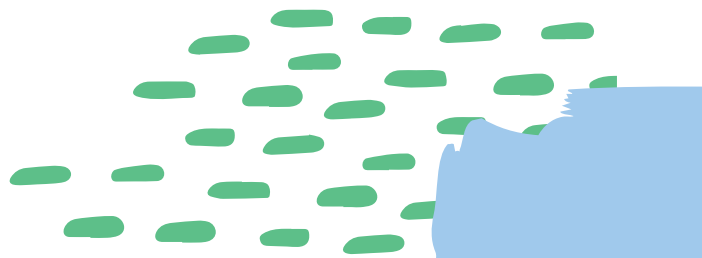
- » Emotional: Self-awareness, Self-control and Self-regulation
- » Social: Cooperation, Sharing, Turn-taking and Problem solving
- » Physical (fine motor): Small muscle development (cutting, drawing)
- » Physical (gross motor): Large muscle development (running, jumping)
- » Cognitive: Thinking, Listening, Resolving Conflict and concentration
- » Language: Literacy, Numeracy, Communications, and Self-expression.

The primary means of learning in early childhood is through play. Play is purposeful and goal-centred. The curriculum is designed to cater for each child's needs and interests. Play is a vital part of a child's life and is the way they make sense of their world. It is the basic ingredient to learning, develops new skills, and stimulates intellectual growth.

Each day has structure and a flexible routine and includes time for play, project work and also free choice. Every child has learning goals, and each child's progress is monitored by observation-based assessment and documentation. In addition, an online learning portfolio is compiled for every child to capture their unique creativity and expression whilst regular communication with parents is maintained via our app and website. A Daily Journal is available at the end of each day which documents the experiences and learning throughout the day. Our educators are always willing to discuss your child's learning and day with you. You will be amazed what your child will learn and the experiences your child is involved in at our early learning centres.

Our curriculum supports:

- » having a play based emergent curriculum;
- » numeracy, literacy, music and movement, science and social development;
- » children developing knowledge and an understanding of technology and computers;
- » promoting physical activity, health and wellbeing;
- » adopting intentional and spontaneous teaching methods to optimise learning;
- » child lead and initiated experiences;
- » structured but flexible routines;
- » family participation and input to allow the Educators to pursue child's interests;
- » scaffolding experiences and projects to extend children's learning;
- » developing school readiness;
- » reflecting and evaluating our practices; and
- » keeping up to date with leading research on early childhood education and innovation.



OUR CURRICULUM INCLUSIONS

These are some of the educational programs included in our curriculum:



Literacy and Phonics Program

We deliver a literacy and phonics educational program using phonics educational program. Our phonics program is a fun and child centred approach to teaching literacy through synthetic phonics.



Wellbeing Classroom Program

The Wellbeing Classroom provides a framework to assist in developing long term pedagogy in relation to the wellbeing and social and emotional learning development of children. As part of the Wellbeing Classroom we deliver the Kimochis Educational Program - social and emotional learning. The program teaches children real life skills such as communication, self-regulation, problem solving and responsibility. Kimochi means 'feelings' in Japanese.



Sustainability and Environmental Programs

We see early childhood as a critical period to involve children in sustainability and environment education so they develop lifelong practices that respect and help protect our planet. For children to do this, it is important for them to develop a sense of wonder, belonging to and love of the natural environment, living things and animals.



School Readiness Program

Our School Readiness Program commences when your child enrolls, regardless of their age, and represents a systematic and continuous approach to preparing each child for primary school.



Creative Arts Program

Encouraging self-expression through art, music and movement is paramount and each child is encouraged to express their creativity. Children are encouraged to explore the materials and are also taught about music and movement. Creative arts are about enjoyment just as much as participation.



Excursions and Enrichment Programs

To enhance and enrich each child's learning we incorporate additional extra-curricular experiences into our curriculum. Experiences may include indigenous performers, musical performances, magic shows, animal farms, etc.

CURRICULUM PORTAL & APP

We use our curriculum portal and app to create and share learning with parents and children.

