

PARENT HANDBOOK



www.unleyearlylearning.com.au

Ph:(08) 83573800
Fax:(08) 83573522

**The Director and Staff of Unley Early Learning Centre
extend to you and your child A warm welcome.**

We hope that you and your child will feel happy and secure in the Unley Early Learning Centre environment. We also hope that you will take an active part in its Planning and operation. You can do this by offering ideas and suggestions and/or participating in activities. We would like you to feel free to visit the centre at any time.

We feel that all parents have a right to Quality Childcare that is sensitive to the needs of the Child and is provided within a safe, caring and healthy environment.

The Centre achieves this Philosophy by: -

- Recognizing that each child is an individual.
- Providing Quality Developmental Programmes within the context that learning and play should be fun.
- Employing caring, appropriately Qualified and Experienced Staff who can meet the varying needs of the Children.
- Providing Facilities of a high standard located within a Healthy Environment.
- Ensuring that Parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's needs with Staff.
- Providing Children with Nutritional and Inviting Meals

You and your childcare Staff are partners; working to make sure your child develops and learns in an interesting and secure environment. There are things that you know better than anyone else about your child, such as their likes and dislikes, and personality. This valuable information can help the staff support your child. Childcare Staff are not intended to be a substitute for Parental Care. Even if your child is in care for long hours, you still have the most impact on your child's development.

Staff are an important source of information. They keep individual developmental records for each child. These observations and records assist them to plan a program that suits your child's needs. The things the staff learn and experience with your child can be valuable to you as a parent.

When you are choosing a centre for your children, there are some important things you should look for

Does the centre look clean; the equipment looks safe and in adequate amounts

Is there adequate numbers of staff to care for the children, are they interacting with the children

Do the children look happy and engaged in play?

Does the centre have a warm and friendly atmosphere?

GOALS

Our basic goals of Unley Early Learning Centre are: -

1. To provide a secure, happy and loving environment that will promote positive feelings of trust, acceptance and belonging.
2. To provide a stimulating environment that will encourage and promote the balanced development of the child's mind and body.
3. To positively direct the child to a logical consequence without being punitive i.e. a child who writes on a chair can be expected to wash it off.
4. To encourage children to think of alternative solutions and the possible effects of taking those alternatives.
5. To promote positive feelings of self-worth
6. To encourage independent decision-making and problem solving.
7. To create an environment that increases a child's perception of himself and the world around him.
8. To be flexible, approachable and adaptable.

PHILOSOPHY OF OUR CENTRE

We believe that Childcare is an extension of the Family Unit. Each family is important and we aim to support parents in the care and upbringing of their children in a happy and homely atmosphere.

We believe that each child including special needs and culturally diverse children have the right to reach their full potential. We will provide a safe and nurtured environment in which to encourage, stimulate and develop individual growth.

We believe that children should: -

- Always feel safe, happy and comfortable
- Have opportunities to seek challenges as part of their exploration within a safe environment
- Be given the opportunity to experience a programme aimed at developing the child - physically, emotionally, imaginatively, socially and intellectually
- Have opportunities to develop concentration and problem solving skills
- Have opportunities to express their feelings
- Have opportunities to be involved in activities that develop a positive self-concept and confidence in themselves.
- Be able to grow in independence and to respect the rights of others
- Have a balance between activity and rest
- Develop an appreciation of the wider community through involvement of community, home and the Centre.
- Be encouraged to respect and increase their knowledge and experience of cultural diversity of our community.
- Be encouraged to be involved in the care of the environment.
- Be taught to be loving, caring and to respect individual differences.
- Be encouraged to respect the rights of those in the wider community not just those in their immediate environment.

AIMS

At Unley Early Learning Centre we share with the parents the responsibility for promoting character development, learning activities, laughter and happiness.

There will be a great deal of talking and communicating for language skills are valued.

Development of personal relationships will be at a premium. There will be morning and afternoon snacks, and an excellent midday meal.

At Unley Early Learning Centre the children will learn through doing what is needed to become a contributing member of a small community.

