



# **Pumpkin Long Day Care Centre Parent Handbook**

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## **About Us**

Pumpkin Long Day Care Centre is a private run business, we are licensed for 78 children daily aged 0 to 6 years old. We are classified as a long day care centre and we strive to provide the best possible care for your child. Our staff are highly trained, experienced and dedicated to caring and educating children and we believe that children are eager to learn what the world has to offer and we at Pumpkin Long Day Care provide the necessary tools and experiences to facilitate this. Pumpkin Long Day Care Centre is a Sun Smart and Nut Free Centre.

## **Our Philosophy**

### **Children**

- We see children as unique and capable individuals, who come to our service with their own interests, talents, skills, abilities and ideas.
- We as educators, value, respect and appreciate each child's uniqueness.
- We feel children have a right to be active participants in their own learning and should be empowered to express their views, needs and ideas.
- We believe a child's opinion must be valued for its validity to their perspective and that their autonomy and initiative are to be respected.
- We believe children are unique individuals who develop at their own rate, and thus by providing enriching, meaningful and realistic opportunities children will explore, create, discover, and imagine.
- As we are guided by the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), we work alongside each child to actively promote individual children's learning through worthwhile and challenging experiences and interactions that foster high-level thinking skills.

### **Family**

- We acknowledge that family is the most important and influential aspect in the lives of young children and the significance of their relationships cannot be underestimated.
- We aim to ensure we involve parents and families into the service's decision-making and all aspects of the program development and implementation.
- We strive to develop positive, mutually respectful relationships with each family member, as we work in partnership to achieve the best possible outcomes for all.
- We believe that working in partnerships with families is central to ensuring continuity and progression in each child's learning, development and future success.

### **Program**

- Our curriculum is all that occurs in our early childhood environment, all the interactions, experiences, events and routines that occur – spontaneously or in an intentional manner.
- Our curriculum decisions are guided by the national framework, the EYLF. It is a play-based curriculum which also recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy), social and emotional development.
- Our curriculum is a flexible, ongoing cycle of documenting what learning is occurring as well as planning and implementing what is to occur next.
- We feel that a meaningful, integrated, emergent curriculum guided by the EYLF as the Framework is the most beneficial curriculum to children's learning across all learning outcomes.
- Our curriculum allows children to be active participants and collaborators, creating a more individualistic and meaningful involvement by the children.
- Our programs reflect planned and spontaneous experiences designed to support children's development in all domains. Through the EYLF, the program sees educators using intentional teaching (it's deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful) and valuing learning through play.
- We as educators recognise that learning occurs in social contexts and that interactions and conversations are vitally important for learning. They actively promote children's learning through worthwhile and challenging experiences and interactions.
- Our service is committed to catering for different capacities and learning styles and invite children and families to contribute ideas, interests and questions to our program.

## **Educators**

- We as educators are responsive to children's ideas and play.
- We are well trained and passionate. We value, respect and appreciate each child's uniqueness.
- We as protect and cherish the innocence of children and thus provide a safe and secure environment.
- In our early childhood setting, we believe that team work and effective communication are essential requirements for positive outcomes across all aspects of the services' functioning, for 'together everyone achieves more'.
- We are responsive to all children's strengths, abilities and interests. We value and build on children's strengths, skills and knowledge to ensure their motivation and engagement in learning.
- We aim to create an environment of trust and respect, where we work towards achieving a shared goal. Ongoing education and training is a critical aspect of our professional development. It is through accurate evaluation and assessment, which occurs when we critically reflect on our actions, that we are able to identify areas which may be considered a skill and those which may need further development.
- Our service recognised that educators are an important resource and aim to provide them with a satisfying and safe working environment. Further, we also appreciate the experience and skills of all educators and appreciate their dedication as an integral element of the success of our service.

## **Community**

- We strive to be seen as a service of excellence within our community, a service which values community involvement in all aspects of our program.
- We aim to be a Service where community resources are utilised effectively, to enhance the growth and development of individual children, families, and educators.

## **Environment**

- Our environment is designed to foster children's learning and development and to respond to their individual interests and needs.
- Our play spaces invite children's connection with nature, exploration and discovery.
- We understand that children often develop their ideas and understandings of the world around them from the information presented to them by the significant adults in their lives. As we are one of these significant adults, we believe we have a responsibility to present a positive approach to the environment.
- We embrace diversity within our service and the wider community, so that children view this diversity with a sense of appreciation and wonder. Through respect, acknowledgement, appreciation and acceptance of diversity within our community, our service embraces, celebrates and shares traditions and cultures throughout our program.
- Our learning environments are welcoming and flexible spaces which reflect and enrich the lives and identities of children and families participating in the setting.

**Source:** Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments.

**Review Date:** August 2017

**Next Review:** Feb 2018

## **Priority of Access**

Children enrolled at Pumpkin Long Day Care Centre will be given Priority of Access in accordance to the guidelines set by the Department of Family, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

They set out the following three levels of priority, which the centre must follow when filling vacant places:

- Priority 1 a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- Priority 2 a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under section 14 of the A New tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
- Priority 3 any other child

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

- Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- Children in families which include a disabled person
- Children in families on low income

- Children in families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Children in socially isolated families
- Children of single parents

On enrollment parents will be notified of their priority and advised that if the centre has no vacancies and their child's position is a priority 3 under the Priority of Access Guideline, it may be required that their child leave or reduce their days in order for the centre to provide a place for a higher priority child.

Children who have a disability will not be discriminated against and will be afforded access to the centre where: a place exists; they meet the required priority of access; the centre's resources are able to adequately care for the child.

## **Child Care Benefit**

The Child Care Benefit (CCB) is designed to assist families with child care costs and is calculated based on the family's income. Australian residents who use childcare provided by an approved day care service are entitled to receive CCB. For further information on CCB contact:

*Family Assistance Office (FAO)*

*Telephone: 13 61 50*

[www.familyassist.gov.au](http://www.familyassist.gov.au)

If no Child Care Benefit arrangements have been made by the family, FULL FEES will be charged.

## **Fee Policy**

The following outlines the how fees can be paid. Fees must be paid on the first morning your child attends the service for the week.