The curriculum portal and app allows educators to plan, set goals, prepare learning documentation and create your child's learning portfolio. The app and website allows parents to feel more involved in their child's day by providing daily information on their learning and experiences.

Our curriculum portal and app as the following features:

Child Learning Portfolio

You can view your child's portfolio online at a convenient time.

Child Image Gallery

See photos of your child in the image gallery.

View Daily Journals

The daily journal outlines what happened during the day in your child's room, including any spontaneous experiences enjoyed by the children.

Learning Observations

You can read your child's individual learning observations and also read group learning observations and see how your child interacts with others.

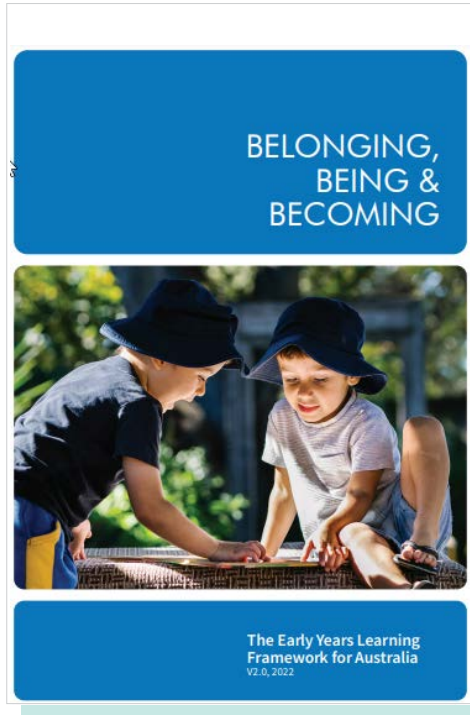
Child Reflection Reports

Educators prepare a Child Reflection Report at the end of each year for each child to provide parents with a summary of their achievements against the Early Years Learning Framework Outcomes.

Kindergarten Transition Statements

Your child's transition statement is prepared by Educators to share information on your child's learning and development to assist your child transition to school.





OUR TEACHING FRAMEWORKS

“Belonging, Being and Becoming”, is central to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and a key component of the National Quality Framework (NQF).

We follow the Victorian and National Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the National Quality Framework. Incorporating these frameworks with Reggio Emilia is the best early childhood approach to offer and provides a solid foundation for life success in early childhood education.

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK

Our curriculum supports the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF).

EYLF and VEYLDF describe the principles, practices, and outcomes essential to support and enhance young children’s learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school.

The framework has a strong emphasis on play-based learning, and recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development. Through implementing the early year learning framework in our educational programs, we help your child to develop:

- » a strong sense of identity.
- » connections with their world.
- » a strong sense of wellbeing.
- » confidence and involvement in their learning.
- » effective communication skills.



NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK

The National Quality Framework (NQF) encourages services to provide a high quality and consistent standard of early childhood education and care across Australia.

The National Quality Standard areas are:

NQS 1 - Educational program and practice.

NQS 2 - Children's health and safety.

NQS 3 - The physical environment.

NQS 4 - Staffing arrangements.

NQS 5 - Relationships with children.

NQS 6 - Collaborative partnerships with families and communities.

NQS 7 - Governance and leadership.

You can find more information about the NQF at <http://acecqa.gov.au>



ROLE OF TEACHERS & EDUCATORS

In the Reggio approach, the Educator is considered a co-learner and collaborator with the child and not just an instructor. Educators are encouraged to facilitate the child's learning by planning experiences and lessons based on the child's interests, asking questions to further understanding and actively engaging in the activities alongside the child.

Our dedicated Teachers and Educators recognise pedagogy that actively engages children in play as one of the main ways in which children learn and develop. They use a holistic approach when planning for the whole child's development. They pay attention to the children's physical, personal, social, and emotional wellbeing as well as cognitive aspects of their learning.

Our Educators are invaluable; their personalities and beliefs contribute to making a successful learning environment. They have a range of early childhood teaching qualifications including Bachelor of Early Childhood, Advanced Diploma in Early Childhood, Diploma in Early Childhood or a Certificate 3 in Early Childhood.