There will be joy and laughter. Our aim will be to strengthen the children's spirit by teaching him/her that learning is a joyful and unique combination of pleasure and curiosity. This will be a source of delight to our Staff.

Courtesy and good manners will be taught.

All Staff are hand picked. They are selected for their professionalism and are involved in the planning and development of programmes.

STAFF AND PARENTS SHOULD WORK HAND IN HAND TO GIVE YOUR CHILD THE BEST POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITIES.

FEES AND BOOKINGS

PAYMENT OF FEES

Fees are to be paid weekly or in advance at all times. Payment should be made at the office, we do not send out accounts. Direct Deposit in to our account can be arranged.

HOLIDAYS

When your child goes on Annual Leave (4 Weeks per year), you are still required to pay. Any additional annual leave taken you pay Full Fee per Child. This is also a holding fee, therefore your child will still have a position at the Centre when returning from annual leave, (Staff are still required and paid over Holidays, rents payable etc.) Childcare benefits entitlements remain payable during these breaks up to a maximum of 30 per Financial Year. This arrangement enables us to keep our weekly fee down.

WHEN BOOKED AND NOT ATTENDING

Anytime that is booked (permanent or full-time booking) **MUST BE PAID** even if the child fails to attend on the day due to illness or if the particular day falls on a Public Holiday.

ALLOWABLE ABSENCES

Childcare Benefit is paid for up to 30 allowable absence days for each child per financial year across all approved Long Day Care Centers and Outside School Hours Care Services.

Allowable Absence Days can be taken for any reason including Holidays. However if your child is sick and absent from care and we receive a Medical Certificate then those days are not deducted from the Allowable Absence Days, so we suggest that if you take your child to the doctors you should ask for a Medical Certificate in case they are not well enough to attend on their booked day. Annual Leave is charged at $\frac{1}{2}$ of the Parents Contribution to a Maximum of 4 weeks per year (20 Days) and the 10 remaining allowable absence days are charged at Normal

NOTICE OF BOOKING CHANGES

Two weeks notice is required for any change to bookings; this is necessary due to amendments of Staff Rosters and Timetables. Specific days booked are charged regardless of attendance. If however your child attends on a different day to the specific day booked, you will be charged for that day also, i.e. both days.

LATE FEE

A late fee of \$15.00 for each 15 minutes or part thereof is charged and is to be paid for at that time. The reason for this is because staff have to be held back and our license for operations ends.

Please ensure you have picked your child up by 6.00pm

CHILDCARE BENEFITS

THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT OFFERS CHILDCARE BENEFITS THROUGH FAMILY ASSISTANCE OFFICE TO ALL ELIGIBLE FAMILIES IRRESPECTIVE OF INCOME.

The amount of the subsidy varies according to the families income

Please note that the weekly fee is still applied during weeks, which include a Public Holiday, as Staff and other overheads must still be paid.

Full fees are charged for ALL other days that your child does not attend including sick days. Except for 4 weeks Annual leave at $\frac{1}{2}$ of the Parent Contribution.

TWO WEEKS NOTICE IS REQUIRED PRIOR TO WITHDRAWING A CHILD FROM CARE, FAILURE TO DO SO WILL NECESSITATE ONE EXTRA WEEK'S FEE'S BEING CHARGED.

Our centre link reference number is **407 237 237 X**

We aim to provide the highest quality care for your children at a most affordable cost to hardworking families. The arrangements above are in place to keep our weekly fees down and to optimize services and vacancies to families. Thank you for your cooperation.

ENROLMENTS

Parents are requested to fill out and return an Enrolment Form and Registration Agreement before commencement. It is important to discuss with us any special needs your child might have and how we can meet them.

Parents will be notified about any other outings or excursions as they arise with consent forms. We offer Orientation visits and these can be organized with the director before you commence care

HOURS OF OPERATION

THE Centre is open 51 weeks a year from 7.00am each weekday (excluding all public holidays) until 6.00pm (Monday - Friday).

SECURITY

Access to the centre is via a code entry door .The code is only available to parents or those authorized to collect children.

