

## Welcome to Weston Creek Children's Centre

Welcome you to our service! We hope that this information booklet will act as a valuable resource. Please use this book as a reference for policies and procedures within the centre. The service also has comprehensive policy manuals; please feel free to borrow them at any time.

Weston Creek Children's Centre is a community based not for profit childcare service managed by Projects on Parkinson Ltd. We are open Monday to Friday from 7.45am to 6.00pm 49 weeks per year. We close for approximately 3 weeks over the Christmas/New Year period. Fees are not charged during this time.

We hope your time here with us is happy, fun and rewarding. We work hard to ensure that all experiences for children in our early childhood program are positive. We work to ensure that you feel comfortable and secure in the knowledge that your child is being cared for by early childhood professionals who work hard to ensure that your child's individual needs are being met.

This booklet has been written to ensure that you have information you can access on the services provided and written information to keep at home referring to at a later date. This booklet does not replace the valuable information that you receive on a day-to-day basis in talking to staff so we encourage you to communicate with staff at every opportunity.

Information is available, specific to each program offered at the centre. This will be provided upon enrolment at the centre.

When you enrol, please make sure you collect the following documents:

- Enrolment form – this lists all of the particular details about your child and your family.
- Child Care Benefit and Rebate Information
- The Service Philosophy and supporting documents

Please bring your child's personal health record for staff at the centre to copy.



**Please use our website regularly to keep updated with things happening within the service.**

**[www.westoncreekchildrenscentre.com](http://www.westoncreekchildrenscentre.com)**

## Your child's well being

### Settling in and orientation

When starting in any children's service for the first time, parent and guardians may feel anxious about leaving their children. The approach to settling children in will be dependent upon many factors including the age and developmental level of the child. To make those first few days at Weston a happy experience please talk to the Centre Director and program staff to discuss your child's unique strengths, interests and abilities. This will help us to settle your child into the program.

Pre-enrolment visits are highly recommended. This gives your child opportunity to meet Educators and see how the program works before their first day. Parents and guardians are encouraged to contact the centre through the day to check on their child.



Call 6288 5380 to speak with our staff.

We have plenty of information available to help you and your child settle in. If you would like some, please do not hesitate to ask.

### Delivery and collection of children

- Parents must sign the register located in the children's rooms on arrival and departure. Signing the register is extremely important so that we know who is present during the day. Please note that if you do miss on any occasion to sign in or out our administration, staff will email or ring you to complete the missing requirements.
- If someone different is collecting your child please complete the section in the enrolment package outlining people who may be most likely to collect your child. Make sure program staff and the Director are aware of someone else collecting your child. Please make sure that this person has photo identification ready if we have not met them before.
- When you leave your child, it is essential that you hand your child over to one of our staff. It is also important to let staff know how your child is, whether routine times for departure have changed. It can also assist staff to hear about upset nights or incidents that may have occurred since their last visit to the centre.



### Meals and Nutrition

We provide healthy menus for morning and afternoon tea. Please consult with the program staff to see what is on your child's menu. We provide lots of fruit, toast, muffins and crumpets, yoghurt and cheese. We provide milk and water. If your child requires another type of milk drink please provide the formula, soymilk, rice milk or any other type of milk. Please make sure you prepare your child's formula in a safe and hygienic manner. You might like to consider using a cool bag to keep bottles in before arriving at the service. This ensures milk feeds are kept at a safe temperature until they can be stored in the fridge at the service.

Families are to supply lunch for their children. We encourage nutritious healthy lunches which follow the five food groups and eight dietary guidelines. We encourage whole foods wherever possible and limiting processed foods and snacks that are full of preservatives and empty calories. Please ensure you prepare your child's food in a safe and hygienic way. We recommend an ice pack in your child's lunch to keep the food cool on the way to the service during warmer months. This makes sure food is kept at a safe temperature until it can be safely stored in a fridge at the service.

If you are finding it a challenge at any time to put together, a healthy lunch please ask us for suggestions or books that may provide you with some ideas. We always have a healthy eating display at reception. Food can be heated in the microwave; all containers need to be labelled. Our nutrition policy and associated documents may be helpful for you to read.

### **Rest and relaxation**

Your child's needs for rest and sleep will be dependent upon your child's age and normal routine. Approaches to sleep will vary for each group of children so it is advisable for parents to discuss their child's needs with staff. Children who do not sleep will be encouraged to have a rest time depending upon their needs. For example, non-sleeping preschool children may have a quiet half hour after lunch listening to a story or music. Please make sure you always speak with your child's Educators in regards to your child's specific needs for rest. Sometimes it takes a little while for children to develop a good sleeping routine when new to the centre. Our Educators are always here to work through sleep routines so never hesitate to discuss your thoughts with them.

