

JULIA CREEK

EARLY LEARNING CENTRE



JULIA
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LEARNING
CENTRE

PARENT HANDBOOK 2021



PARENT HANDBOOK | Julia Creek Early Learning Centre
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Notes:

Julia Creek Early Learning Centre**1 Shaw Street, Julia Creek****(Ph): 07 4746 7279****Operating hours:****Monday to Friday****8:30am – 5:15pm****Closed public holidays and for 3-4 weeks over the Christmas period****Welcome**

Our Educators and the McKinlay Shire Council would like to welcome you! We trust that the time you spend at our Service will provide rewarding experiences for both you and your children. You are welcome to visit our Service at any time and we encourage you to spend time talking with your child's Educators. We will work towards making the transition to our Service as smooth as possible so both you and your child feel a part of this fantastic learning journey.

Please read this handbook thoroughly and speak to our Director should you have any questions. We also encourage you to keep our handbook somewhere safe should you have any queries in the future; you can refer to it quickly and easily. When completing your child's enrolment form you will also be asked to sign that you agree to all policies contained in this handbook. That way we can be sure that your orientation process has been informative and thorough. A detailed policy folder is always available in the office for your reference and all policies are available on our online documentation platform, Storypark.

About Our Service

At our Service we are committed to a holistic approach to learning and this is fostered in an environment that promotes and supports all aspects of a child's development. Our Service has Service Approval and must comply with the Education and Care Services National Law 2010 and Regulations 2011, please note copies of these are available at our Service at all times. Service Approval authorizes the Service Provider to conduct a child care service at the premises stated in the Service Approval. As specified in the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 there are minimum staffing levels for each group of children and they are as follows:

Birth – 2yrs:	1 Team member to a maximum of 4 children
2yrs – 3yrs:	1 Team member to a maximum of 5 children
3yrs – 5yrs:	1 Team member to a maximum of 11 children

Our service is approved to provide care for 21 children per day.

Our Service is open 48 weeks per calendar year and is only closed for Public Holidays and during a 3-4 week closure period.

Our Service is approved by the Federal Government for the payment of Child Care Subsidy(CCS). The Service also participates in the National Quality Improvement Process.

Our Centre Philosophy

Acknowledgement of Country

“We acknowledge the Traditional owners of the land on which we live and learn. We pay our respects to them for their care of the land over countless generations. We hope they will walk with us on our journey as we share friendship together.”

Nadia Wheatley & Ken Searle

“Going Bush”

Our Place

Julia Creek Early Learning Centre is a 21 place; council operated childcare centre and Kindergarten which was established in 1971. We are situated in the Queensland Outback, surrounded by cattle stations and the native flora and fauna of the Australian Outback.

We provide a government funded Kindergarten program, built into a long day care setting, catering for children aged from 12 months to 5 years of age.

Our service community is made up of a professional staff team of qualified early childhood educators from diverse and varied backgrounds.

Our Beliefs

The Educators at Julia Creek Early Learning Centre believe children develop best in a safe, nurturing, healthy, respectful, caring and inclusive environment. We assist children in developing into responsible, confident, creative and active citizens of their world.

We are inspired by Reggio Emilia, Nature Play and a range of contemporary approaches to children’s learning. We understand through this approach, that children use many different ways to express their thoughts and creativity. The Educators at Julia Creek Early Learning Centre recognize the environment as the third teacher; and therefore create beautiful and thoughtful play spaces. We understand it is our role as Educators to observe and listen to children, find out their interests and provide them with opportunities to explore these interests further.

Our Educators believe children learn best through hands on play, in an inquiry- based model of learning. We therefore provide a stimulating learning environment; one that promotes happiness and a desire to learn.

We believe children are independent and autonomous in their decision-making. We believe they are expressive communicators and collaborative learners. We believe children are creative, capable and inquisitive, and have therefore created an open-ended learning environment that builds on these personal qualities.

The Educators at Julia Creek Early Learning Centre believe open-ended experiences allow children to express themselves in play freely and creatively, not bound by pre-set limitations.

We believe the outdoor environment has more to offer than just physical benefits, extending on a child's cognitive, social and emotional development. We therefore provide a flexible outdoor program, allowing for choice, to nurture these developmental outcomes and to assist in nurturing a child's creative intelligence, language, literacy and numeracy development through multi-sensory play experiences; promoting loose-part play, sustainable living and allowing for ongoing and extended exploration.

