

Nola-Dee Child Care Centre

Parent Handbook



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Welcome to Nola-Dee



**Service Provider
Judith Huang**

I would like to extend a warm hand of welcome to you from all the educators and staff at Nola-Dee. For many parents, leaving their children in someone else's care can be a very stressful time. We want to work in partnership with you to make the transition into child care and kindergarten as stress free as possible. Having worked as a young mum, I remember the guilt I felt when leaving my children. Therefore I want to work with you to ensure you are able to go about your day, without feeling worried or guilty about leaving your child. Our doors are always open and you are welcome to visit the centre and experience the programs we have on offer. We work hard to make you feel at home and part of the Nola-Dee family and want you to feel comfortable to visit at any time.

Partnership means working together, so your input and feedback are essential if the quality of care and education for your child is to be high. Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have questions, queries or comments. I look forward to beginning this journey with you and your family

CENTRE PHILOSOPHY

We believe that each 'child first and foremost' and has the basic needs for love, acceptance and nurturing. This is inclusive of children regardless of their, gender, ethnicity, social circumstances and disabilities. Underlying this is our belief that every child is an unique individual with inherent qualities, skills and potential.

At Nola-Dee we aim to provide children, families and community with an atmosphere that is warm, welcoming, nurturing and fun. We offer a safe and supportive environment for children to be themselves and to learn to develop at full potential.

Our Educators recognise the importance of children's early years of development and this is shown through our approach of guided play and learning. We aim to offer opportunities that will encourage children's development by: **1.** Making sure that they feel **Belonging**-this gives them security and confidence to form connection with people and environment around them. **2.** Ensuring that they are comfortable of **Being** who there are. Children will build self-esteem knowing their identity and through that beginning to understand social diversity and gender differences, thus begin to make their choices and become their own decision maker. **3.** Once children start to build their relationship with others and learn who they are they being the process of **Becoming** who they want to become. In that, they are beginning the foundation by showing their interest and strength in their play. This allows us to formulate our program.

We believe children learn and grow at different pace. Therefore, we allow children to accomplish each learning experiences at their own pleasure.

Educators encourage children to develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity. These dispositions attribute to every child's long term goals of Belonging, Being and Becoming.

Furthermore, we believe it is important for children to learn about other cultures to appreciate the world around them, especially to be empathic with people of different cultures. It is therefore important that children participate in diverse multicultural activities where they will learn to respect differences amongst diverse cultures and people. Children being unique individuals learn at their own pace and will develop skills and abilities when they are developmentally ready.

In addition we understand that the first 5 years in a child's life is critical to their ability to adjust to normal society and succeed in whatever endeavours they may undertake. As a consequence children need a happy, safe, secure and stimulating learning environment where they will develop and learn in stable, sensitive and challenging surroundings. As children's confidence and self-esteem increases and their skills and abilities continue to develop, children will gradually acquire decision making abilities which are important to their future social interaction and work relationships success in our complex social structure.

Educators maintain professional practice by ensuring our 'image of the child' is of a capable, curious, independent, knowledgeable, resourceful and unique individual. We aspire to work in partnership with parents, families and the community to promote and instil a strong sense of wellbeing, identity, community, active learning and communication.

Building positive relationships is integral to Nola-Dee CCC. We strive to achieve open communication between educators, children, parents and families, management and support agencies. Parents and families are encouraged to be involved by providing feedback, and contributing their skills and talents to our centre.

Educators are valued and respected for their individual strengths and abilities that they bring to Nola-Dee CCC. Ongoing professional development, and opportunities to liaise with other early childhood professionals, allows educators to continue to create the best environment for children to grow and develop.

We understand that the Framework is based on conclusive evidence from around the world research, that early childhood is a critical period in a child's life in their learning and holistic development especially relating to others. Our philosophy has been structured to reflect this and emphasizes play-based learning with communication, language early numeracy and literacy. Being critical in the early years if a child is to reach maximum potential and succeed in our complex social environment.