### **Footwear and clothing**

Please provide sufficient changes of clothing for your child's visit. This usually means two complete changes of clothing. Children learn through a play-based program so it is essential they come to childcare in clothing that can take the wear and tear of the day. Paint, sand, mud and other craft activities are normal activities children are encouraged to participate in. Please save the best or favourite outfits for non-child care days. Children must be appropriately clothed for the weather. Please supply sunhats year round, beanies and warm coats in winter. Children are not allowed to wear thongs, crocs or sandals that do not have sufficient coverage. Likewise, strappy dresses and tops must be avoided. We follow our Sun smart policy and encourage children's skin to be covered for outdoor play. All clothing articles should be labelled. Children in-group care usually have similar clothing of the same sizes. It can become difficult at times to determine whose is whose! Please remember to pack disposable nappies for your child's nappy changes through the day. Again, appropriate shoes are necessary – no thongs or crocs please!



### **Sun protection**

SPF 30 + sunscreen is provided by the service and is applied to all children prior to exposure to the sun. We have a sunscreen station at reception that you are welcome to

use each morning when you arrive. When you have applied sunscreen to your child, please indicate that you have done so on the sign on sheets. If your child is allergic or sensitive to generic brand sunscreen, please pack a suitable sunscreen in their bag. Please dress your child appropriately for sun protection. Children do not play outside between 11am and 3pm during hotter months outside as per our policy. Our service is a Sun Smart service. We encourage you to take a copy of our Sun Smart policy to ensure you are aware of our policies and procedures. This policy also provides information about how to ward of the long term effects of sun and minimising the risk of skin cancer.

### **Allergies and medical conditions**

It is essential that information about allergies, medical conditions or special dietary requirements be shared fully with the Director and Educators on enrolment. If there are, any known changes or developments in any of these areas over time the Director should be notified of these. All primary staff should be familiar with these conditions. We have various types of forms which need to be completed when situation change. These are available for you to freely take from areas within reception. Please note that should your child require medication such as antihistamine or epi pen for allergic reactions you must supply these at all times. Children who require these medications/epi pens will not be allowed to remain at the service under our care without these medications.

### **Quality Assurance**

Parents and guardians are entitled to be assured that the quality of the services offered to them and their children are of a suitable standard.

Quality assurance measures are in place to ensure these standards. External quality assurance processes include licensing and the National Quality Framework. We are now working under the Early Years Learning Framework and will abide by the new National Quality Standards that commence in 2012.

Internal quality assurance measures include policies and procedures in relation to staff development, learning environments and adherence to the Australian Early Childhood Code of Ethics. In April of 2016, we were awarded Exceeding the National Quality Standard and were very excited to see our hard work acknowledged by this fabulous achievement.

### **Licensing**

Weston Creek Children's Centre is licensed by the Department of Children's Services to provide care for 105 children within the centre. Licensing advisors inspect the premises, programs, equipment, staffing, policies, and procedures before issuing the licence. Occasional spot checks are undertaken by licensing advisers throughout the year to ensure the service continues to meet licensing requirements.



## **National Quality Standards and The Early Years Learning Framework**

Both of these systems and frameworks ensure Early Childhood services across Australia provide high quality care and education. Services must participate to undertake to continue to receive Childcare Benefit for families using the service. Please watch out for displays throughout the centre outlining what areas of the process we are working on. Please speak with your child's Educators regarding the processes. Our website is also a good point of reference.

## **Staff Development/ Professional Development**

The greatest impact on the quality of the program offered to children is the skills, expertise and knowledge of the Educators that manage and work within the programs. Educators at Weston Creek Children's Centre are encouraged to participate within in service training courses that improve their skills. Staff are provided with many opportunities for development throughout the year. Whole team staff development opportunities are provided through monthly staff meetings.

## **Students within the centre**

One strategy is to ensure that future staff practices are of a high standard is to offer practical placements to students undertaking their studies. Weston Creek Children's Centre accepts students from high school, college and university level. Students are never allowed to supervise children on their own and they themselves are always supervised by our staff. We regularly have students from Canberra Institute of Technology and the Australian Catholic University on placement.