- Upon enrolment, families must pay a security deposit of **two week's full fees. This deposit is not refundable if the family wish to cancel the enrolment later on.**
- Fees must be paid **two week in advance.**
- Fees can be paid weekly or fortnightly by direct debit or \$3- per day extra will be charged on non direct debit account.
- Fees are payable in advance for every day that your child is enrolled at the service. This includes pupil free days, sick days and family holidays but excludes periods when the service is closed.
- Child Care Benefit (CCB) is available to all families who are Australian Residents. To find out their eligibility, families must contact the Family Assistance Office.
- Child Care Benefits can be received as:
  - A reduction of fees through the service.
  - A lump sum payment to families at the end of the financial year that the Service is used in.

A receipt will be issued for all fees. This will include the child/children's full name/s, date of care, date of payment, amount, etc. If the incorrect amount is paid, change will not be given but will be credited to the families account.

Should you wish to end your child's place at the service or should management make the decision to terminate your child's place, 2 weeks written notice is required from the ending/terminating party. If this does not occur, 2 weeks fees will be billed to you.

### **Overdue Fees**

Any family who is one or more weeks late with their fees will received a **Friendly Fee Reminder**. Families can make appointments to speak with the approved provider or nominated supervisor regarding payments if there is a need to do so. Continually not paying fees will put your child/ren's place/s in the Service in jeopardy.

### **Late Fees**

Late fees will be charged if a child is picked up after 6.30 pm (closing hour). The late fee is \$20.- for the first five minutes and after that \$5.- per minute.

### **Dishonour**

Should this unfortunate incidence occur we will inform the family and an immediate payment by cheque or eftpos has to be made.

## **Family Holiday Discount**

Families can apply for 1 calendar week of 50% reduction in their gap fee using the Holiday Application Form giving a minimum 2 weeks' notice prior to going on holiday. The 50% holidays will apply only to families that are following the centres fee policy and is only applied once per One Financial Year.

## **New Enrolment**

When a family has indicated their interest in enrolling their child in our service, the following will occur:

- A tour of our service. During this tour, the educator conducting the tour will give the family information about the service including, but not limited to, programming methods, meals, incursions, excursions, inclusion, fees, policies, procedures, our status as a Sun Smart service, regulations for our state and the licensing and assessment process, signing in and out procedure, the National Quality Framework, room routines, educator qualifications, introduction of educator in the room the child will be starting in and educator and parent communication. Families are also invited to ask any questions they may have.
- Families are given a copy of the Parent Handbook to read and are invited to ask questions.
- Discussions are held between office staff and families regarding availability of days, a start date and tailoring an orientation process to suit the needs of the family and child. Families are informed of the Priority of Access Policy, and have their position assessed as to how they place within this system. Any matters that are sensitive of nature, such as discussing a child's medical needs, Court Orders, parenting plans or parenting orders, will be discussed privately with the Nominated Supervisor at this time. We request that parents begin to fill out enrolment forms at that time, and discuss their child with us so we can accommodate their needs in the service from the first day they start with us. Should a child use English as a second language, or speak another language at home, we request that families provide us with some key words in the languages the child speaks at this time so that educators can learn the words.
- Families also need to contact the Family Assistance Office (Servicelink) to have their eligibility for Child Care Benefit assessed. If these details are available, we will complete the child's formal enrolment. Should a family still need to access this information, we will complete an informal enrolment until these details are finalised.
- As per our Orientation for Children Policy, families will be invited to bring their child into the service at a time that suits them so the child and family can familiarise themselves with the environment.
- Before the child begins their first day with us, the service must have all required documentation for the child. The child will not be accepted into the service without this being completed.

## **Orientation**

We believe orientation is an important process where educators are able to get important information about the new child's needs and those of the family. This process helps to make the transition from home to care as smooth as possible with the aim to maintain continuity between home and the service, which helps the child adjust to the new setting.

The Nominated Supervisor will arrange for the new child to attend the service (together with parents/s) to visit and meet the educators, and familiarise with the environment. The children may participate in the activities if they so desire. A number of young children prefer to just watch, rather than do. Positive interactions at this time (between parents, educators and the child) are important for the children to build positive attitudes to the service environment. Educators are aware that some children respond to new experiences faster than others and will adapt to the situation.

At this time, the daily timetable and program will be discussed, as well as routines and any special requirements for the child that may need to be accommodated. Parent/s will also be encouraged to send any special comfort items (teddy etc) to help the child in the initial settling in period. Parents will also be invited to ring and check on their child at any time if there are any concerns.

Part of this orientation visit is also to explain/collect the required documentation for the child (enrolment form, birth certificate, immunisation record and Medicare number etc). Staff will also explain methods of fee payment and communication (newsletters, pockets, communication box etc), what the child will need, the importance of labelling personal items and also show the parent library where they can access the service's policies and other resources.

Educators will also discuss how best to tailor the child's settling in period – with some parents choosing to gradually build up to a full day so the child is reassured that the parents will return to collect them. Educators will encourage parents to say goodbye when dropping off – and reassured that if the child remains distressed over a period of time, that educators will contact them. Parents are able to stay as long as needed to reassure their child, but sometimes it's easier for the educator to settle the child if the parents come earlier on collection to spend time with their child – rather than do this at drop off time.

Parents will be kept informed about how their child is settling in on collection and are welcome to discuss any aspects with the Nominated Supervisor at a convenient time.

Information on the service's child orientation policy will be available in different languages when required.

## **Parental Involvement**

At Pumpkin, we encourage all parents and families to be involved in the operation of the centre. Parent's wishes will be taken into account regarding the extent and type of involvement at our centre. Parent and family participation is viewed as a welcome and valued resource.

- Parents are welcome visitors at any time.
- Parents are invited to make suggestions and contributions to the children's program, to Centre management and to the centre's menu.
- Parents and other family members are invited to share aspects of their culture with the staff and children: such as craft, cooking, music and language experiences (Such as favorite stories, stories from home cultures, special skills, talents or even bathing a new baby).
- Special activities will be arranged throughout the year to promote family and community participation in the centre's activities.
- Parents are also invited to participate in the daily routine such as assisting in the preparation of the morning tea, craft activities, special language activities and afternoon tea.
- A parent/staff committee is set up to establish goals, policies and Accreditation.
- Minutes of regular parent meetings will be kept, with parents and staff invited to think of issues they wish to add to the agenda prior to the meeting.