In partnership with the families and educators we have arrived at this philosophy and will be doing an annual review as deem necessary.

IMPORTANT POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The first week

The introduction into long day care can be difficult for children and parents. Children's welfare and happiness are the priority of our educators when welcoming new children to the Centre and when assisting the family to settle into the centre environment. It is recognised that families' needs will vary greatly in the orientation process and individual needs will be met as best also.

The following outlines some helpful hints for parents on settling their child into care:

- Make sure you familiarise your child with the environment and the people in the environment (children and adults) by coming in for visits before commencing care.
- Ease your child into care with short stays to begin with. An orientation program that is free of charge will be organised when you first enrol.
- Provide a favourite toy, blanket or comforter to support your child when they are separating from you or settling to sleep. This can help your child feel more secure.
- If your child is unsettled, short visits with you helps your child to gain trust with an unfamiliar environment. These visits can be made on a day when your child is not booked to attend.
- Interactions between educators and parents or educators and other children can produce positive role models and be reassuring. This experience can help to establish trust in an unfamiliar setting.

- Try to talk at home about child care. Mention the names of the educators and other children. Talk about the things the child will be able to do at child care that are fun and enjoyable.
- Talk to the educators about your child, for example, what they like to do; successful ways of settling them to sleep; foods they like and dislike and so on.
- This helps educators to get to know your child.
- When leaving your child it is best to make sure you say goodbye and then leave. Hesitating and not going after you have said your goodbyes, if a child is upset, only confuses them. Reassure your child that everything is alright and you will return later, this can help them to settle.
- It sometimes helps to establish a routine when leaving. For example, giving your child a cuddle and giving them to an educator or sitting down with them for a short play or reading a book together then leaving.
- At first some children protest strongly while others may take a day or two to realise that you are leaving them and begin to protest after several days.
- Children soon learn that you do return and in the mean time they are well cared for.

THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The educators at Nola-Dee are committed to the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education. The Early Years Learning Framework describes the principles, practice 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 as play is the best vehicle for young children's learning providing the most appropriate stimulus for brain development.

The Framework also recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development. Educators aim to create positive learning environments and guide experiences for each child in conjunction with their family. Educators will observe children and facilitate their learning to provide each child with an individualised portfolio by documenting their learning throughout the year. Children and their families will be encouraged to participate in the ongoing process to promote engaged learning.

GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR

Our service, in partnership with parents, aims to ensure all educators form positive relationships with children that make them feel safe and supported in the service. Educators will encourage positive relationships between children and their peers as well as with educators and volunteers at the service.

Educators follow the Relationships with Children policy which extends across every centre giving consistency of expectation in all rooms. This policy allows the children to develop self-discipline, a respect for others, property and self. The policy aims to:

Give all children the opportunity to expand their experiences of life in a productive, safe environment that allows individuals the right to safety, tolerance, self-expression, cultural identity, dignity and the worth of an individual, and honesty in dealing with peers and caregivers

- Be taught to respect the rights and needs of others by foreseeing the outcome of their behaviour and the consequences of their behaviour
- To encourage the individual social development of each child.

If you require further information on this policy, please ask staff and refer to policy book located in the foyer.



Belongings

Please ensure all belongings are clearly labelled such as dummies, clothes etc. Lost property will be displayed for parent collection in your child's room. Parent cooperation in labelling assists the Centre in keeping your child's belongings together.

What to bring

- A change of clothing that is weather appropriate (younger children- especially those toilet training will need extra changes). Please ensure all clothes are named.
- A hat – a wide brimmed or legionnaire's style
- A security item for rest time (if required).
- Babies bottles will need to be brought to the centre
- Nappies (depending on children's age)

Clothing

Parents are advised to send their children to the Centre in comfortable, inexpensive clothing. The children need to be able to move around during their play period and should be unimpaired by clothing. While paints, etc. will come out in the wash, accidents do happen so it is best to send the children along in their "less than good clothes". Young children enjoy and need "messy" play with paint, clay, sand, water and mud.