We ensure that working with children checks are carried out on all Educators before they are employed and all employees follow the ethical code of conduct. Educators are aware of their obligations with regard to child protection and mandatory reporting and follow the services child protection policy and regulations.



FAMILY COMMUNICATION & PARTICIPATION

Open, honest, respectful and harmonious communication between families, educators and children is essential. We feel this is important in delivering high-quality, effective education and care for each child.

Please keep in touch with what is going on at the centre through reading the curriculum portal and app, noticeboards and our emails. Please participate in your child's curriculum by completing curriculum input forms. We value your feedback and the unique experiences and culture of your family. Sharing this information with your child's class will provide opportunities for your child to share their culture and create new topics for learning.

ENROLMENTS

HOW TO ENROL

We would love to find your child a place at our centre. Please contact the Centre Director to arrange a centre tour if you have not already had one. A centre tour is a great way for you and your child to meet the educators, understand our curriculum and learning programs and see our environment first hand.

Once you have completed your tour, please register on our portal and app to complete the online waitlist form for your children. When a vacancy arises, you will be contacted by the Centre Director with an offer of placement. Before a placement is offered a tour is required to be completed to ensure our centre is the right fit for your family. When an offer for placement is made to you, please accept the offer and complete the online enrolment form, complying written arrangement(cwa) and direct debit authorisation form.

To finalise the enrolment, an initial enrolment fee must be paid. The initial fee is calculated as the greater of amounts: \$100 or two weeks fees. Your centre director will advise the initial fee amount. On your child's commencement, the initial fee amount will be credited to your account and offset against the amount due for the two weeks fees due in advance. Please note, if your child does not commence as booked, the initial fee is non-refundable.

We operate in accordance with priority of access Government guidelines. This ensures that children at risk will be given priority when there are limited places. To review the guidelines please refer to the Policy section of the website or the Centre Policy Handbook: Priority of Access Policy.

We aim to make your day as stress free as possible. Unless your child has special requirements there is no need to pack food, drinks, wipes, or sunscreen. We supply them to make packing your child's bag easier.

We supply the following items:

- » Nutritious meals, prepared fresh in our kitchen
- » Nappies and wipes for babies & toddlers
- » Sunscreen



STEPS TO ENROL

The following are the steps to add your child's name to the centre's waitlist and complete enrolment forms using our enrolment system. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Centre Director.

STEP 1

Undertake a Centre Tour

If you have not undertaken a recent centre tour, please contact us to arrange a suitable time to show you why attending our early learning centre is the best choice for your child's early education and care. Please contact us and we will book your private tour.

STEP 2

Add Your Children to the Waitlist

After you have completed a centre tour, please complete the online Waitlist Form for each child you are seeking to attend the service.

On completion of the tour, the service will email you an online wait-list form for you to complete. The waitlist email will also provide other information such as the fees, our service offering, information about our Approved Kindergarten Program, etc

We regularly review the waitlist and we will contact you when a place becomes available.

STEP 3

Enrolling at our Early Learning Centre (Once Been Offered a Place)

Once you are offered a place, you will complete an Enrolment Form, Direct Debit Authorisation Form and Complying Written Arrangement (CWA) for each child been offered a place at our early learning centre.

We will issue an Enrolment email to you once we have discussed and offered your family a place at the service.

The CWA will be completed as part of the enrolment process. In the Complying Written Arrangement you will need to elect the session duration most appropriate for your family. More information will be provided when enrolling.

To finalise the enrolment an initial enrolment booking fee must be paid. The initial fee is calculated as the greater of amounts: \$100 or two weeks fees. Your centre director will advise the initial fee amount. On your child's commencement, the initial fee amount will be credited to your account and offset against the amount due for the two weeks fees due in advance. Please note, if your child does not commence as booked, the initial fee is non-refundable.

We've made payment easy for you and have direct debit implemented via bank account or credit card on a weekly basis. A direct debit authority form is required to be completed and signed upon enrolment.