## **Communication**

Communications between family members and the Service are considered crucial for a child to reach their full development. Therefore, we aim to provide an environment where there is a strong emphasis on family/Service communication to allow consistency and continuity between the home and the Service environment. By encouraging family members to be involved in the service, we aim to provide a service that best meets the needs of our community.

## **Open Door Policy**

We have an 'open door' policy at our centre and our centre is open at all times for parental inspection, please come and see how we help your child's development. Don't hesitate to visit us.

## **Staffing**

Our staffs are qualified, trained, experienced and talented. We employ caring, loyal and capable staff who bring to this Centre different quality, qualifications and experiences to implement our Centre philosophy. All Centre staff will be assessed to ensure they have the required abilities to care for children, understand their responsibilities under the child protection legislation and are fit and proper persons to care for children.

## **Code of Ethics**

The Australian Early Childhood Association is a peak early childhood organization focused on providing support for services of young children. This organization has produced a Code of Ethics that covers expectations of staff towards children, families, others and self. Families are encouraged to read this Code of Ethics on the information board.

## **Policy Compliance**

The centres aim is to welcome parent's comments and concerns in any area of our work and encourage parents to speak with us if you have any concerns or comments that may help us improve our centre or our performance.

## **Multicultural Diversity**

Our aim is to provide a centre and program which recognizes that Australia is a multicultural society where different ethnic groups co-exist harmoniously, free to maintain and practice their language, religious beliefs and social customs, while recognizing that all are equal as individuals.

Our program will recognize the importance of similarities as well as differences in various cultures, which incorporates the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of families, staff and the community, and which includes experiences and materials which meet the individual needs and interests of the children.

It is also equally important to introduce children to cultural variety not only to the cultures represented within this Centre.

## **Interactions with Children**

Our Service's statement of philosophy will guide our interactions with children. Please find the service's statement of philosophy in the front page of our policy folder.

In order to maintain positive interactions with children our service and educators will maintain the following:

- Our service will provide a relaxed and happy atmosphere for the children.
- Our service will ensure mealtimes are relaxed and unhurried and educators take the time to sit and talk with children.
- Our educators will encourage children to initiate conversations about their experiences inside and outside the service as well as what is happening around them, express their ideas and feelings, share humour with the nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators and educators and seek assistance as they take on new challenges and try to do things for themselves.

- Our educators and coordinators will respond sensitively and appropriately to children's efforts to communicate and engage them in sustained conversations about their interests in a positive manner.
- Our educators will talk with children in a two-sided manner. That is, encourage children to have their own opinions, ideas and comments. Educators should support children with this and let them know that their ideas are valued.
- Our service will have in place predictable personal-care routines that are enjoyable experiences for babies and toddlers and will respond to babies and toddlers when they practice their verbal communication skills.
- Our routines, as well as planned and spontaneous experiences will be organised to maximise opportunity for meaningful conversations between children and educators and the service will ensure that all children have equal opportunity to engage in one to one and small group conversations with educators.
- Our educators will be knowledgeable in the communication strategies and non verbal cues of babies and toddlers, and staffing arrangements within the service will support the development of trusting relationships between educators, babies and toddlers to allow them to feel secure in the service.
- Our statement of philosophy and policy on interactions with children will be visible
- Our educators will participate in children's play using children's cues to guide their level and type of involvement while always maintaining a positive approach when responding to children and offering assistance.
- Our educators will model reasoning, prediction and reflection processes and language.
- Our educators will collaborate with children about routines and experiences.
- Our educators will use techniques such as sign language and other resources and tools to support children with additional needs.
- Our educators will engage in give and take communication by adding to interactions initiated by babies and toddlers by describing objects and talking about routine activities with babies and toddlers.
- Our educators will use their interactions with children to support the maintenance of home languages and learning English as an additional language.
- Our educators and coordinators will use information from their observations of interactions with children to extend the children's thinking and learning.
- Our educators will also support children to build secure attachments with one and then many educators and use a favourite toy or comfort item to help them feel secure in the service. Most toddlers suffer a form of separation anxiety when away from their families. Educators need to reassure the toddler and work with the toddler's family in order to make the child feel safe and happy at the Service.
- Our service will ensure that there are many opportunities for babies and toddlers to experience relaxed physical contact and close interactions with familiar educators.
- Our nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators will learn more about the histories, cultures, languages, traditions, child rearing practices and lifestyle choices of families using the service.
- Our educators will frequently talk with families to get an idea of the non-verbal forms of communication used by their children in order to convey messages such as hunger, needing the toilet, tiredness and emotions.
- Our educators will allow time to talk to parents about their children. This allows educators to gain insight into their home life.
- Our service will implement strategies to assist all children to develop a sense of belonging and confidence through positive interactions between the children and educators.
- Our service's roster will be planned in a way that promotes continuity for children.
- Our service will gather information from families in the enrolment form in order to be able to provide support for children during the settling in process.
- When children have special needs our service will consult with other professionals or support agencies that work with children to gather information that will guide our interactions with these children. This information will be recorded in the child's file.
- Our service's approach to equity and inclusion will be documented in our statement of philosophy.
- Our service will ensure that educators document the knowledge gained about children, through their interactions, in the child's file for reference for other educators and will continually review the experiences that are planned for children in light of this information.



## **Children with Additional Needs**

**As per the National Quality Standard, our service positively responds to and welcomes children with additional needs who -**

- are Aboriginals or Torres Strait Islanders
- are recent arrivals in Australia
- have a culturally and linguistically diverse background
- live in isolated geographic locations
- are experiencing difficult family circumstances or stress
- are at risk of abuse or neglect
- are experiencing language and communication difficulties
- have a diagnosed disability—physical, sensory, intellectual or autism spectrum disorder
- have a medical or health condition
- demonstrate challenging behaviours and behavioural or psychological disorders
- have developmental delays
- have learning difficulties
- are gifted or have special talents
- have other extra support needs.