We believe home and family are the child's primary educators and therefore we aim to foster collaborative partnerships with families for a holistic approach to learning and a high-quality meeting of needs. We recognize that coming from a rural and remote community brings with it its own unique needs and challenges, but also opportunities. We provide ongoing and flexible support to our remote families to ensure that every child has access to quality and critical early education.

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines (QKLG), the National Quality Standards (NQS) and a number of theoretical perspectives and contemporary research influence our programs.

Our Commitments

We embrace each child's unique set of values, experiences and ideas. Furthermore, we recognise children develop holistically and have different styles of learning.

The Educators at Julia Creek Early Learning Centre partake in ongoing professional development as well as in house mentoring to enhance their skills and knowledge consistent with change in the early childhood field.

We are committed to helping children understand the importance of looking after their natural world, and promote sustainable practices through encouraging responsibility for their classroom, the outdoor spaces, and in turn, the world in which they live.

We acknowledge the diverse backgrounds of children and believe in instilling the powerful message of acceptance, regardless of; gender, race, culture, religion, ability, social or family structure. Our early learning environment is reflective of this.

Service Policies and Procedures

You are able to access our Service policies and procedures at any time, a complete copy of the policies are available in the foyer. If you would like a copy of a particular policy, please ask the Director who will happily assist you. All of our policies are also available online in the 'About' section of Storypark. This ensures that you are able to access all policies at your convenience.

Settling into the Service

The transition to an Early Learning Centre for the first time or starting at a new Early Learning Centre can sometimes be very emotional for both the child and their families. All of our Team Members and particularly your child's Educators are ready to support your child and your family so they can look forward to coming to our Service each day. If possible prior 'visits' with your child are a great way to assist your child to become familiar with the Service, the room and the Educators who will care for them as well as reducing some of the anxiety around separating from parents on their first day. Please speak with the Director to discuss a time that would be most suitable for you and your child to visit. Please note you are required to stay on Service premises during the visit, you are welcome to have a read through our Service information which is available at the Parent Resource Area.

On your child's first day it is a good idea to allow plenty of time to settle your child. On arrival, please put away your child's food, drinks and bags where appropriate (if not sure, please ask any Team member to assist you). If your child is able, please assist them to do this themselves, this is a great opportunity to foster their self-help skills. If time permits, sit with your child and assist them to transition to the Service and engage in an activity. Please see any of our Team Members to pass on any messages or instructions for the day as well as giving them an approximate time for your return to the Service.

When it is time for you to leave, we encourage you to say goodbye to your child and let them know when you will be back, even if your child is upset it is best to say goodbye and leave. This will help build trust between you and your child. We discourage parents and families from prolonging their departure as this can be very stressful for your child and often for you too. One of our Team Members can assist by reassuring your child and engaging them in another activity as you leave. They will continue to support your child and encourage them to participate in the fun and exciting experiences programmed for the day. Please do not hesitate to phone our Service to see how your child has settled as many times as you need. If your child's Educator deems your child's level of distress too high or too prolonged, families will be called and an orientation program which causes the least amount of anxiety to your child will be arranged in collaboration with the family to ensure a smooth and stress free transition into care. However in most cases children will settle into the program with minimal fuss and much enthusiasm. The easiest way for your child to understand when you will return is by linking this to their routine. For example, by telling them I will be back after your sleep or after afternoon tea etc.

It is important that you return when you have said you would, if you are going to be late, please let the Service know and we will explain this to your child. 'Separation Anxiety' is normal during early childhood and occurs when a child becomes upset when separated from a parent / guardian. Separation anxiety usually occurs from six to eight months of age and can last until about four and a half years of age although it can last longer if the child has had painful separations in their early years. Separation anxiety reflects the child's attempts to hold on to what is safe in their world and it will settle down as the child grows older and more confident.

Priority of Access and Multicultural and Equity Policy

The Australian Government has Priority of Access Guidelines for allocating places in a long day care Centre. They set out the following three (3) levels of priority:

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 / study / training test

PRIORITY 3 – any other child

For more information www.dest.gov.au

Our Service has a non-discriminatory access policy which ensures children of different needs, religion, cultural and ethnic backgrounds are treated equally. Their needs are accommodated and their diversity of background is respected. Inclusion in childcare services reflects the acceptance in society of the principles of social justice – that children of all ability levels and cultural and ethnic backgrounds have the same intrinsic value and are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in childcare.