The Centre will only have a limited supply of spare clothing. Please supply at least one change of clothing and underclothing in case of accidents.

Please mark your child's clothing and replace name tags if they fade in the wash. Ensure clothing is weather appropriate.

Please ensure that toddlers have about three complete changes of clothing and plenty of training pants.

Please do not dress your child in clothing with cords e.g. shorts, hats etc. As these have the potential to become caught on equipment and may cause serious harm to your child. Singlet tops and thongs are not permitted in warmer weather.



Partnership with families

We believe the best way to work with you and your child is by building a partnership of care. To do this we want you to feel that;

You're given lots of information about what is happening and asked for your views

Communication & Educators

What is the best way to communicate with you?

Everybody has a different communication style and time for communication. We understand that mornings and afternoons can be a little rushed, and not the best time to discuss your child. We have many types of communication we use for families in the centre just like you.

Please feel free at any time by phone, email or in person, to discuss your child's progress, relationship, interest and experiences.

Confidentially & Discretion

Information received through written and spoken communication with families will be treated with discretion.

At any time if you require a private discussion with our staff please inform us. This can happen face to face or by phone.

How do you like to be communicated with?

- Newsletter
- Phone calls to your work
- Emails
- Letters
- Face to face

What Can You Expect From Staff?

Staff will make efforts to communicate effectively with families.

- Staff will inform families promptly and sensitively of any out of the ordinary incidents affecting your child.
- Staff will share with children's families some of the specific interactions they had with the children during the day

Information on children's eating and sleeping patterns at the centre will be provided to families through verbal communication and daily boards in each room.

Hours of Operation

Centre hours are from 7.30am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday, 52 weeks of the year. Nola-Dee Child Care is closed only on Public Holidays.

ENROLMENTS

A completed Enrolment Application must be returned to the centre before care can commence.

Under Australian Government "Priority of Access Guidelines, the law applies to filling child care places under these priorities:

1. A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
2. A child of a single parent or parents who satisfy the work/training/study test under section 14 of the 'A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999.
3. Any other child.

COURT ORDERS

Parents must notify the Centre if there are any Court Orders affecting residency of their children and a copy is required for the Centre. Without a Court Order we cannot stop a parent collecting your child.

Parent Involvement

This is vital to ensure maintenance of a quality service. Your contribution of ideas, experiences and skills are welcomed and greatly valued. You may be able to share your skills and experiences in music, craft, cooking and storytelling etc, to enhance your child's program at the Centre. Please complete your availability or what you can offer the Centre on the enrolment form.

Parents are welcome to visit or call the Centre at any time. If you have any talents or hobbies, we welcome and encourage you to please share them with the children.

If you have any concerns, please see your child's teacher or the Director. We have a grievance policy and procedure if you would like to formally raise any concerns.

WAITING LIST

When our rooms have full enrolment, children's names will be put on a waiting list. Once a position is vacant, parents are then contacted about placement. When parents wish to change days to other days, this can be effective immediately provided the group enrolment is not full. If it is full the child's name will be placed on a waiting list. Once a position is available, days will then be adjusted. Our waiting list does give priority to working parents as per Priority of Access Guidelines. (You will be charged \$20 admin fee if you change days from your normal booked days during the year)

Notice of Withdrawal

It is our policy that parents must give three weeks written notice before they withdraw from the Centre. If notice is not given, 3 weeks of fees will be added onto your account.

Arrival & Departure of Children

It is extremely important you approach one of our early learning professionals to let us know your child has arrived or is about to depart for the day. Only parents/ guardians and authorised nominees are permitted to collect your child from our early learning program. If you're unable to collect your child, please contact us to provide the name of the person who will be collecting your child. To ensure we release your child into the care of the correct person, this person must be an authorised nominee on your child's enrolment form. Photo identification will be requested from any authorised nominee unknown to our early learning professionals so we can ensure the safety of your child at all times. If your child is not collected from the centre and we're unable to contact you, we will contact the authorised nominee listed on your child's enrolment form.