We understand that additional needs arise from different causes, and that causes require different responses. Any child may have additional needs from time to time.

We recognise that additional needs may be temporary or for a lifetime.

### **Learning Environments**

- The service environment and equipment will be designed or adapted to ensure access and participation by every child in the service to support the inclusion of children with additional needs.
- The indoor and the outdoor environment will be suitable for children with additional needs.
- The service will ensure the program and curriculum meets the needs of children with additional needs. Learning materials and equipment such as books and games will reflect positive inclusion and children with additional needs in the community.
- The service will work with external professionals and families to ensure that learning environments are most suited to each child with additional needs and children and families from culturally diverse backgrounds. We will also involve children in this process. And where appropriate, the service will keep a copy of any specific plans or instructions provided by external resource providers and professionals for children with additional needs.
- Children may have sensory sensitivities to pressure, texture, smell, noise or visual expectation of the environment or colour which may need to be considered in the environment.
- Children will be encouraged to feel safe and secure during their education and care at the service by developing trusting relationships with educators, other children and the community.

### **Positively Promoting Each Child's Personal Ability**

Our service wants children to develop to the best of their personal ability. Our philosophy highlights our commitment to equality and fairness for all children. Every child in our service is an individual and we aim to promote and encourage this by:

- Our commitment to ensuring each child is able to fully participate in their education and care at the service.
- Helping children to develop ease with and have a respect for physical, racial, religious and cultural differences.
- Enabling children to develop autonomy, independence, competency, confidence and pride.
- To provide all children with accurate and appropriate material that provides information about the additional needs of others.
- Providing educators of a high calibre who encourage children to experience active and energetic play in order to develop their physical potential.
- Presenting children with a wide range of male and female work roles, both within the home and the workplace, including nurturing roles.

- Encouraging children to develop friendships with each other based on mutual trust and respect.
- Including in our program and curriculum, and the physical environment, an awareness of cross-cultural and non-discriminatory practices.
- Using a program that is based on a child's development, that is also relevant to the children's life experiences, interests and social skills.
- Encouraging parents from non-English speaking backgrounds to contribute their knowledge and culture to the service to enhance the program.
- Making it clear to children through all educators that it is not acceptable for a child to say or do unfair thing to another person and that if this does occur an educator will firmly step in.
- Educators will familiarise themselves with, and share knowledge about, the specific communication needs of each child. This will include verbal and non-verbal communication skills and cues. Where applicable, this may include things such as sign language and or learning key words in the child's home language.

### **Professional Support Services for Children**

- Our service will not hesitate to access external professional support services for children with additional needs.
- Educators will liaise with the Nominated Supervisor to ensure the needs of each child are met throughout their education and care at the service.
- The service will use the Enrolment Form to gather information about children with additional needs. Educators will encourage families to update this information throughout the year and families are responsible for passing on information from any professional support services accessed outside of the service. This will promote the continuity of learning for each child.
- Information gathered about children with additional needs may be used to develop an individual support plan that will be kept on file at the service and shared with families, the child's medical practitioners and/or professional support services and where appropriate the child's local school if known by the family.
- The service will work with local schools to help children with additional needs transition. We are open to sharing information about the additional needs of children to promote continuity of learning.
- Educators will remain positive, open-minded and honest at all times.
- The Inclusion Support Agency (ISA) is funded by the Australian Government. The service can lodge an application for Special Needs Subsidy Support (SNSS) funding for additional support workers through the ISA. Funding will be granted when the child meets specific criteria. SNSS workers will help the service with the integration of children with additional needs and will assist educator in putting together an individual program for each child. Australian government funding is necessary in continuing the availability of support through ISA's and SNSS Workers. Information is available from DEEWR at the following website –
  - <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Programs/ChildCareforServices/SupportFamilyCCS/Pages/InclusionSupportProgram.aspx>

### **Professional Development for Educators**

- Our service will access professional development for educators to help the service meet the needs of each child with additional needs.

## **Programming**

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.

Our programs are provided for differing age groups and transition from one stage to the next is individually structured. Children's home language, culture and religious differences will be accepted and provision for same will be included within the program.

Music and movement activities encourage physical, social/intellectual and fun areas of the child's development.

Road safety, general safety practices, hygiene, dental care, nutrition, etc. will be incorporated into the weekly program.

Planning the program will be developmentally appropriate and individually appropriate.

We will start with the child and look at his/her needs and plan objective to meet these needs, provide activities and experiences in accordance with the needs of the child and the objectives of the teacher. We will evaluate the program each week and this will provide us with ongoing observations for the following week. Programs and activities will be evaluated weekly by staff. Child and parent input will be encouraged.

## **Transition to School**

When a child first attends school, there is a great change for that child and for their family. We believe that the child's parents are the most important link in this transition.

- The better the transition between home and school, the better the education: that's the message of recent research.
- The Service will always talk about starting school in a positive manner that will reinforce a healthy attitude toward the transition.
- If possible, information on local schools will be made available to parents.
- Toward the end of each year an excursion is arranged to visit the local school so as to familiarise the children with the school environment.
- Information regarding school readiness is issued.
- Children will be encouraged to bring a school lunch for a week in December to help prepare for school. Parents will be provided with information regarding appropriate nutrition and lunches for school

## **Excursions**

The centre aim is to minimize the risks of accidents and injuries on excursions, respond effectively to emergencies, and promote awareness in children and their families of road safety and play safety. Children learn from experience, therefore excursions are seen as a valuable part of a centre program.

All parents are to receive a written itinerary, along with the reasons for taking the children on the excursion, prior to giving permission for their child to participate in the excursion.

## **Visitors**

All visitors are:

- Only permitted in the centre after identification is seen and approved by a permanent staff member
- Given an identification tag on arrival (if they are without one e.g. badge) and returned on leaving
- To sign in on arrival and out on departure in the attendance register ( this register is located in the foyer area)

## **Students and Volunteers**

Students and Volunteers may be accepted within the centre from time to time. They will be fully supervised by qualified staff at all times.