COMMUNICATION

A supportive relationship between parents and caregivers must be founded on mutual respect and acceptance of each party as having much to contribute as well as much to learn

You can assist us by detailing your child's temperament, stages of development and likes and dislikes. Please tell us anything you can about your child, changes in sleeping patterns, the cold that seems to be developing, and the reaction to new food or how an activity was enjoyed. More importantly any major events or changes e.g. a trauma in the family should be advised so that we can pay particular attention to any signs of distress etc.

Daily records are used in each section to enable parents to inform Staff about their child e.g. medicines which are to be given, teething problems etc. The Staff also use the daily records to record information about the child for their parents. We will communicate to you in person.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Our centre has over 60 policies and procedures and all of them are available for you to View and or copy. Please do not hesitate to ask. Parent input in to these is extremely valuable to us and we appreciate your contributions

In our Newsletters we will endeavor to inform you of the current policies and procedures and we will invite parents to participate in changes that are made or the formulation of new policies

GRIEVANCES

At Unley Early Learning centre we always strive to provide the highest quality child care possible. We endeavor to carry out our work in a professional manner being sensitive and responsive to the needs of families. As a team of professionals we acknowledge that we constantly need to review, monitor and modify our programs and practices

If there are any aspects of the Centre that you are not happy with please inform the Director. There are forms available in the foyer for you to put it in writing if you prefer

We can't solve problems if we don't know about them. In fact we want to guide your child as you yourself would guide him/her if he/she were at home with you. Please remember that no matter how trivial your concern seems, it is never too trivial to discuss. If something is worrying you- then it is important to us. We request that you raise any concerns that you might have regarding your children

The centre has a grievance policy Available to all parents.

PARENTS NIGHTS

Twice a year we hold parent /staff nights. This provides parents with an opportunity to find out more about what we do, how and why. Parents also have time for an individual chat with the staff from the rooms. We also at various times have guest speakers and welcome suggestions of topics that you would be interested in.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged and welcome to visit the centre and participate in our program, and we regularly send home letters to you that require you to respond and we appreciate all replies.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

It is most important that parents notify us of any changes of address or telephone numbers, so that a contact number is available at all times. Also we ask that you could keep us informed of Immunization or Medical Conditions or any other matters that could help us to maintain Quality Care for your child.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE POLICY

Signing in and out

All children must be accompanied by an adult into the centre and signed in to the attendance folders Located in the rooms. Parents are required to sign their children "in" and "out" each day. Upon arrival at Unley Early Learning Centre parents sign the time of arrival, i.e. 9am and the same procedure applies when departing the Centre. This register is used to confirm numbers in case of an emergency evacuation of the Centre and is a Government Regulation for the payment of Childcare Benefits.

Your child must be personally handed over to a Staff Member

When leaving, the person in charge of your child's group, or another staff member, must know you are taking your child from Unley Early Learning Centre.

It is important that times are correct.

PICKING UP YOUR CHILD

Where someone other than the parents are to collect the child, Unley Early Learning Centre must be notified prior to the person arriving. This may be by way of a note or phone call informing the Staff of the change.

Please notify us immediately if any change in custody arrangements occur. No child will be allowed to leave Unley Early Learning Centre without the consent of either the parent or guardian and identification of that person.

LATE PICK-UPS

If children are collected after 6.30 pm the centre may impose a late fee of \$15.00 per 15 minutes

If at 6.45 parents have failed to notify the centre of when the child/ren will be collected, the centre will phone the emergency contacts to collect the child.

SETTLING CHILDREN IN AND SEPERATION

INTEGRATION INTO THE CENTRE, PARTICULARLY FOR CHILDREN WITH LITTLE EXPERIENCE IN GROUP SETTINGS MUST BE INDIVIDUAL. CHILDREN NEED TO FEEL SECURE in this new environment with many new faces to trust it often helps to bring along something the child is familiar with-a teddy.doll.blanket.etc. In almost all situations children do not remain upset for very long once the parent has left. It takes some children longer than others to settle, and parents need to be understanding and make the separation as positive an experience as possible. Feel free to phone and ask how your child is settling in; it can be re-assuring to know that your child is no longer distressed.