The benefits for inclusion can be:

- The opportunity to participate in the typical experiences of childhood
- The opportunity to be with other children and form friendships and develop other social skills
- The opportunity for natural learning of skills in real situations
- The opportunity to gain understanding about the diversity of people in the community
- The opportunity to gain skills and confidence to pursue inclusion in other settings
- Access to peer models

Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is a payment made by the Australian Government to assist families with the cost of quality childcare. The Child Care Subsidy is the main way the Government assists families with their child care fees.

The Child Care Subsidy that commenced on 2 July 2018:

- replaced the Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR) with a single, means-tested subsidy
- is paid directly to child care providers as a fee reduction and parents just cover the remaining gap

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

- the age of the child (must be aged 13 or under and not attending secondary school, except in certain circumstances where an individual may be eligible for a child who does not meet this criteria, such as children with a disability or medical condition in certain circumstances)
- the child meeting immunisation requirements
- the individual, or their partner, meeting the residency requirements listed in the legislation.

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

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) entitlement

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

- Combined annual family income
- Activity test – the activity level of both parents
- Service type – type of child care service and whether the child attends school

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

There is also targeted additional fee assistance for vulnerable families through the Child Care Safety Net.

Families can get an estimate of what they may be entitled to by entering their details into the Department of Human Services Payment and Service Finder.

Registering for CCS is the responsibility of the parent. You will need to confirm your child's booking pattern and that they attend the Service in order for your claim to be approved by Centrelink. This can all be done through your MyGov account. Information and forms can be accessed from your nearest Families Assistance Office, calling 13 61 50 or logging onto www.centrelink.gov.au.

With the introduction of the Governments Child Care Management System (CCMS), families are now linked through computer software to receive CCS through fee reductions. Your enrolment form clearly outlines the information you need to provide to our Service to receive your CCS reduction (Please note our Service is unable to change any of this information on site, this can only be done by contacting FAO). If families are not eligible for CCS, or become ineligible full fees must be paid.

Payment of Fees

Upon enrolment you will be required to pay one weeks' worth of fees as fees are paid one week in advance. We are currently a 'Cashless' service with Direct Debit the preferred payment option for our Service. Our bank account details are on the bottom of your statement to use for direct debit payments. If fees are not kept up to date it will jeopardize your child's booking and their position may be suspended or cancelled.

Your child's booking at the Service is permanent. Therefore fees are payable for all days including absences (sickness or holidays) and public holidays. This ensures that a booking is always reserved for your child. Two weeks' written notice is required if your child leaves our Service. All accounts must be finalised by this time, as any outstanding accounts will be forwarded to a debt collection agency.

Our Service offers a Holiday Half Gap fee during the School holidays if your child is absent, however in order for this to be applied you will need to provide at least a weeks' notice as to whether or not your child will be attending during the school holiday period.

Late fees apply to all children who remain at the Service after closing time (5:15pm). Parents / guardians will be charged \$1.00 per minute per child. For example 2 children for 13 minutes will be charged at \$26.00. These fees are charged to your account and you will need to sign a form to acknowledge this. When you are completing your

enrolment form you will be asked to sign that you have read and understood your responsibilities in relation to fee payment.

Outstanding Accounts

We have a proven Debt Management procedure. If your account falls in arrears we will take steps to collect the amount outstanding, you may risk losing your child's position within our Service and a possible bad credit rating if the amount remains outstanding. All costs incurred during recovery of outstanding fees will be charged to your account.

Emergency and Evacuation

Emergency evacuation drills are held on a quarterly basis at our Service to ensure a thorough understanding of emergency procedures and to demonstrate how safety procedures may be applied in an emergency situation. Our drills cover such possibilities as fire, bomb threats, floods/storms, blackouts, smog episodes and disgruntled persons attack. It is important that Team Members use teaching opportunities and discuss emergencies and evacuations with the children in both a formal and informal manner.

Our Service has up to date emergency plans in place and ensures that all of our Team Members are trained in what to do when there is an emergency. Fire extinguishers and fire blankets are placed strategically throughout the Service. Each child is identified during an evacuation and an attendance record is taken.

This highlights why it is so important your child is signed in and out every day so we can ensure your child's safety in the event of an evacuation. All persons on the premises during an evacuation must participate in the evacuation and must follow the direction given by our Team Members.

National Quality Framework

The Australian Government understands that parents want the best for their children. An important part of this is ensuring that quality early childhood education and care makes a positive contribution to children's learning and provides the building blocks for a brighter future.