Parental permission will be obtained prior to any observations of children being commenced and a code will be used to protect the identity of the child. Information will be kept in a private and confidential way.

## **Food Safety**

In the interest of the safety and well being of the staff, children and families at Pumpkin Long Day Care Centre it is essential to have adequate procedures and policies in place to secure safe food handling and hygiene practices that meet Occupational Health & Safety Standards.

This will be achieved by staff following the procedures outlined below:

We are a "NUT FREE" centre.

Have a specific designated area for food preparation and storage which is safe and hygienic.

Store food and drink appropriately as indicated by current authorities/information.

Follow appropriate food handling procedures, including workplace instructions for

- hand washing routine
- when hand washing should be undertaken

Follow appropriate food preparation procedures such as

- Using colour coded chopping boards
- Using colour coded cleaning cloths
- Serve food in a hygienic manner
- Cleaning and maintenance of food preparation areas

Educate and promote safe food handling and hygiene in the children and families by

- Sourcing and providing current information from recognized authorities to families
- Undertake relevant training in food handling and hygiene safety, and sharing this information between all staff to the centre.
- Encourage and promote discussion and awareness of food hygiene and safety practices with the children through spontaneous and planned experiences.
- Model appropriate practices with food handling and hygiene.
- Being aware of and respecting any cultural/religious practices in relation to food preparation and handling of food and drinks.

## **Incidents/ Accidents**

Accidents are often directly related to the child's growth and developmental stage. Staff will be aware of the particular hazards recognisable in each stage, and take all precautions necessary to prevent such accidents. It is a staff responsibility to increase parent awareness of accident prevention, and of their child's ability to learn safety habits at a very early age.

Any injury to a child during the day will be notified to the family. First aid will be administered, if needed. An Incident and Accident Form will be completed and parent/guardian asked to sign the report at the end of the day to verify that they have been notified of the incident.

## **Children Protection**

The centre believes it has a responsibility to all children attending the centre to defend their right to care and protection. To support this right the centre will follow the procedures covered within this policy, when dealing with any reportable allegations, to ensure the protection of all children attending the centre.

The centre believes it also has a responsibility to its employees to defend their right to confidentiality unless allegations against them are substantiated. The centre will ensure all groups affected by this policy are aware of the roles and responsibilities of children's service in relation to child protection.

The centre will implement preventative procedures which protect and educate children, staff, parents and community members.

The centre will ensure that all requirements of child protection legislation are being met.

Under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 there are provisions where children's services staff have child protection concerns about a children. Children's services play an important role in recognising and reporting child abuse and neglect and in promoting the safety, welfare and well being of children. This legislation states that all people who hold a management position, or who are employees delivering children's services, are legally obliged to report any reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of harm.

This means that if you work in children's services you are a mandatory reporter. It also includes those involved in the management of a service.

## **Managing a child with Acute Fever**

Pumpkin Long Day Care Centre will facilitate effective care and health management of children who are taking medications for health problems, prevention and management of acute episodes of illness or medical emergencies by the safe administration of medication, and compliance with relevant legislation, particularly in relation to children who develop acute fever while in care.

All attempts to reduce the child's temperature through first aid measures will be undertaken by the staff.

- Sponging
- Removal of excess clothing
- Bathing with Tepid water

Should the child's temperature continue to remain above 38 degrees Celsius without indication of it reducing, steps to administer paracetamol will commence

- Obtain consent by telephone, fax or email regarding whether a dose of paracetamol should be given. This is additional to any general prior agreement made by the parent.
- If the parents are unable to be contacted, the emergency contacts as nominated by the parents on the enrolment form will be contacted.
- Manage the situation as an emergency, and ask parent to collect child as soon as possible.
- Advise them to take them to the doctor.
- If parents and emergency contacts cannot be reached, the decision to administer paracetamol will be made by the Nominated Supervisor.

### **Administering the paracetamol:**

When administering paracetamol to a child in an emergency as consented by parent, guardian, emergency contact or Director or Nominated Supervisor, the centre will:

- Only administer Paracetamol to a child for fever (38 degrees or above) and is in discomfort or pain.
- Paracetamol will not be administered as a sedative
- Check the paracetamol is within its used by date before administering.
- Administer dose according to instructions on the bottle, or according to the child's emergency plan, and preferably administer by age, not weight.
- This will be done to try to avoid any further distress to the child by attempting to weigh them
- Only administer one dose of paracetamol in any situation.
- Ensure the parent/guardian understands that they still need to take their child home and/or to a doctor on any occasion requiring the administration of paracetamol.
- Ensure a Record of Paracetamol form is completed and is signed when parent/guardian/authorised person arrives to collect the child.
- If a child accidentally swallows paracetamol or inadvertently is given an excessive dose, medical advice should be sought immediately by calling Poisons Information Line on 131126 or call for an ambulance, dial 000.

### **Managing a child with a febrile convulsion**

- In any circumstance when a child has had a convulsion, and even if it stops, the centre will immediately dial 000 for an ambulance and notify parent/guardian/emergency contact.
- If emergency treatment of first aid is required for a child having a convulsion, administer first aid or treatment in accordance with the child's First Aid or Emergency Management Plan, doctors instructions or First Aid as instructed by St John Ambulance Australia (or equivalent) during the course undertaken by all permanent staff.

## **Dental Care**

Pumpkin Long Day Care Centre aim is to establish and reinforce good dental health practices for each child. The centre will provide a learning environment that raises dental health awareness, and supports the development of valuable life skills and habits for children and families.

- Arrangements are made for dental health professionals to visit the centre to talk with staff, children and/or families about dental health.
- The centre liaises with families to establish dental health practices that are workable at home and at the centre.
- The centre systematically incorporates information on dental health practices into the children's program, including tooth brushing, 'tooth friendly' snacks, and going to the dentist.
- The centre will encourage healthy eating habits, and drinking water to quench thirst.
- Children will be encouraged to rinse their mouths with water to remove food debris after every meal or snack
- Gently clean babies gums and teeth with a clean damp cloth or cotton gauze to remove plaque and milk
- Staff role model good dental health practices.
- The centre will provide information to families on dental health principles relating to different age groups of children, as recommended by recognised health and dental health authorities. Wherever possible this information will be provided in families home languages.
- Report to the family any sign of tooth caries, any accident, injury or suspected injury to teeth and gums, gum swelling, infection in the mouth, or problems, pain or discomfort the child has with chewing, eating or swallowing
- The centre will be aware of dental first aid.