We will contact you to arrange suitable times for you and your child to undertake orientation at the early learning centre.

ENROLMENT FORM CHECKLIST

When completing the online enrolment form please undertake the following:

COMPLETE ALL ENROLMENT FORM QUESTIONS

Childcare Regulations require all questions on enrolment forms to be completed. The information you need to have available for enrolment includes:

- » Customer Reference Number (CRN) for your child
- » CRN for parents
- » Employer's name, address and telephone number (both parents)
- » Contact details for emergency contacts and adults who will also be collecting children from centre (Names, Address, and Telephone numbers). Please note you are required to have a minimum of two people as authorised nominees
- » Doctors name, address and telephone number
- » Medicare Details
- » Private Health and Ambulance Insurance Details (if applicable)

COURT ORDERS, PARENT PLANS AND ORDERS

If court order, parent plans or orders apply, a copy must be provided to the centre on enrolment and uploaded with the enrolment form. Any changes to these orders must be provided to the centre. Unless a custody and contact order applies, both parents are deemed to be authorised to collect their child.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND ILLNESS

If your child has a Medical Condition or Illness (for example Anaphylaxis, Allergies, Asthma, Diabetes, epilepsy, hearing loss, or medically diagnosed dietary restrictions), please advise your Centre Director. The completed forms detailed below will be required to be uploaded onto the Enrolment system.

Please undertake the following:

- a) Complete relevant "Medical Management, Risk Minimisation & Communication Plan"- this form is obtained from the centre or our website.
- b) Complete the relevant form:
 - » ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis Reactions form (Found at ASCIA - www.allergy.org.au);
 - » ASCIA Action Plan for Allergic Reactions form (Found at ASCIA - www.allergy.org.au)
 - » Complete an Asthma Australia Asthma Care Plan for Education and Care Centre form (Found at Asthma Australia - www.asthmaaustralia.org.au)
- c) Have the forms signed by your child's doctor.
- d) Please discuss Forms and Plans with the Centre Director during orientation sessions.
- e) Upload signed forms to our enrolment system section - Medical Condition & Dietary Restriction.

A Medical Management, Risk Minimisation & Communication Plan is required for each type of medical condition. If the medical dietary condition is an allergy, please follow the Allergy Medical Condition requirements. If the signing date is greater than 12 months old, you will need to have new forms prepared and signed.

IMMUNISATION COMPLIANCE

Please complete the Immunisation Status table and upload your child's Immunisation History Statement or Medical Exemption Form onto the enrolment system portal. (NOTE: The Child Health Book is not an accepted proof of immunisation.) You can obtain an Immunisation History Statement in the following ways: Online through MyGov, Medicare Express App, over the counter at a Medicare Service Centre or by calling Australian Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809.

Immunisation Guidelines

As a result of Government Regulations all childcare centres cannot enrol a child unless approved documentation has been provided that shows the child is either;

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

Families must also provide their child's updated ACIR History Statement after each scheduled vaccination to ensure that the enrolment records are up to date. As part of the enrolment process families must provide a copy of one or more of the following documents:

- » An Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) Immunisation History Statement which shows that their child is up-to-date with their scheduled immunisations, or;
- » An ACIR* Immunisation Exemption Conscientious Objection Form (IMMU12) which has been certified by an immunisation provider and a parent/guardian, or;
- » An ACIR* Immunisation Exemption - Medical Contraindication Form (IMMU11) which has been certified by an immunisation provider, or;
- » An ACIR* Immunisation History form on which the immunisation provider has certified that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule.

For more information please access: <http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/australian-immunisation-register>

Non-immunised children will be excluded from our Centre in the event of any preventable childhood disease case. Please note during this period fees are payable as normal.

Once you have completed the enrolment form and uploaded all relevant forms, please submit the enrolment form.

FEES & GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

Mildura Central Early Learning Centre is a registered childcare provider. The Federal Government provides us with each family's approval details directly, which is why each family must be registered with Centrelink and have a myGov account.



GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

The Australian Government may provide financial assistance towards the cost of childcare. Your subsidy will then be subtracted from the full fees owing, leaving a gap fee which is the amount families pay to the Centre, meaning less out of pocket expense.

REGISTERING FOR CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES

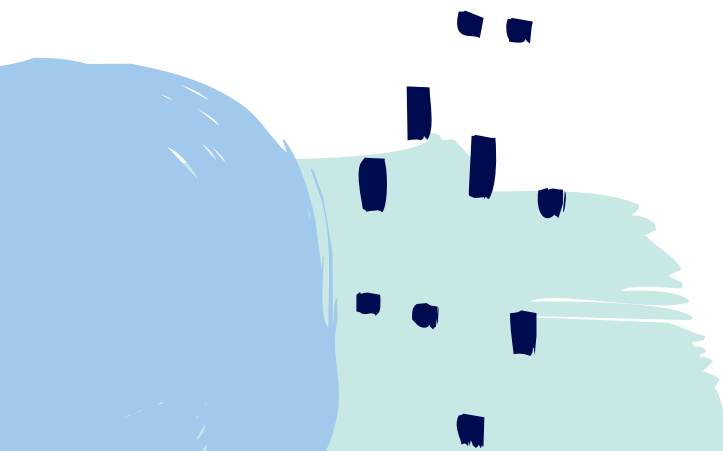
Registering can be completed through:

In person:
at Medicare offices or Centrelink offices

Internet:
www.servicesaustralia.gov.au

Phone:
13 61 50

Please note: You are required to advise Centrelink specific details of your child's enrolment at the centre. This can be completed in person, telephone or electronically via myGov. You are required to link your Centrelink and myGov accounts.



OUR FEES

All fees are to be paid in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of Enrolment, Fee Schedule and our Fee Policy. The following information is general information regarding the centre's fees:

- » The daily fee is inclusive of freshly prepared meals, sunscreen, nappies and wipes.
- » To secure child's enrolment, an initial fee of two weeks fees is required to be paid on enrolment of your child or \$100 (whichever is greater). The initial fee is not refundable under any circumstances. Once your child commences at the centres, the amount equal to the initial fee will be credited to your account and offset against the attendance fees charged.
- » Your child's attendance is booked and charged on a daily basis (not a part day basis).
- » Two weeks advance payment (current week plus 2 weeks) of full fees is required before your child commences. Fees will apply for booked days that your child does not attend due to illness, holidays or public holidays.
- » We provide Statements weekly via email and these can also be requested at any time from your Centre Director at the administration office.
- » We understand that sometimes families may run late and collect their child after our early learning program ends. Please see our fee schedule for additional costs of continuing to provide care after the operating hours. This will be charged to your account accordingly. If late pick-up occurs regularly the centre reserves the right to cancel child's enrolment.
- » Enrolment may be terminated if fees are outstanding. If your account is referred to our debt collectors, recovery costs of 25% of the outstanding account balance will be added to your account.
- » Our method of payment is via direct debit either from your nominated bank account or credit card. (Please see our policies and fee schedule for direct debit terms and charges.)
- » If an account goes into credit due to the application or backdating of subsidy entitlement, that credit will remain on the customer's account to be set against subsequent fee statements. If an account is in credit when a child leaves the Centre, after all fees owing have been paid, then the source of the balance will be reviewed to determine whether the money should be returned to the parent or refunded to the Federal Government as an overpayment of Child Care Subsidy.



ENTITLEMENTS WHEN YOUR CHILD IS ABSENT

Like most early learning centres, your child's place is reserved when they are away so the day still needs to be paid for. Each financial year, the Government will pay your child care subsidies for the first 42 absence days. These absences can be for any reason, including public holidays, and the initial 42 days must be used before any additional absences can be claimed. Please review Government websites for specific guidelines.

HOLIDAYS

Families taking annual leave will be entitled to a holiday discount in accordance with the fee schedule of the centre, provided two weeks notice in writing is given of intended dates of absence. Discounts will only be applied to parent accounts that are up to date and where appropriate written notice has been given.