## **Learning Environments**

Learning environments support the quality of the interactions that children experience with staff. Learning environments must be well planned stimulating and challenging, yet safe. Considerable thought and assessment is undertaken in purchasing new equipment and materials. A commitment is undertaken in each annual budget for the replacement of the equipment and materials. Family suggestion for the purchase of new materials is always welcome!

## **AECA code of ethics**

The Australian Early Childhood Association has developed a code of ethics to inform and guide practices when working with children and families. Staff at Weston Creek Children's Centre has adopted this code of ethics.

## **Illness and exclusion**

**This chart outlines conditions that require exclusion from childcare services. Use this as a reference but please consult the Centre Director or program staff should you have specific questions.**

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Exclusion</b>
Campylobacter	Exclude until diarrhoea has ceased
Chicken pox	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least 5 days
Cold sores	Until the lesion has dried up
Conjunctivitis	For 24 hours after commencing treatment and to be excluded until discharge from eye has completely ceased.
Diarrhoea	Child must be excluded for at least 48 hours after the child is symptom free
Diphtheria	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received following at least 2 negative throat swabs, the first not less than 24 hours after finishing a course of antibiotics and the other 48 hours later.
Giardia	All persons to have Giardia, whether as an isolated case or during an epidemic should be excluded until treatment has been given and diarrhoea has ceased.
Hand, foot and mouth disease	Exclude until all blisters have dried and there is no longer fluid in any of the sores
Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received. Not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness
Hepatitis B	No exclusion necessary
HIV/AIDS	No exclusion is necessary unless a child has a secondary infection
Impetigo	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing
Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by an appropriate health authority
Measles	Exclude for 4 days after the onset of the rash. Immunised contacts not excluded. Unimmunised until 14 days after the first day the appearance of the rash
Meningitis (bacterial)	Exclude until well
Meningococcal infection	Exclude until well
Mumps	Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down

Poliomyelitis	Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Re-admit after receiving medical certificate for recovery
Rubella	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least 4 days after onset of rash
Streptococcal Infection	Exclude until the child has received antibiotics for at least 24 hours and the person feels well
Tuberculosis	Exclude until a medical certificate from an appropriate health authority is received
Thrush	24 hours after treatment has commenced
Whooping cough	Exclude the child for 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment
Vomiting	Exclude for 48 hours after the child became symptom free
Head lice	Children are allowed to return to the centre after appropriate treatment has taken place and there are no live lice or eggs in the child's hair
Scabies	24 hours after treatment has commenced
Ringworm	24 hours after treatment has commenced
Worms	Until worming treatment has been given

**All children who have coughs, colds or flu must only attend if they are well enough to cope with the demands of group care. If a child is prescribed antibiotics, they must not return until they have been on the antibiotics for 24 hours.**

**It is the policy of Weston Creek Children's Centre that all children who have had a temperature (over 38 degrees Celsius), experienced vomiting or diarrhoea are not allowed to attend the centre for the following 24 hours (48 hours in the case of vomiting and diarrhoea). We have a comprehensive infectious disease and health policy. This will be provided upon enrolment at the service.**

### **Health and Hygiene**

The age and learning nature of children means that infectious disease are easily transmitted.

We implement controls to try to stop the spread of contagious diseases such as:

- Strict hand washing and drying practices by staff and children
- Cleaning all equipment and surfaces and rooms
- Staff wear gloves when changing nappies and when treating children who have an accident
- The children's hats and sheets are sent home to be laundered week

It is centre policy that you must wash your hands and your child's hands when you arrive each day in the children's bathrooms. Studies have proven that this is a most effective way to reduce the introduction of germs into the classroom. We ask that parents use the

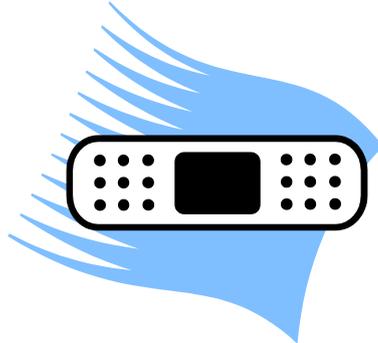
antibacterial hand wash located on the wall outside of each classroom when they arrive to collect their child, before entering the room.



## Emergency Evacuation

There may well be an occasion where we would need to evacuate the building; such as in the case of a fire, bomb scare, storm, etc. Emergency evacuation procedures are posted in all rooms. We have a practice evacuation every second month. Should there be an occasion when we need to evacuate the building the following occurs.