The National Quality Framework balances improved quality with maintaining affordability for families. The Australian Government will continue to provide child care payments to reduce out-of-pocket costs for families who use Child Care Subsidy approved child care.

Quality children's education and care is where children are happy, engaged and learning with qualified educators who are nurturing and caring.

Many of the questions parents have about the operation of education and care services can best be answered by the regulatory authority in their state or territory.

Department of Education and Training

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Signing Children In and Out

Your child must be signed in and out of our Service every day they attend. This is a legal requirement and must be followed. The sign in and out records are used for emergencies and for the calculation of CCS (Child Care Subsidy).

If a child is away for a booked day, absent because they are unwell or on holidays or if their booked day occurs on a public holiday the corresponding days must be signed for by the parent or guardian. Failure to sign for any booked days or absences will result in the removal of CCS (Child Care Subsidy) for that day and you will be charged full fees.

Please ensure our Team Members are aware that your child is arriving / departing and you must sign your child in/out on the Kiosk.

In cases where the Kiosk is not working, a paper sign in form will be provided and parents are required to sign in the time the child was dropped off or collected from the Centre and sign their names.

Cancellation of Care

Should you wish to cancel your child's care 2 weeks' written notice is required. If two weeks' notice is not given you will be charged full fees (CCS cannot be claimed if you do not give notice and therefore full fees will be charged). These fees are payable to the Service to finalize your child's enrolment. Any fees not paid will be passed onto a debt collection agency and which may affect your credit rating and incur further fees.

Dropping Off and Collecting Children

Our Service will not release any child into the care of someone not known by Team Members. If our Team Members do not know the person who has arrived to collect the child, then that person must provide photo ID as proof they are the person authorized to collect the child from both the enrolment form and or other written confirmation of collection (please note that any person authorized to collect a child must be over 18 years of age, unless they are the parent/s of the child being collected).

In the event that the child has not been collected by closing time, we will then begin to contact the parent / guardian on the numbers provided (it is important that these are up to date at all times). If we are unable to reach the parent/guardian, we will then begin to contact the individuals listed on the emergency contacts list. If after 30 minutes we are still unable to contact anyone, the Approved provider will be contacted.

After 45minutes, the Approved Provider will follow the Department of Communities Abandoned Child procedures including contacting the Child Protection and Crisis Centre 24hr service.

Programs and Routines

Our qualified Educators provide stimulating and engaging experiences which develop each child's skills allowing them to achieve positive outcomes. A planned program is displayed in our room for you to view, please take time to discuss this with your child's Educator. Your child's individual learning plan and group plan is on Storypark. Our programs reflect planned experiences from observations of children and also child initiated experiences. Our programs are flexible and adaptable to meet the individual and group interests, talents and abilities of each child. Daily reflections are sent via Storypark, informing families of what their child has done for the day with links to the EYLF, educational theorists, developmental milestones and other relevant documents.

Children have the opportunity for both indoor and outdoor play as part of our room's routine. Routines allow time for individual, small and large group play. Children's language and literacy skills are further developed during this time with social interactions that involves children in storytelling, drama, poems and games. Music also plays a large part in these sessions as children are able to experiment with dancing, singing and exercising their bodies.

We ensure your child is an active learner by creating an environment that is challenging and stimulating where children can explore and experiment through play. Following their natural curiosity and own lines of enquiry.

What to bring to Kindy

Please speak with our Nominated Supervisor regarding what to bring each day. As a minimum guide we recommend:

- Shady / broad brimmed hat (bucket or legionnaires is recommended by the Cancer Council)
- Bag or back pack
- At least three (3) spare changes of clothes (please ensure these are appropriate for the season) including underwear, training pants, socks etc
- Fitted cot sheet for rest time and a blanket in cooler weather. These should be placed in a sheet bag (or a pillow slip, *plastic bags are strictly prohibited*)
- Labelled bottle/s with milk (if required)
- Labelled dummy or comforter (if required)
- Nappies and wipes (if required)
- Lunch box containing healthy options for the following (please refer to our nutrition policy or speak to our Director):
 1. Morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea
 2. Drink bottle
 3. Lunch

For great ideas you can also try www.kidspot.com.au or www.nutritionaustralia.org. Please ensure that all items are clearly labeled with your child's name. If items are misplaced, this will assist us to return them to you as soon as possible.