WITHDRAWAL OF CHILDREN FROM THE CENTRE

Two weeks written notice of cancellation of your booking is required for withdrawal. Parents should be aware that non-attendance during the two-week notice period will result in ineligibility for childcare subsidies, hence full fees will be payable in the event of non-attendance.

ADDITIONAL ABSENCE DAYS

You may receive childcare subsidies for absence days after the initial 42 days each financial year if you are able to provide evidence to demonstrate the absence has occurred under permitted circumstances. There is no limit on these days, but you will be required to provide documentation to support the absence. Please see the Governments website for more information.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Our centre is closed on public holidays. Fees still apply if any of your usual days of attendance fall on a public holiday.

CHANGES TO YOUR CHILD'S REGULAR BOOKED DAYS

Two weeks written notice is required if you need to change or cancel your child's regular booked days of attendance. Additional days can be requested at any time and taken immediately if available. If unavailable, your request for additional days can be added to your centre's waiting list.



PARENT INFORMATION

ORIENTATION

Leaving your child for the first time can be an anxious time for both parents and children. We have an orientation and transitioning program for all new children at the centre; this is arranged in consultation with parents.

HEALTHY AND NUTRITIOUS MEALS

We aim to instil in all children the importance of maintaining a lifelong respect for food and living a healthy lifestyle. It is important that children understand where food comes from and each centre uses fresh seasonal produce. Our menus are reviewed by Nutrition Australia and the meals provided exceed the nutrition guidelines. During meal times educators discuss food, nutrition and hygiene.

To ensure strict compliance with all nutrition guidelines and due to children's allergies, we ask all families not to bring any food into the centres and support our nut free policy. We do allow you to bring in cakes to celebrate your child's birthday, however, the cake must be purchased from a commercial outlet and have a food label detailing the contents. We are a nut-free centre to keep our children with allergies safe.

Menus are displayed on the kitchen noticeboard and include an array of important dietary nutrients required for a healthy balanced diet.

Children will be offered the following meals:

- » Breakfast
- » Morning Tea
- » Lunch
- » Afternoon Tea
- » Late Snack



CHILDREN'S HEALTH & WELLBEING

What to wear

Please dress your child in accordance with the climate. Non-restrictive clothing is easily removed for toileting and suitable for running, climbing, painting and playing in areas with sand and water. We recommend comfortable safe shoes that can be easily managed by each child to encourage their independence. Please ensure all items are clearly labelled to reduce the risk of misplacement.

What you need to bring for your Child

One bag containing:

- » Labelled bottles, formula (pre-measured please), or breast milk as required.
- » Labelled sipper cup or drink bottle.
- » Two complete changes of labelled clothing suitable for current weather conditions.
- » Pants and underpants (a minimum of 3 pairs) to allow for possible accidents (if toilet training).
- » A pair of shoes for children who are able to walk. Shoes should be worn on arrival and departure from the centre.
- » A labelled sun hat, preferably a hat with peak and neck flap (Legionnaires style) or with a broad brim.
- » Any long-term medication, with appropriate documentation.

For safety reasons, no plastic bags, plastic wrap, or items smaller than a film canister are to be brought to the centre. A container with lost property is located in each classroom. Please check this container regularly as items will be disposed of monthly.

Rest Time

Rest time is included in the daily program to allow children to recuperate from the morning's activities. The rest period allows children to gather their thoughts and revive for the remainder of the day. Children who do not sleep are encouraged to rest their bodies quietly or are provided with quiet activities such as books and puzzles.

Supporting Children's behaviours

We use a positive approach in behaviour management and guiding children's behaviours. We encourage children towards positive and responsible behaviour, and give children the opportunity to become self-reliant and to develop their self-esteem. Please see our Behavioural Guidance Policy.

Our Hygiene Practices

The Centre follows meticulous cleaning procedures to ensure a sanitary, hygienic and organised environment for all children and educators. To maintain our high levels of cleanliness in both indoor and outdoor settings, educators follow cleaning schedules throughout the day. Educators model good hygiene and encourage children to practice good personal hygiene by washing their hands following play, using the toilet, blowing their nose, before eating and always covering their mouths when coughing or sneezing. Regular hand washing is a systematic practice throughout our centre and considered an utmost priority.