- The signal is activated by blowing a whistle
- The children are evacuated to the rear of the building on the right side closest to the Irish Club.
- The Director contacts emergency services and collects family contact details
- The attendance record and medications are collected
- The children are then checked off the attendance book. This is one of the reasons we insist you fill out the attendance book each time your child is left at the service. If we were unable to return to the building, we would endeavour to contact all families to collect children.



## Managing Injuries and First Aid

**No matter how careful we are, accidents sometimes happen. It is a compulsory part of employment at Weston Creek Children's Centre that all Staff must be trained in first aid.**

In the event of minimal injury – (bumped knees, scratches etc) we will:

1. Implement first aid procedure
2. We may ring you and advise you of what has happened
3. We will complete an accident notification advising you of the injury and the first aid given and you will be asked to sign this notification

In the event of a minor accident we will –

1. Implement first aid procedure
2. Ring you and inform you of what has happened and may ask you to take your child to the doctor.
3. If we can not contact you we will contact your emergency contacts

4. We will complete an accident notification advising you of the injury and the first aid given and you will be asked to sign this notification.

In the event of a major accident, we will:

1. Implement first aid procedure
2. Ring an ambulance and parents
3. Go to the nearest hospital
4. One staff member will accompany your child and meet you at the hospital
5. We will complete an accident notification advising you of the injury and first aid given and you will be asked to sign the notification

## **Safety Precautions**

The service strictly adheres at all times to the staff to child ratios set by the Office of childcare. These supervision ratios are:

- 0-2 years – 1 staff member to 4 children
- 2-3 year olds – 1 staff member to 5 children
- 3-6 year olds – 1 staff member to 11 children

We always aim to have more staff than these ratios to allow for a better quality program to all children.

Parents and guardians can help staff to keep the service a safe place for children by observing the following:

1. If you open a door or gate please shut it behind you
2. Please do not smoke on the premises
3. Do not allow your child to bring plastic bags, matches, glass jars, rubber bands or ropes into the centre
4. Do not bring anything in your child's bag that would be a safety issue. Please make sure all medication whether prescription or non-prescription is taken out of your child's bag. This is essential.
5. Provide your child with footwear, which is safe for physical activities. Thongs and crocs are not suitable footwear.

## **Court Orders**

Please advise the Director on commencement of enrolment if:

- You have a current court order in relation to custody and access to your child or children, and
- At any stage custody arrangements are changed

## **Parent/Guardian Focus**

If you have concern, it is always best to firstly address the person most involved. You should always share your concerns even if they appear minor to you.

If your concern is not adequately addressed you can take this concern to someone in a higher position. The following represents the lines of communication in relation to staff at the Weston Creek Children's Centre:

Assistant  
Lead Educator  
Centre Director

If it is most difficult for you to share your concern with the person most involved do not hesitate to share your concerns with the person next in line. This is better than never having your concerns addressed.

**Remember most concerns can be remedied quickly and easily – but only if they are shared.**

### **Parent/Guardian Involvement**

The best outcome for children and families can only be achieved if parents and staff are involved in a partnership with staff. Involvement for parents or guardians can be achieved in numerous ways. The following list provides a few ideas for parents to consider. A parent/guardian may like to:

- Provide advice, suggestion regarding their child's needs, interests and strengths.
- Become involved in any working groups as they arise
- Donate recyclable art items
- Attend information sessions
- Meet with staff to discuss their child's progress
- Participate in social functions
- Assist on excursions
- Post celebration notices on the noticeboard
- Participate in fund raising ventures

The level of involvement that individual parents or guardians choose will vary greatly. If you have a new suggestion or way you would like to become involved let the Director know.

### **Parent/Guardian consent**

On enrolment, parents will be asked to provide consent to numerous procedures. These include emergency treatment, administration of medication and person authorised to collect children. Other consent may be sought for excursion, referral, photographing and videoing.

### **Updating personal information**

Any time your details change, you must let the Director know so your child's enrolment form can be updated. These forms are available to you at reception. Alternatively, you can email anytime with up to date information.

### **Communication**

Information exchange can take on many forms within Weston Creek Children's Centre. It is recognised that the need for information varies from family to family. Systems for sharing information may vary a little from program to program. Please speak with your child's carers about what suits your needs best. Some of our communication methods are as follows:

- Daily verbal and written communication is complemented by information sharing strategies such as interviews and information nights.
- Information of interest to all families across the service is displayed on notice boards. Notice boards should be checked daily.