PLEASE ENSURE THAT ALL ITEMS ARE LABELLED AS WE CANNOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST ITEMS

Absences and Holidays

Parents are requested to phone the Service if their child is unable to attend for the day. Please note; notification is urgently required in the instance of an infectious or contagious disease.

Families receiving Child Care Subsidy payments are allocated 42 absent days (allowable absences) per child per financial year (including Public Holidays). When the 42 absent days have been used, CCS will not be paid for any further absences unless they are for the following:

- Illness with a medical certificate
- Non-immunisation
- Parent with a rostered day off and a Statutory Declaration signed by a JP
- Parent with a rotating shift and a Statutory Declaration signed by a JP
- Public Holiday
- Periods of local emergency
- Court ordered shared custody
- Attendance at Preschool (where applicable)

Please note there is no limit to the number of approved absences as listed above. Each family is entitled up to 8 weeks (booked days) for holidays per calendar year (not accumulative) Our Service offers a Holiday Half Gap fee if your child is absent for holidays, however in order for this to be applied you will need to provide at least a weeks' notice as to whether or not your child will be attending during the school holiday period. Any entitlement is providing that a written notice is received at least a week prior to holidays being taken and that all accounts are paid up to date (please note if your account is not one week in advance as per Service policy you are not eligible for any relevant holiday discount).

Health and Hygiene

To minimise the risk of infection in our Service we follow the 'Staying Healthy in Childcare' guidelines for exclusion periods. Please find an exclusion table attached at the end of this document for your reference. If a child in care has a suspected infectious condition the parents will be contacted and asked to collect the child as soon as possible. Parents are encouraged to seek medical advice and inform our Service of the outcome. If parents cannot be contacted we will endeavor to contact other individuals listed on your enrolment form.

In accordance with the Health Department please inform the Director IMMEDIATELY if your child contracts German Measles (Rubella). If your child contracts German Measles they may need to be excluded from our Service to prevent women in their early stages of pregnancy from contracting the disease when they enter our Service because of its effects on the developing fetus. For more information please log on to: www.health.gov.au.

Children with a suspected or confirmed infectious condition must produce a medical certificate before the child can return to our Service. The Director will post signs and communicate via our online platforms including our Private Facebook Page and Storypark, to inform families of confirmed infectious outbreaks with information relating to the illness. 'Staying Healthy in Child Care' provides essential information to early childhood services. For more

information, please log on to: www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses. The Director has the right to ask for a second opinion if they feel the child has not fully recovered from a suspected or confirmed infectious condition.

If a child has been admitted to or, visited the hospital due to a suspected or confirmed illness, a medical clearance will need to be provided before the child can return to care.

As per the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 each Team Member must observe good health and hygiene practices and ensure the childcare facilities be kept clean and in good repair.

The three most important ways of preventing the spread of infectious diseases are:

- Effective hand washing
- Exclusion of sick children and Team Members
- Immunisation

We consider hand washing and hand drying as the most effective way for our Team Members to minimize the spread of infection. This is an important routine for both Team Members and children. Our Team Members follow the practices below:

- Team Members are encouraged to wash their hands on arrival at our Service and before departure each day
- Team Members are encouraged to wash their hands before handling food, including babies' bottles
- Team Members and children are encouraged to wash their hands before and after eating
- Team Members and children are encouraged to wash their hands after changing a nappy, assisting children with toileting or using a toilet themselves
- Team Members are encouraged to wash their hands after cleaning up blood, urine, faeces or vomit (even if wearing gloves)
- Team Members are encouraged to wash their hands after removing gloves
- Team Members are encouraged to wash their hands before and after giving medication
- Team Members and children are encouraged to wash their hands after coming in from outside play

Good oral health is vital to general wellbeing and early childhood dental hygiene is a key factor in the development of healthy adult teeth. Our Service plays a vital role in promoting good dental hygiene behaviour in children to reduce the risk of dental decay and to facilitate the prevention and management of dental trauma in children.

Recent information on dental health indicates that rinsing the mouth with water after eating is the most effective way to combat tooth decay. Our Service will encourage children to have water bottles at the table to drink during and after eating.

We also use our group and transition times to discuss dental care. We provide a range of resource material for children and their families.

Immunisation

Immunisation is not compulsory, but is a requirement to claim Child Care Subsidy. Parents must provide up to date immunisation records to the Service at all times. Parents who choose not to immunize their children will be charged full fees for their time in care and any child who is not fully immunized may be excluded from the Service in the event of a breakout of a vaccine preventable disease for the duration of the outbreak. All children require an immunization record BEFORE they commence at the Centre, even if they are not immunized. This can be found under the Medicare tab on your MyGov account.