It is necessary to advise the Centre immediately if absence is due to an infectious disease as this allows educators to keep an eye out for similar symptoms in other children and minimise the spread of any infection.



How we manage Unwell Children at the Centre

If a child becomes unwell whilst at the centre the parents or care givers will be notified and asked to take the child home. Unwell children must be collected from the centre within an hour of being contacted therefore families must ensure emergency contacts are documented on the enrolment form.

Children's medication

All medication (both prescribed and over the counter) must be clearly marked with a pharmacist's dispensing label which states the child's name and the dosage and a Medication Authority Form must be completed. Please do not leave medication of any nature in your child's bag. Medication should be given to your child's educator upon arrival at the centre. Medications (including those requiring refrigeration) will be appropriately stored in a designated area out of reach of children. Please see our Medication Policy for further information.

Sun Safety

We promote sun safety awareness and follow guidelines requiring parents to dress children in clothing that provides protection from the sun. A hat and loose-fitting cotton T-shirt covering the shoulders, back and neck is preferred. Parents are also requested to apply broad spectrum water resistant sunscreen 20 minutes prior to their child arriving at the Centre each morning. The centre also has sunscreen available for your convenience. Depending on the child's age, educators will either re-apply or advise each child to apply sunscreen periodically throughout the day 20 minutes before any sun exposure to ensure maximum protection. For further information and guidelines, please see our Sun Safety Policy.

Child related accidents and injuries

Accidents and injuries occur even in the safest environment. Any accidents that occur at the centre are recorded in an Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Record form. If your child has been injured during the day you will be required to sign the Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Record form, indicating you have been made aware of the incident. If necessary, you will be contacted to collect your child. If you cannot be contacted and your child requires medical attention, we will take the necessary required steps. Any medical expenses incurred will be your responsibility.

On the Enrolment Form, parents must provide the centre with the names, contact numbers and addresses of at least two authorised nominees (emergency contacts) who can collect their child in case of an emergency or illness. When contacted by the Centre Director or their delegate, the parents, or a nominated emergency contact must personally come to the Centre to collect their sick or injured child as soon as possible.

Infectious Diseases & Illnesses

We use the publication Staying Healthy in Childcare as our main guidance for managing infectious diseases. If your child is showing signs of illness or infectious disease while in our care, we will contact you and request that you collect your child. Please refer to our Infectious Diseases and Immunisation Policy for further information.



SAFETY & SECURITY

Our priority is providing your child with a safe, clean and nurturing environment. All our centres are only accessible via single-entry security keypad access and there are no external entry points to the playground or outdoor areas. After you have signed your child in using the kiosk please escort your child to their classroom to meet their educators.



Our Commitment to Child Safety and Protection

Our organisation has a strong commitment to child safety, wellbeing and protection, through implementing and adherence to the Child Safe Standards and the Information Sharing Scheme. This commitment extends to all children in our service and community with an aim for children to feel safe, secure and supported. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and we have a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and harm. We acknowledge the importance of our organisation and community to be committed to culturally safety of aboriginal children, the cultural safety for culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and safety of children with a disability.

All educators are trained in first aid and asthma & anaphylaxis care and no educators are present without a current Working With Children Check (WWCC). We hold our child protection, safety and security procedures in the highest regard and will not compromise on safety when it comes to the protection of your children.

Children may only be collected from the centre by those people nominated on their 'Enrolment Form'. We are only permitted to release children who have been authorised to collect the child. The person collecting the child must be over the age of 18 years and photo identification will be required if the person collecting the child is not known to the educator.

An electronic record is kept of every child's daily arrival and departure times and the adult responsible for picking up and dropping off the child must sign in using the electronic kiosk. Please notify the centre as soon as possible if your child will be absent on any scheduled day.

Educators practice the centre 'Evacuation Procedure' with children on a regular basis. The educators and children evacuate the service and assemble at the designated assembly area.