## **Infection Control**

The service will use the attached Recommended Minimum Periods of Exclusion to exclude children and educators and inform parents of exclusion and non-exclusion periods for infectious diseases. We will minimise the spread of potential infectious diseases between children, other children and educators by excluding children who may have an infectious disease or are too ill to attend the service and facilitating the prevention and effective management of acute illness in children.

Notification of the child's parents or nominated contacts will occur immediately.

All appropriate notifications to the local Public Health Unit will be made by our nominated supervisor.

Children might be brought to care with symptoms or signs of illness or while in care suddenly develop an illness that has not been diagnosed by a doctor, and that might be potentially infectious or potentially life-threatening for the child. Symptoms may not clearly fit those listed in exclusion diseases making it difficult for the service to decide whether to accept or exclude the child from the service. If we suspect a child may have an infectious disease, we will exclude the child until we receive a medical certificate stating the child is not contagious and is okay to attend the Service.

Many illnesses, while not fitting exclusion criteria, can transmit disease to other children in care, and can make a child too ill to participate in normal activities. All children who are unwell should not attend the Service and we will ask parents of children who are unwell to collect the child from our Service or to make alternative arrangements for their child's care.

### **Infectious Diseases requiring Notification to the local Public Health Unit**

Our nominated supervisor will notify the local Public Health Unit by telephone as soon as possible (and within 24 hours) after they are made aware that a child enrolled at the service is suffering from a vaccine preventable disease.

## **Immunisation**

Families will be asked to provide information about a child's vaccination status on entry to the centre (Immunisation Details)—vaccination book or record from GP. Families will be asked to keep this record updated by bringing in the vaccination book or letter from their GP to verify vaccinations.

Parents who choose not to vaccinate their child must sign the declaration at the bottom of the Immunisation Details Form.

If an outbreak of a disease that is preventable by immunization occurs at the centre non-immunised children will be excluded for the incubation time listed in the Exclusion Table—Infectious Diseases.

## **Administration of Authorised Medication Policy**

- The service will ensure each that the Administration of Authorised Medication Record is completed for each child using the service who requires medication. A separate form must be completed for each medication if more than one is required.
- Medication may only be administered by the service with written authority signed by the child's parent or other responsible person named in the child's enrolment record that is authorised by the child's parents to make decisions about the administration of medication.
- In the instance that the child's registered medical practitioner prescribes a medication, the service must ensure the medication is administered appropriately.
- Medication must be provided by the child's parents including the following -
  - Original container. Medication will only be administered from the original container.
  - Original label that is clearly readable.
  - Child's name clearly on the label.
  - Any instructions attached to the medication or related to the use of the medication.
  - Any verbal or written instructions provided by the child's registered medical practitioner.
- Any person delivering a child to the service must not leave medications in the child's bag or locker. Medication must be given directly to an educator for appropriate storage upon arrival.

## **Medical Conditions**

The service will involve all educators, families and children in regular discussions about medical conditions and general health and wellbeing throughout our curriculum. The service will adhere to privacy and confidentiality procedures when dealing with individual health needs.

A copy of the Medical Conditions Policy must be provided to all educators and volunteers at the service. The Policy must also be provided to parents of children enrolled at the service including those whose child has been identified as having a specific health care need or allergy. Educators are also responsible for raising any concerns with a child's parents about any medical condition/suspected medical condition, or known allergens that pose a risk to the child.

No child enrolled at the service will be able to attend the service without medication prescribed by their medical practitioner. In particular, no child who has been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injection device, insulin injection device or asthma inhaler is permitted to attend the service or its programs without the device.

Families are required to provide information about their child's health care needs, allergies, medical conditions and medication on the Enrolment Form and are responsible for updating the service about of these things, including any new medication, ceasing of medication, or changes to their child's prescription.

All educators and volunteers at the service must follow a child's Medical Management Plan in the event of an incident related to a child's specific health care need, allergy or medical condition.

Our service will implement the following communications plan to ensure that parents are reminded to advise of any changes which will impact the Medical Management Plan and Risk Minimisation Plan:

### **Information that must be provided in Enrolment Record**

The service's Enrolment Form provides an opportunity for parents to help the service effectively meet their child's needs relating to any medical condition.

The enrolment record will include details of any:

- specific health care needs or medical conditions of the child, including asthma, diabetes, allergies, and whether the child has been diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis.
- any Medical Management Plan provided by a child's parents and/or registered medical practitioner. This Plan should:

- have supporting documentation if appropriate
- include a photo of the child
- if relevant, state what triggers the allergy or medical condition
- first aid needed
- contact details of the doctor who signed the plan
- state when the Plan should be reviewed.

Copies of the plan should be kept with the child's medication and also accompany them on any excursions.

Where there is a Medical Management Plan, a risk minimisation plan must be developed and informed from the child's Medical Management Plan.

Note parents are responsible for updating their child's Medical Management Plan/providing a new Plan as necessary and will be regularly reminded by the service as per the Medical Management Communications Plan.

Any new information will be attached to the Enrolment Form and kept on file at the service. Educators will ensure information that is displayed about a child's medical conditions is updated.

### **Identifying Children with Medical Conditions**

Any information relating to a child's medical conditions will be shared with relevant educators, volunteers and the family day care co-ordinator at the service. Educators will be briefed by the family day care co-ordinator on the specific health needs of each child.

Our service will implement the following communications plan to ensure that relevant educators, staff and volunteers are:

- informed about the Medical Conditions Policy
- easily able to identify a child with medical conditions
- are aware of the requirements of any medical management plans and risk minimisation plans
- aware of the location of each child's medication
- updated on the child's treatment along with any regulatory changes that may affect practices for specific medical conditions.