Rest & Sleep

Rest time routine varies according to individual needs. We aim to make rest time a relaxed, pleasant time for all children. We provide mattresses for children. Your child may wish to bring a security item, pillow or blanket to have at rest time. Please feel free to discuss your child's rest needs with staff. We do have a sleep and rest policy in place so if you are interested to read it, please request from the educator.

Food & Nutrition

The convenience of dropping off your child without having to worry about what to pack for lunch, is a benefit to many busy families. In addition to any bottles provided by you, all children are provided with nutritious balanced meals, meeting at least 50% of their daily needs, with a focus on fresh, healthy foods. Our chef prepares a wide variety of fresh meals every day, and the children really enjoy them!



Child Protection

Meeting the needs of children and making sure they are safe in the family is a shared responsibility between individuals, the family, the community and the government. When adults caring for children do not follow through with their responsibilities, are abusive or exploit their positions of power, then it is the child protection system that becomes responsible for taking action. As educators, we're part of the system to protect children and will provide notification to the relevant authority in accordance with state legislation when necessary.

Regular Check ups

We have regular independent, external audits to review a range of aspects concerning safety around our centre - from food handling, to hygiene, to OH&S and more. Each time we receive incredibly high results. Our educators are incredible proud that the hard work they do, and the systems, processes and procedures we have in place, ensure that your children are safe at all times. Nola-Dee CCC maintains a safe and secure environment where children are free to explore and learn more about their world. The approved provider and educators are familiar with regulatory requirements and standards regarding supervision. The education and care service encourages educators to evaluate their supervisory practices and implement plans that increase their awareness of the layout, risk management and supervisory choices within the education and care environment. All educators must hold a current first aid certificate which is renewed when it becomes necessary.

Medical Conditions

To ensure appropriate identification and management of children with medical conditions, we will implement best practice and risk minimisation strategies. This includes the provision of suitable first aid training for all staff to ensure a rapid response in the event of a medical emergency. If your child has a medical condition, you may be asked to complete a medical management plan and action plan to be followed in the event of an incident relating to the specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition. We do have a medical condition policy in place with more details so do request it from the educator if necessary.

Evacuation Procedures

In the event that the service needs to be evacuated, we aim to conduct this in a rehearsed, timely, calm and safe manner to secure the safety of each person using the service. The safety and wellbeing of each child, educator and person using the service is paramount above any other consideration in the time of an emergency or evacuation. Any other procedures will be carried out only if it is safe to do so. An evacuation may be necessary in the event of a fire, chemical spill, bomb scare, earthquake, siege, flood etc.

INCLUSION SUPPORT

Our aim is to provide each child, regardless of their needs and abilities, with a supportive and inclusive environment that allows each child to fully participate in the program. Educators will remain positive, open minded and honest at all times when working with families and external support professionals to most positively meet the additional needs of each child being educated and cared for at the centre.



SUN SAFETY

It's important to have a healthy balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure. Too much of the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Overexposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk.

Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.

This SunSmart Policy has been developed to:

- Ensure all children and educators get some UV for vitamin D.
- Encourage children and educators to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above to minimise skin and eye damage and skin cancer risk.
- Work towards a safe outdoor environment that provides shade for children and educators at appropriate times.
- Assist children to be responsible for their own sun protection.
- Ensure that families and new educators are informed of the service's sun protection policy.

Educators are encouraged to access the SunSmart UV Alert at sunsmart.com.au to find out daily local sun protection times to assist with the implementation of this policy. We use a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities from September to the end of April and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, (the level that can damage skin and eyes.) Our Sunsmart practises consider the special needs of infants.

All babies under 12 months are kept out of direct sun when UV levels are three and above.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR ACCOUNT

Commencement fees

\$250 deposit needs to be paid before commencing at the Centre.