- Celebration boards can be used by staff and parents to share something special happening within their family.
- Newsletters are distributed frequently and can be collected from table displays
- Each program has information displayed outlining news special to that program
- Our Website
- Emails



## Access and Equity

No child or family should be discriminated against in any manner including gender, age, race, language, ability, religion, family background, culture or national origin. Decisions regarding access to services are based on the needs of the child or family, the funding guidelines and capacity to provide the service.

Any incident of discrimination should be reported to the Director. In addition, Weston Creek Children's Centre also holds the right to refuse care or enrolment to parents/guardians who may become hostile, aggressive or abusive.

**Financial Goals** - In managing the operation of Weston Creek Children's Centre, Projects on Parkinson Ltd aims to maintain quality services as affordable as possible.

## Financial commitment for permanent bookings

When confirming permanent bookings for children, parents or guardians are making a commitment to cover the costs of their children's enrolment through paying fees in accordance with the services policies. Given that this is the only income received, it is crucial that parents meet their financial commitments.

A number of financial policies are in place to ensure that Weston Creek is a viable and successful service.

## Payment of fees

All permanent bookings must be paid for irrespective of time used. This includes occasions when your child is away on holidays, public holidays or illness.



Fees for permanent bookings should be paid as per the invoice provided to families via email. You are able to pay by cash, personal cheque, and direct debit via your credit card or by direct deposit into the centre's bank account. The fees box is available to place these payments in, located at reception. Please use the envelopes provided and record –

- Your child's name
- Fee amount enclosed

Please note that we cannot provide change so it is important that you provide the correct amount of credit will be carried over on to your account. A receipt will be provided to you via email.

Please collect the separate information page and policy statement for further information on financial obligations.

### **Changing or cancelling care**

Two weeks written notice is required if a permanent booking is to be cancelled or to altered (eg changing days of care)

### **Yearly Enrolment costs**

Each year when families re-enrol for the following year, there is a \$50 enrolment acceptance fee payable. New families enrolling for the first time will need to pay a \$150 acceptance fee when accepting the position as offered. These payments are non-refundable should you decide later to cancel your enrolment with the service.

### **Late fees**

The service closes at 6pm. A \$40 fee is charged if your child is collected after 6pm. There is also an additional \$2 per minute charge per child for each minute the child remains after 6pm; if it is obvious that you will be late in collecting your child please contact the centre.

If a child is not collected at 6pm staff will endeavour to call parents and emergency contacts by phone. If no one can be contacted after 6.15pm staff will contact family services and the child/ren will be placed in appropriate care.



### **Child care Benefit and Child Care Rebate**

All of the places at Weston are approved for childcare benefit and you may be eligible for the childcare rebate. You need to organise this through the family assistance office. Administrative Staff are happy to assist you with any initial enquires about either of these subsidies.

Special childcare benefit is available for parents who fall into extreme cases of hardship. The Director is the only person authorised to approve such benefit. Please contact the Director should you fall into hardship.

### **Allowable absences through child care benefit**

Childcare benefit allows for 42 absences through the year when childcare benefit still applies to fees. After these absences are used, full fees must be paid for absent days. For more information, please see administration staff.

### **Confidentiality and Privacy**

The information that Weston Creek Children's Centre obtains with regard to families, staff and volunteers and others is regarded as confidential and is respected as such. Storage of information collected is secured to prevent access to persons not entitled to this information.

Information is not disclosed either verbally or in writing without prior consent of the individual, or in the case of a child, the legal guardian of that child. Exceptions to this disclosure policy include emergencies requiring immediate or urgent action, in situations of neglect or abuse or to fulfil government requirements.

If parents or guardians wish to share information, which is sensitive or confidential, a private meeting should be arranged so that others cannot overhear the conversation.

Parents/Guardians and staff have the right to access documentation and records which relate directly to them. If the information contained in such documents is incorrect, out of date misleading or irrelevant, the individual has the right to ask that such records be amended.

WE HOPE YOUR TIME WITH US IS ENJOYABLE AND MEMORABLE. WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU IN YOUR PARENTING ROLE, SO IF WE CAN ASSIST IN ANY WAY JUST ASK.

**Our Team comprises of fantastic qualified, experienced and sincere staff that are very committed to the service here at Weston. We really cannot emphasise enough how we are here in every respect to support your family!**

Regards, the team at Weston Creek Children's Centre

Last updated 7/11/17