Add medical management communication plan. Provide information about how educators will be informed about the policy and plans eg during inductions and at regular staff meetings.

Our service will display information about a child's medical management plan, risk minimisation plan, and the location of each child's medication in an area near a telephone that is visible and easily accessed by all educators eg food preparation or serving area to ensure all procedures are followed. We will ensure the display of information meets privacy guidelines and is not accessible to visitors or other families. We will explain to families why this is important for the safety of the child and obtain parental consent.

Where a child has been diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis, a notice stating this must be displayed at the service so it is clearly visible from the main entrance. The privacy and confidentiality of the child will be maintained at all times and the public notice will not name the child.

## **Rest Time**

The Approved Provider will ensure that the Nominated Supervisor (who is responsible for ensuring all staff members, educators and volunteers) must implement the following requirements –

- The service will provide a quiet and restful environment for sleep and rest periods that is within hearing and observation range for educators to closely monitor children.
- We recognise the differences between each child and family's preferences in relation to routines for rest, sleep and clothing. These needs will be met provided they are within the service's requirements.
- We respect the need for rest, sleep and clothing requirements to be aligned with each child's social and cultural background and personal preferences.
- We will communicate daily with parents about their child's routines that are in place at the service and at the child's home.
- Educators will work with children to help them learn about their need for rest and comfort. Children will be encouraged to communicate their needs where possible.
- Educators negotiate the need for sleep and rest with children.
- Children who do not require sleep or rest will be provided with appropriate and quiet play activities.



- Children will be encouraged to make appropriate decisions about their participation throughout their time at the service.
- Each child will be supplied with clean, appropriate spare clothes when necessary.
- Children will be grouped in a way that minimises overcrowding.
- The privacy needs of each child will be respected during dressing and undressing times.

### **Children's clothing**

- Children should be clothed in an appropriate manner which will allow them to explore and play freely and not restrict them using equipment while at play
- Clothing should also allow easy access for toileting i.e. elasticised trousers, track pants – rather than buttons, zips, belts etc.
- Children will be encouraged by educators to use aprons for messy play and art experiences to protect their clothing. For this reason it is important to not send the children in their best clothes.
- Children should be appropriately protected from the sun during outdoor play - please refer to sun safety policy for further directives on hats and clothing.
- Children's clothing should accommodate weather conditions. I.e. be loose and cool in summer to prevent overheating and warm enough for cold weather – including outdoor play. At all times educators will monitor children to ensure they are appropriately dressed for all weather, play experiences, rest and sleep routines.
- Children should have appropriate footwear that enables them to play comfortably and not cause safety concerns. I.e. thongs, clogs or backless shoes have a trip factor and do not allow children to use equipment safely.
- Comfortable and non-restrictive clothing is important at sleep time to promote your child's comfort at this time of the day.
- Clean and appropriate spare clothing will be made available to children should it be needed.
- All clothing and belongings must be clearly labelled with the child's name.

### **Sun Protection**

Our service will retain all headings numbered 1-10 in the following section on sun protection so we fully comply with Cancer Council NSW's *SunSmart Program*.

#### **1. Outdoor Activities**

The service will use a combination of sun protection measures whenever **UV Index levels reach 3 and above**. This will include:

- From October to March sun protection is required at all times. Extra sun protection is needed between 11am and 3pm and during this period outdoor activities should be minimised. Minimising outdoor activities includes reducing both the number of times (frequency) and the length of time (duration) children are outside.
- From April to September (excluding June and July) outdoor activity can take place at any time. However, from 10am – 2pm sun protection is required.
- In June and July when the UV index is mostly below 3, sun protection is not required. Extra care is needed for services in the far west and north of NSW and for all children who have very fair skin.

All sun protection measures (including recommended outdoor times, shade, hat, clothing and sunscreen) will be considered when planning excursions and incursions.

#### **2. Shade**

All outdoor activities will be planned to occur in shaded areas. Play activities will be set up in the shade and moved throughout the day to take advantage of shade patterns.

The service will provide and maintain adequate shade for outdoor play. Shade options can include a combination of portable, natural and built shade. Regular shade assessments should be conducted to monitor existing shade structures and assist in planning for additional shade.

### 3. Hats

Educators and children are required to wear sun safe hats that protect their face, neck and ears. A sun safe hat is:

- Legionnaire hat.
- Bucket hat with a deep crown and brim size of at least 5cm (adults 6cm).
- Broad brimmed hat with a brim size of at least 6cm (adults 7.5cm).

**Please note: Baseball caps or visors do not provide enough sun protection and therefore are not recommended.**

Children without a sun safe hat will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under shade, veranda or indoors) or can be provided with a spare hat.

### 4. Clothing

When outdoors, educators and children will wear sun safe clothing that covers as much of the skin (especially the shoulders, back and stomach) as possible. This includes wearing:

- Loose fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered neckline.
- Longer style skirts, shorts and trousers.

Children who are not wearing sun safe clothing can be provided with spare clothing.

**Please note: Midriff, crop or singlet tops do not provide enough sun protection and therefore are not recommended.**

### 5. Sunscreen

All educators and children will apply SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every 2 hours. Sunscreen is stored in a cool, dry place and the use-by-date monitored.

### 6. Babies

Babies under 12 months will not be exposed to direct sunlight and are to remain in dense shade when outside. They will wear sun safe hats and clothing and small amounts of SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen may be applied to their exposed skin.

### 7. Role Modelling

Educators will act as role models and demonstrate sun safe behaviour by:

- Wearing a sun safe hat (see Hats).
- Wearing sun safe clothing (see Clothing).
- Applying SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors.
- Using and promoting shade.
- Wearing sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (optional).

Families and visitors are encouraged to role model positive sun safe behaviour.

### 8. Education and Information

Sun protection will be incorporated regularly into learning programs. Sun protection information will be promoted to educators, families and visitors. Further information, support and free resources are available from the Cancer Council website [www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart](http://www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart) or call the SunSmart Information Line on 02 9334 1761.

### 9. Policy Availability

The sun protection policy, updates and requirements (including hat, clothing and sunscreen) will be made available to educators and staff, families and visitors.