For more information please call the Family Assistance Office on 13 61 50 or log on to: www.familyassist.gov.au

Head Lice

Head lice (pediculosis capitis) is a part of life for children in childcare and school. Children have close contact with each other and this provides an opportunity for head lice to transfer from head to head although head lice cannot jump. Our Team Members will take every precaution to limit the spread of head lice within our Service while ensuring that the Service will notify families of any reported case so appropriate treatment can be sought.

Medication

If your child requires medication to be administered at the Service a medication form must be completed by a parent/guardian. All medication must be in its original container with the dispensing label or doctor's letter confirming the child as the prescribed person and the dosage to be given. This applies to all medications; regardless of whether they are non-prescribed such as teething gels, nappy creams etc. or prescribed such as antibiotics. Please note pharmacies can provide dispensing labels for non-prescribed medication, including homeopathic medicine.

Under no circumstances can medication be left inside a child's bag. In the case where a child has a high temperature our Service is able to administer children's paracetamol for an emergency. We do prefer to have received verbal confirmation from the parent / guardian to two (2) staff members. The child's enrolment form must also give permission for the child to receive paracetamol. Team Members will complete the medication form and the parent / guardian will be asked to sign upon arrival at the Service.

Once paracetamol has been administered we will continue to monitor your child frequently. The child must be collected within the hour, if paracetamol has been administered, if the child's temperature has not lowered within thirty (30) minutes, the child must be collected immediately. If a child's temperature rises above 39 degrees they must be collected immediately.

Please note, we do not have any stores of children's Panadol at the Centre

Management of Asthma

Nebulisers / Volumatics will only be administered with your Doctor's written consent. Medications will not be administered more often than 4 hourly. Parents are asked to demonstrate to Team Members, with the child, the procedure before the initial dose.

In the case of a child susceptible to an acute asthma attack, medication may be permanently left at the Service. We have encouraged parents to speak with their doctor to discuss an asthma management plan, which includes regular

review. A copy of the child's asthma management plan that has been developed by the child's doctor must be given to the Director before your child starts at the service.

Unwell Children

A child who is unwell cannot participate fully in their day. We ask parents to keep children who are unwell at home as it is more comfortable for your child as well as ensuring that there is little opportunity for other children to become unwell too.

If your child does become unwell whilst in our care we will follow the steps below:

- We will remove your child from the group (to ensure the other children do not become sick if the illness is infectious)
- We will contact the parent / guardian and request that your child be picked up as soon as possible
- If we are unable to make contact, our Director will use their discretion in deciding to seek medical attention
- We will complete an Illness Form and this will be provided to the medical practitioner
- The Director may request a medical clearance prior to your child returning to our Service

Our Service will, at all times, maintain a clear and concise record of both Team Member and child illnesses as they occur at our Service.

Incidents

Team Members organise indoor and outdoor environments daily to ensure it allows for maximum supervision and promotes safety. In the case of an incident involving your child at our Service, Team Members will administer first aid immediately.

If an injury requires further medical attention the parent / guardian will be contacted to arrange a plan of action. If our Service is unable to contact a parent / guardian or another person from the emergency contact list on the enrolment form, we will arrange a plan of action. The Director or person in charge will act on behalf of the parent / guardian to seek the appropriate medical assistance. We will ensure that a Team Member the child knows accompanies them at all times until the parent / guardian arrives.

Documentation of all incidents will be made on the Incident Form and the parent / guardian will be asked to sign this on collection of their child.

Sun Safety

We protect the children and Team Members from direct exposure to the sun. Children are very vulnerable to sunburn which increases their risk of acquiring skin cancer. Cancer Council Australia advises 'the major cause of skin cancer is too much exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun.' Skin can burn in as little as 15 minutes in the summer sun.

Children will play outside before 10.00am and after 3.00pm **where possible** to minimise the exposure of the sun to the children and Team Members and in shade as much as possible. We have created lots of shade to limit exposure to direct sun. Parents / guardians are encouraged to ensure that children have sunscreen on all uncovered areas

prior to leaving home in the morning or on arrival at the Service. Team Members will also use a variety of age appropriate teaching tools to ensure that children are developing sun safe habits.