Consistency and predictability are two key ingredients for smooth arrivals and departures.

It is essential that parents make this as easy as possible for their child and the following points may help you do this: -

- Prepare your child by telling them before hand.
- Always leave your child with a care-giver
- Tell your child you will return, and if possible align this with a specific event e.g. an afternoon tea or after you have picked up school children.
- Always say goodbye and never sneak away.
- Do not prolong the separation process, leave once you have said goodbye, don't keep coming back: this only serves to upset your child, as they sense your hesitation.

We offer an Orientation Process, which can be organized with the Director.

SAFETY AND EMERGENCY

We have in place Safety and Emergency Procedures and regularly carry out Fire and Evacuation Drills

The centre is fitted with smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are serviced regularly.

Full procedures are on display in all rooms.

DANGEROUS PRODUCT

All cleaning products are stored in the laundry, kitchen and in locked cupboards in the rooms. The art equipment used is non-toxic and all toys are regularly checked to ensure they are in good repair

Safety and dangerous products are discussed with older children.

LICENSEE

The licensee of Unley Early Learning Centre is Sandra Hands, who has worked in the Childcare Industry for many years and holds a Childcare Certificate from the Dept of Further Education TAFE.

Sandy, a mother of two adult children has been involved in various committee's in the Childcare Industry and the community at large. Her considerable experience in Childcare has been gained over an extended period in a range of demanding jobs. She has extremely high standards and places considerable emphasis on Team Building and Quality Care.

A commitment of high quality affordable childcare and efficient service are the prime features of Sandy's approach to the conduct of activities at Unley Early Learning Centre.

Sandy can be contacted on After Hrs 8370 5815 or (M) 0407 795 543

DIRECTOR

Rhianna Hedley (Sandy's daughter) has worked in the child care industry for ten years and has a diploma in child care. Rhianna, a step mother to one child, has previously been a director for the last few years and has very high standards, her commitment to provide high quality care to children should be commended

STAFFING

Our Qualified Staff have qualifications recognized by Dept. Of Education Children's Services Office. We look to employ Staff who have a strong commitment to caring for children and who have enthusiasm, energy and alertness to observe children in all situations. Our Staff, with qualifications recognized by ,D.E.T.E will implement ongoing Developmental Programmes for all children in our area. Staff are encouraged to attend In-Service Training during the year to achieve awareness regarding new or updated qualifications for the betterment of your child's programmes and Safety. We also regularly host work experience and university students as part of our commitment to continue high standards within the industry,

MANDATORY REPORTING/CHILD PROTECTION

All childcare workers are Mandated Notifiers and any suspected child abuse or neglect cases must be reported to FAYS.

A full policy is available on request.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Staff shall provide each child with appropriate and positive guidance to assist the child to acquire a positive self-concept. Discipline and behavior guidance used by each caregiver will be constructive. Positive and suited to the age of the child

With unacceptable behavior staff may redirect distract remove, use active listening

A full behaviour management policy is available on request

MEDICINES

Please note we do not give children paracetamol unless authorized by a doctor as this could mask serious signs of illness

IF MEDICATION MUST BE ADMINISTERED PLEASE: -

1. A Doctors letter must state the Childs name. The medication , the dose amount, and the Times to be given
2. Place Medication in a plastic bag.
3. Complete Medication Register fully (date and sign).
4. Hand the Medication to the caregiver in charge.

EVEN UN-PERSCRIBED MEDICATION MUST FOLLOW THIS PROCEDURE.

INFORMATION

Daily records are used in each section to enable parents to inform Staff about their child e.g. medicines which are to be given, teething problems etc. The Staff also use the Daily Records to record information about the child for Parents.

Every endeavor is made by Staff Members to provide a safe environment and prevent accidents, but if one does happen it would be recorded in the Accident or Illness Register and you will be asked to sign on collection of your child.

PROGRAMMES

Our Staff Program for individual children and our programmes are displayed in your child's room. These are designed to ensure that all areas of a child's development are encouraged. The various activities are selected so as to stimulate each child to work to their own potential and to extend them a little further in all areas of development. Periods of structured, stimulating activity are interspersed with relaxing free play and quiet, listening games.