### 10. Review

Our service will monitor and review the effectiveness of our sun protection policy regularly, at least once every 12 months.

## Toileting

Staff will consult with families about a child's readiness to commence toilet training. Staff will observe the child for signs of readiness that include dry nappy for long periods of time, a growing awareness of the need to pass urine and a wish to imitate other children who are toileting. Staff and families should have a relaxed, sensitive attitude to toilet training. Families may be asked to supply 'pull up' nappy pants to encourage independence when toilet training has commenced.

## **Fire and Emergency Evacuation**

Our service will conduct a risk assessment to identify potential emergencies that could affect our service and use this to prepare emergency and evacuation procedures. An evacuation may be necessary in the event of a fire, chemical spill, bomb scare, earthquake, siege, flood etc.

### **Emergency and Evacuation Procedures and Drills**

- Emergency and evacuation procedures that are based on the service's floor plans will be prominently displayed in the following locations that are near each exit –
  - **Jellyfish room, the entrance door and Starfish room, the glass door at the back.**
- The service will maintain an up-to-date and compact register of emergency telephone numbers that must be taken in an emergency or evacuation that is to be located in the following location –
  - **Jellyfish room, Starfish room, parent foyer.**
- Emergency telephone numbers will be displayed prominently throughout the service in the following locations, including near telephones or available near mobile phones –
  - **Office (Jellyfish Room) and near the telephone in the Starfish room.**
- The service will ensure educators are provided with training on how to use fire extinguishers, fire blankets and other emergency equipment that will be kept in the following locations –
  - **Store room in the Jellyfish room and parent foyer.**
- Fire extinguishers, fire blankets and other emergency equipment will be tested as recommended by the manufacturer by recognised authorities. All tests must be documented.
- Emergency and evacuation procedures will be discussed with families and regular information will be provided to families. Families will also receive written notification from the service.
- The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that all educators, including relief educators and staff members, are aware of the service's policy and procedures relating to Emergency Management and Evacuation.
- Informal games and discussions will be used to familiarise children with the service's evacuation and emergency procedures.

### **Rehearsal Evacuation Drill (Every Three Months)**

- The service will add to each child's sense of security, predictability and safety by conducting rehearsal evacuation drills every three months. The drills will take place at various times of the day and week (rather than always on a Tuesday at 10 am for example) to ensure all children and staff members get the opportunity to rehearse. All persons present at the service during the evacuation drill must participate accordingly.
- Rehearsal evacuation drills must be documented.
- The educator places a fire symbol for another user to find and sound the alarm (smoke alarm). When the alarm is heard, the children will drop what they are doing and go with an educator to the designated safe area. This safe area may be a designated area outside the services boundary and will be determined by the location of the fire symbol. This procedure will be necessary to allow emergency vehicles access without risk to educators or children.
- Our service's emergency and evacuation safe area is located at –
  - **In front of the gate (O'Connell Avenue).**

### **Role of Educators**

- Immediately when the alarm sounds, educators will return to the group with which they are working if it is safe to do so. Educators will then assist with the evacuation.

- Educators are to ensure that sign in/out rolls remain in the vicinity of that particular group of children at all times and if evacuation is required that a primary carer collect that roll in the process of evacuating children.
- After the alarm has been raised, group children and evacuate through the nearest exit to the designated safe area with the children's sign in/out roll.
- Primary carer to call roll and settle children.
- Supervise and reassure children.

**Nominated Supervisor's Role:**

- Collect educator sign in book, a phone, emergency contact box and backpack.
- Check toilet, kitchen, playrooms and cot rooms.
- Ring 000 as soon as possible.
- Follow children and other educators to designated area.
- Oversee and check attendances of children, educators, volunteers, families and visitors.
- Supervise and reassure children.

## **Supervision of Children**

Our service will have at least one "responsible person" present at all times when caring for and educating children. A responsible person is:

- an approved provider
- a nominated supervisor
- a certified supervisor who is in charge of the daily running of the service.

The name of the responsible person will be clearly displayed in the main entrance of the Service.

If the responsible person needs to change (for example the current person needs to leave the Service), he or she will "hand over" responsibility for the role to another eligible person at the Service. Both the old and new responsible person will communicate directly and ensure the name of the responsible person displayed at the Service correctly reflects who currently holds the position.

If more than one person at our service is a "responsible person", we may develop a roster to rotate the role.

**Educator to Child Ratios**

Our educator to child ratios will always meet the minimum requirements as stated below. Note the numbers of children referred to in this section does not include children being cared for in an emergency for no more than two consecutive days the service operates.

- For children aged from birth to 24 months the educator to child ratio will be 1 educator to 4 children.
- Until 31 December 2015, for children aged over 24 months but less than 36 months the educator to child ratio will be 1 educator to 8 children. From 1 January 2016, the educator to child ratio for children over 24 months but less than 36 months will be 1 educator to 5 children.
- For children aged over 36 months and less than 6 years the educator to child ratio will be 1 educator to 10 children.
- If children being educated and cared for at the service are of mixed ages the number of educators for the children must meet the requirements above at all times. This can be done after considering the total number of children being cared for at the service and the educator to child ratio required for each age range. If the number of children actually being cared for in a particular age range is less than that allowed in the educator to child ratio, that educator has the capacity to work directly with another child in an older age bracket. For example if the service is only caring for 3 children under 24 months, but 9 children in the next age bracket, one of the 9 children can be allocated to the educator caring for the younger children. This leaves 8 children for the educator in the older age bracket to care for, and this meets the ratio requirements (until 31 December 2015). Ratio requirements must always be met for younger children before allocating educators to older age brackets.

- When an early childhood teacher (ECT) is required to be in attendance at the service as per the licensed places of our service, that teacher will be counted as an educator at the service for the purposes of this regulation.
- If the service is required to have access to an ECT for a period of time as per the licensed places, the ECT must be added to the minimum number of educators required for that service for that period.
- If the service is a preschool program in a school in a class or classes where a full-time education program is also being delivered, educator ratio and qualification requirements do not apply.
- At all times we will consider the needs of the children and provide adequate supervision.