Parents / guardians are encouraged to dress children in loose comfortable clothing which covers as much skin as possible (singlet or halter neck tops are not appropriate). All children and Team Members must wear a sun safe hat when outdoors at all times. The Cancer Council of Australia recommends the use of a 'broad brimmed or legionnaire style hat.

We are aware sun damage can never be repaired, prevention is the best cure. For more information log on to: www.cancer.org.au or Cancer Council Helpline 13 11 20.

Toys from Home

We have lots of wonderful, fun and educational toys for the children to enjoy at our Service. We encourage children to leave their own toys at home. Home toys are special to children and if they are lost or broken children can become very upset.

We understand that some children may need 'comfort' items, can you please ensure they are clearly labeled with your child's name and that their Educator is aware of them. If your child brings a special item in for show and tell, please let Educators know and it must be stored in children's bags until it is time to show and share.

Our Service cannot accept any responsibility for the care of any personal items brought into the Service.

Lost Property

The Service will aim to take every precaution to prevent lost property. Unfortunately items can go missing from time to time. The Service will keep any lost property together and make it available at the service for families to search for any missing items. If items are still uncollected after a period they will be donated to a local charity.

Rest Time

We provide 'quiet time' for our children to regroup after a busy morning of fun and learning. This is a requirement as per the Education and Care Services Regulations 2011 for all programs in appropriate circumstances, to allow for supervised rest periods for all children. If our children do not sleep, they will participate in meditation and quiet activities.

Positive Behaviour

Team Members and families share a common goal of positive outcomes for children. Children are encouraged to develop social skills that will allow them to resolve conflicts and meet their needs without the use of aggressive or destructive behaviour.

Children are encouraged to respect themselves and others. When Team Members guide a child's behaviour they aim to provide each child with clear guidelines as to why a particular behaviour is unacceptable. Children are given realistic limits to follow whilst they are in care.

We are here to work in partnership with you to encourage positive behaviour. If you would like to discuss anything with us, please let us know and together we can put strategies in place to assist your child to make good choices.

Bitting at Kindy

Bitting is not uncommon in younger children. Children who usually bite do so because they are frustrated, angry or exploring. They often act impulsively and quickly, being too young and immature to think of other choices or consequences. They usually bite because their language skills are not good enough to say what they want.

Teething may also be a cause of bitting. Bitting is most frequent in the 13th to the 30th month old age group. When bitting occurs, it is often very distressing for parents. If your child is bitten, you will probably feel upset and very distressed.

If on the other hand your child is the biter, you may feel uncomfortable. Team Members also find bitting very distressing, often feeling very guilty that they have been unable to eliminate the problem whilst maintaining the self-esteem of all parties involved. Please remember that this is a natural phase of development for some children, and will be dealt with in an appropriate manner by the room Team Members and the Nominated Supervisor.

The Team Members will endeavor to maintain a safe environment for all children and do their best to ensure they are working to reduce the bitting within the class room, however should bitting become a frequent occurrence the following procedure will be used:

- Team Members are to complete incident / accident reports each time a child bites, for the child that is bitten and the biter. If a child continually bites Team Members are to:
- Complete accident / incident forms, this will hopefully assist Team Members in ascertaining the reasons for the child's bitting
- Team Members are to assess the room environment and routine and make necessary changes as required
- Continue to inform the parents each time the child bites via the incident / accident report
- Involve the Nominated Supervisor to assist with ideas and strategies
- If the strategies the Service is employing is not successful , the parents will be contacted and a meeting will need to be arranged to discuss a plan of action
- Parents and Team Members will work together and evaluate plans on a daily basis
- Professional help may be sort with the approval of the parents to assist the Team Members with room strategies
- Team Members will be required to record the evaluations of the strategies
- After professional help has been sort and bitting continues, parents may be asked to find alternative care. Adequate notice and support will be given.

Nutrition

Good food habits need to be developed at an early age. It is important that we are meeting the nutritional, social, cultural and educational needs of the children in our care. We ask that, where possible, 'treat' food be left at home. If you are concerned about what foods your child is encouraged to bring to our Service, please see one of our Team members who will be happy to discuss this with you. We also have information available in our Parent Resource Area which you are welcome to peruse. Don't forget that water is an ideal drink for children and is available during inside and outside time.

Allergies are becoming increasingly common in children; we are committed to the health and wellbeing of our early learning community. Julia Creek ELC is an ALLERGY AWARE service. There are no current restrictions, in terms of allergens, on what foods can be packed in children's lunch boxes, however if a child were to enroll with a severe allergy this would be evaluated and relevant risk management strategies would be implemented, this may include the restrictions of certain foods. If this were to occur we would inform families prior to the enrolment commencing or as soon as possible.