COMPLIANCE, POLICIES & PROCEDURES

We are assessed and approved under the Education and Care Services National Law Act and Education and Care Services National Regulations.

We have developed a comprehensive set of policies and procedures so children receive consistent high quality education and care. Policies and procedures provide parents with clear information and guidelines about what to expect from us and what we expect of our families. We systematically and continuously review our procedures and policies in consultation with families and educators. Our policies are available for review at any time and your feedback is valued.

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| 89 Education, Curriculum and Learning Policy | 13 Water Safety Policy |
| 44 Curriculum and Planning Policy | 22 Emergency Evacuation Policy |
| 82 National Quality Framework Policy | 72 Interaction with Children Policy |
| 92 Health and Wellbeing Policy | 79 Staff Arrangement Policy |
| 35 Anaphylaxis Policy | 11 Supervision Policy |
| 36 Asthma Policy | 9 Behaviour Guidance Policy |
| 85 Diabetes Policy | 1 Enrolment Policy |
| 88 Child Safe Environment Policy | 45 Transitions & Routines Policy |
| 28 Nutrition, Food, Beverage & Dietary Requirements Policy | 49 Transition to School and Other Organisations Policy |
| 29 Food Safety & Hygiene Policy | 66 Fee Policy |
| 27 Health & Hygiene Policy | 78 Governance of Service, Management and Educator Policy |
| 32 Infectious Diseases and Immunisation Policy | 16 Privacy and Confidentiality Policy |
| 87 Medical Conditions Policy | 7 Complaints and Grievance Policy |
| 33 Medication Policy | 12A Child Safe Standards Policy |
| 40 Rest Time/Sleep Policy | 12B Child Protection and Wellbeing Policy |
| 31 Illness Policy | |
| 42 Sun Protection and Safety Policy | |

Insurance

We have a public liability insurance policy that covers the cost of damages awarded in respect of personal injury and property damage for which the company or its employees are found to be legally liable. The policy does not respond automatically in the event of an accident. There must be a finding of negligence by a court, or a decision by the insurer to settle the claim out of court.



NEW FAMILY CHECKLIST

We aim to ensure that parents have all the necessary information so your children feel settled and excited to start at our centre.

Have you received a tour of the centre and received our welcome email?	Yes / No
Have you contacted Centrelink/myGov to obtain information and update your information? (including authorising your child's attendance in the mygov app, website or via telephone)	Yes / No
Have you been informed of the centre's rating and assessment status and our quality improvement plan?	Yes / No
Have you been introduced to educators?	Yes / No
Enrolment Form, CWA and Direct Debit Authority Form completed?	Yes / No
Have you been informed of the centre policies and procedures including; Open-Door Policy, Sun Safety Policy, Emergency Management Plan, Immunisation Policy, and Medical Conditions Policy and Procedures?	Yes / No
Advised of hours of operation, fee policy and schedule; including charges for public holidays, sick days and absent days?	Yes / No
Have you been informed of the Immunisation Policy and the need to maintain your child Immunisation Record in the enrolment system?	Yes / No
Completed Medication Conditions Form and uploaded into enrolment system? (if applicable)	Yes / No
Have you been informed about the various Educator-Parent communication methods used within the centre?	Yes / No
You have access to the portal and app? (Downloaded the App and turned on notifications.)	Yes / No
Discussed the curriculum and the features of our educational programs? Completed the All About Me form and your Child's Learning Plan?	Yes / No
Been shown the sign in and out Kiosk?	Yes / No
Reviewed the recommendations for what your child needs to bring?	Yes / No
Been provided a centre calendar of events and discussed upcoming events?	Yes / No



Mildura Central

EARLY LEARNING CENTRE



PHONE 03 5023 3214
EMAIL milduracentral@mychildelc.com.au
ADDRESS Mildura Central Early Learning Centre
145 - 149 Lime Ave
Mildura, VIC 3500

OPENING HOURS

Our Centre is open 6:30am to 6:30pm,
Monday to Friday.