ACCOUNTS

Any change of financial income will alter your gap fee. Invoices are forwarded to families on a fortnightly/monthly basis. Payments are made via direct debit using bank account or credit cards through ipay.

CENTRE FEES

It is the Centre's policy that all accounts are to be paid 2 week in advance at all times.

LATE FEES

If your child is collected from the Centre after 6.00pm, you will be charged a late fee of \$1:00 per minute. Please make sure to pay cash on the spot to the on promises.

Child Care Subsidy Eligibility

Some basic requirements must be satisfied for an individual to be eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy for a child. These include:

- the age of the child (must be 13 or under and not attending secondary school)
- the child meeting immunisation requirements
- the individual, or their partner, meets the residency requirements.

In addition, to be eligible for Child Care Subsidy the individual must be liable to pay for care provided, the care must be delivered in Australia by an approved child care provider, and not be part of a compulsory education program.

How does it work?

There are three factors that will determine a family's level of Child Care Subsidy. These are:

- [Combined Family Income](#)
- [Activity Test](#) – the activity level of both parents
- [Service Type](#) – type of child care service

The Child Care Subsidy will be paid directly to providers to be passed on to families as a fee reduction. Families will make a co-contribution to their child care fees and pay to the provider the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount.

The New Child Care Package will also provide targeted additional fee assistance for vulnerable families through the [Child Care Safety Net](#).

Absences from the Centre

We understand that sometimes due to illness, vacation or other reasons children need to have time away from the early learning program. Please let us know if your child is unable to participate in the program on their usual day/s of attendance. If your child is absent you will need to sign the attendance record indicating your child has been absent.

We recommend you provide documentation to support absence days, including:

- Medical Certificates
- Shared Care Plans (signed by both parents)
- Court Orders

Initial Absence Days

As with most early learning centres and preschools, your child's place is reserved when they are away so the day still needs to be paid for. Each financial year, the Family Assistance Office will pay your child's CCS entitlements for the first 42 absence days. These absences can be for any reason, including public holidays. These initial 42 absence days must be used before any additional absences can be claimed (see below).

Additional Absence Days

You may receive CCB for absence days after the initial 42 days each financial year. For all absences beyond the first 42 absent days, CCS will only be paid 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.

Exceptional Absence Days

You may receive CCB for an additional 20 exceptional absence days after the initial 42 absence days per financial year. These CCS entitlements can be claimed without evidence if documentation is provided for 31 of the initial 42 absence days.

Public Holidays

Our Centre is closed on public holidays. Fees apply for all public holiday closures that fall on your usual day of attendance. CCB will not be paid for public holidays if 42 absences have already been used.

Priority of Access

We comply with the Australian Government's Priority of Access Guidelines for allocating childcare places where the demand for childcare exceeds supply. The guidelines set out three levels of priority, which we must follow when filling vacant places:

- **Priority one** - a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- **Priority two** - a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/ training study test under section 14 of the New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
- **Priority three** - any other child

Within these main categories, priority should also be given to the following children:

- Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- Children in families that include a disabled person
- Children in families that include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold or whose partner is on income support
- Children in families with a non-English-speaking background
- Children in socially isolated families
- Children of single parents.

When there are no vacant places and we are providing care for a child who is a priority 3, under the Priority of Access Guidelines the service may require that child to vacate the place in order to provide a place for a child in priority one or two.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS & INFORMATIVE WEBSITES FOR PARENTS

Department of Education and Training

www.education.vic.gov.au

Family Assistance Office

P. 13 61 50

Australian Childhood Immunisation Register

P. 1800 653 809

Early Childhood Association (ECA)

www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)

P. 1300 422 327

www.acecqa.gov.au

Raising Children Network

The Australian parenting website; comprehensive, practical, expert child health and parenting information and activities covering children aged 0-8 years.

www.education.vic.gov.au

Better Health Channel

Quality consumer health information. Regularly reviewed health and wellbeing information and services. This site is sponsored by the State Government of Victoria. www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au