If you can share something with us e.g. cultural activity, skill, musical instrument, please pass this on to Staff so they can programme for it.

HEALTH & IMMUNIZATION

Parents are strongly advised to ensure that their children are fully immunized

The centre maintains an age appropriate record on immunization schedules for each child, so please advise the centre after each immunization so that we can maintain these records

If parents choose for their child not to be immunized the child will be excluded from care during an outbreak of infectious diseases at the centre

ACCIDENT/ILLNESS

In case of illness or an accident the child's parents will be notified. Where parents cannot be located the emergency contacts will be notified in an emergency, Unley Early Learning Centre will contact the Doctor and take the child to the local Medical Centre. An ambulance will be called if required. Unley Early Learning Centre will not be liable for any Medical Fees or Transport that may occur.

Staff stringently maintains records of injury and illness

INFECTIOUS DISEASES/SICK CHILDREN

The well being of every child is the highest priority in the centre whilst staff will minimize cross-infection to prevent illness occurring and we have sympathy for the plight of working parents but unfortunately if a child attends the centre with a contagious disease it is very likely to be passed on to other children

Certain symptoms suggest that a child could possibly have a sickness that could be passed on to others

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1) Fever (38 c or higher) | 5) Green nasal mucus |
| 2) Vomiting (2 in 24 hr period) | 6) Cold sores (weeping) |
| 3) Diarrhea (3 abnormal stools in 24 hr period) | 7) Conjunctivitis |
| 4) Undiagnosed rash | 8) Non-injury related weeping sores) |

IF IN DOUBT PLEASE CONSULT YOUR DOCTOR WHO WILL CONFIRM IF YOUR CHILDREN NEED TO BE EXCLUDED

If your child is not well and the sickness is contagious we ask that you keep them home for the well being of the other children.

For infectious diseases please note the following rules regarding absence from Unley Early Learning Centre.

Measles	at least 7 days from appearance of rash.
Rubella	at least 5 days from appearance of rash
Mumps	at least 10 days from onset of symptoms
Chicken Pox	at least 5 days from appearance of spots
Hand Foot & Mouth	until blisters have dried out
Impetigo	see Director
Ring Worm	see Director

Please notify the Centre if your child will not be attending. We would appreciate notification of any Infectious Diseases.

PREGNANT FEMALES

Some child hood diseases can affect the unborn child so the centre recommends that all staff be up to date with their immunizations and to check with their doctor their immune status. We will place notices on the front door of any notified disease with an additional note for pregnant visitors/parents/staff if it is a disease recognized by the department of health that could possibly affect an unborn child.

SUNSAFE

We are committed to a sun safe environment with broad rimmed hats or legionnaire hats required to be worn by both staff and children when outside. Sunscreen supplied by the centre is applied before every outdoor playtime.

A full Sun safe policy is available

NUTRITION AND MEALS

Our Centre is committed to

- ⇒ A nutritionally balanced menu that provides at least half of a child's daily food and nutritional needs.
- ⇒ All Staff trained in food hygiene, with food safety practices in place
- ⇒ An eating environment that is safe, positive and supports healthy eating for children.

We serve breakfast (sweatbox and toast up until 8.00 am) or on request, midday meals served with bread and a platter of fruit, morning and afternoon teas and a late snack water is available at all times and we serve milk and juice throughout the day. The daily menu is a 12-week rotating menu that is prepared fresh daily by our cook and is displayed in the foyer

APPROXIMATE MEAL TIMES BELOW: -

Morning tea 9.30 am

Lunch 11.30am

Afternoon Tea 3.00pm

Please advise us if your child follows a special diet for medical or religious reasons)

Water, milk and Juice are all provided.

FORMULA / BREAST MILK

Where the infant is on a formula, it is essential that we have enough prepared bottles to last the day. If the infant is on cow's milk we will supply it. Parents must remember to tell the caregiver when the next feed is due. All bottles should be clearly named

BIRTHDAYS

We like to observe Birthdays and would like to help celebrate your child's special day. The focus will be on the occasion and the environment and we will provide a special afternoon tea or cake for your child. If you do not wish for us to do this please inform staff.

FRUITS



A nationwide movement in Early Childhood Education to develop in children a conscious attitude towards good nutrition has resulted in the "fruit habits". A large basket is placed in each room, each child is asked to supply one piece of fruit (Un-peeled) each day.

Beside the benefit of variety, resulting in increased taste appreciation we have observed that the children involved in this scheme delight in the bringing and sharing. We hope the fruit habit will become an enjoyable exercise for all. We do have a no apple policy for children in the babies and pre-kindy room unless we have stewed.

TIMETABLES

Because there are a large numbers of children to be cared for it is necessary for a broad timetable to be adhered to. Wherever possible the actual activities during this period are decided by the children's individual needs.

An example of a typical day follows: -

- Welcome children and setting up activities
- Activities, morning tea and packing away
- Setting up for lunch and sleep time.
- Children to bathroom
- Lunch. Cleaning up, bathroom.
- Sleep, rest or quiet time
- Setting up routines
- Afternoon tea, various activities, free play and packing away. Weather permitting-many activities take place outdoors.

The timetable allows for variations according to the needs of each day. I.e. weather, attendance numbers, special activities. . With the Babies, their own timetables are adhered to as much as is possible so that they do not have any undue disruption.

HYGIENE

Staff are aware of the practices necessary to comply with good hygienic standards and the utilization of gloves when handling waste products, blood spillage and nappy changing

Hand washing is of paramount importance for both children and staff

Toilets and wash areas are cleaned twice daily or as necessary, and the rooms are cleaned every night

Full policy and procedures are available on request

NAPPY CHANGES

Parents are required to supply their own disposable nappies

The children are regularly checked and changed throughout the day and recorded on the day sheet .We also use disposable wipes for cleaning bottoms and use zinc and castor oil cream if needed All other creams can be supplied by parents. The staff follow strict hand washing and disinfecting procedures and wear disposable gloves

TOILET TRAINING

In full consultation with parents, the centre will begin the toilet Training process. This usually happens at about 2 years of age. The child is able to understand what it is we want, and also have voluntary control over the Muscles involved. Once they start training, and are having some control and success we suggest that they do not wear nappies during the day, coming to and leaving Unley Early Learning Centre in training pants. Putting a child in and out of nappies sometimes can confuse them. Parents are asked to provide six pairs of trainer pants when their child begins toilet training.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONSULT WITH STAFF IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING STARTING AND WE ALSO HAVE INFORMATION HAND OUTS AVAILABLE.

WHAT I NEED FOR THE CENTRE EVERY DAY

Please name all belongings

- A BAG OF MY BELONGINGS
- A PIECE OF FRUIT/VEGETABLE FOR THE BASKET - ANY FRUIT IN SEASON
- A SUN HAT - LEGIONNAIRE STYLE WITH A NECK FLAP

INFANTS, TODDLERS AND TWO'S

Formula made up in named bottles

Named bottle if your child has cows milk

Two sets of clothes

Plenty of trainer pants for those who are toilet training

4 nappies for a full day, 2 nappies for a half-day

Comfort toy, dummy, blanket,

THREE TO FIVE'S

Two full changes of clothes to suit the season and weather. Always pack extra undies. Shoes should be sandals, sneakers or boots, NO THONGS.

LICENCE

We are a service licensed by the Department of Education and Children's Services. A copy of the license is on display in the foyer.

ACCREDITATION

Accreditation is an initiative of the Federal Government, and the broad objective of accreditation is to ensure the centre is Meeting the criteria in delivering quality care. Our Centre will be involved in this process and will be aiming for the highest achievable in the quality improvement and accreditation process and will reflect our attitude and approach.

Donations

Some things you may regard as rubbish we consider as treasure, paper (sometimes work places change their letter head) large sheets of paper ,e.g. old plans.

Dress up clothes,hats,shoes,bags

Toys that you're child has grown out of

Long pants that you're child has grown out of (our emergency supply if children forget to bring theirs and need changed)

Too much fruit on your trees (our cook would love to cook up a dessert)