If providing food for a special occasion for all to share, please check with the Director or a team member for any possible ingredients to avoid.

Please note if the Service provides meals for the children we follow strict nutrition guidelines set out by Nutrition Australia to ensure that children are receiving all the vital nutrients and minerals they require to grow.

Birthdays

We encourage families to celebrate their child's birthday at the Service. You are welcome to organise a celebration with our Team Members prior to the birthday so that both you and your child can fully enjoy the special day.

We encourage parents / guardians to bring in individual cupcakes to share with friends. The birthday child can have a candle on their cake to blow out. We do this to minimise the spread of droplet infection by the child blowing on a cake to be eaten by others.

Shows and Special Visits

On occasion we have special shows / visitors that come to our Service each year. These include police, dentists, magicians, reptiles etc. Any planned shows are outlined in the Parent Newsletter for you prior to the day.

Our Service also encourages participation from local schools and training organizations. If a special visit to the Service is required by a health care professional (speech therapist, inclusion support therapist, health care worker etc) during the year, discussion and permission will be sought from the child's parent / guardian. Should you have any concerns about your child, please see our Team Members in your child's room. All shows and visitors are under constant Team Member and/or Nominated Supervisor supervision.

Parent Grievances

We are here to ensure that your child is happy and healthy in our care. If there are any concerns, please let us know! We have a grievance procedure and a support structure in the foyer.

By following this procedure it gives those involved an opportunity to address any issues and ensure that your concerns are followed through and you are satisfied with the end result and the action taken.

Should the need arise, you are always welcome to contact Julia Creek Early Learning Centre directly on 07 4746 7279. All grievances are taken very seriously and we will always ensure the resolution is discussed with the family involved.

Parent Support Structure

Partnerships between Team Members and families are crucial for positive outcomes for our children. Should you require any assistance, please follow our support structure below.

Educator

If you would like further information or you would like the matter taken further, please contact our



Nominated Supervisor

If you would like further information or you would like the matter taken further, please contact our



Approved Provider

If you would like further information or you would like the matter taken further, please contact our

Approved Provider- Tenneil Cody (07) 4746 4202



Department of Education, Training and Employment

(please speak to your Nominated Supervisor for a phone number)

Parent / Teacher Communication

Information regarding your child’s day will be documented and available for you each afternoon. The information provided may include details regarding sleep, toileting, meals and activities (if appropriate). You can locate this in the foyer on the Kiosk and for nappies, in the nappy change area. Daily Reflections are available on Storypark and we have floor books on display in the rooms with current inquiries. Our Team Members will speak to you informally at drop off and pick up times should any issue arise during the day we will give you a courtesy call to discuss.

During the year we offer parent teacher interviews as a formal time for parents / guardians and Team Members to talk. Should you require additional or an alternative time to meet with your child’s Educator, please see your child’s Educator and the Nominated Supervisor to arrange a time which is mutually convenient.

Please ensure that you look out for notices around the Service, in your child’s room and of course, in your pocket.

We provide information and updates on Storypark and Facebook, sharing ideas i.e. lunchbox ideas, events, health advice, medical visitors to town etc.

Parent Participation

We encourage parents to actively participate in the care of their children by becoming involved in and spending time at our Service. Parents are welcome to share special occasions with their child, come in and spend time participating in the room, read a book to the class, play an instrument, do some cooking or painting and much more. Parents can also become involved in the program by communicating their ideas and feedback to our Team Members who will incorporate this information into the daily program. We value parent input into our programs and strive to collaborate with parents regularly to build relationships that support the developing child. Please speak with one of our Team Members or our Nominated Supervisor for more information.

Parent and Visitor Conduct

It is expected that families using our Service and associated visitors demonstrate patience and courtesy at all times. Our Team Members and management endeavour to provide the children with positive behaviour role models. We will not tolerate inappropriate language or behaviour at the Service at any time.

Smoking is not permitted at the Service or in the car park. The car park is for Team Member parking and for families dropping off or collecting children. Please be thoughtful, especially during peak times. We have parent, children and Team Member codes of conduct that must be adhered to at all times.

Parent/Teacher Interviews

Interviews are formally conducted each year. Interviews allow your child's Educator an opportunity for you both to discuss your child's progress and developmental milestones. It is also an opportunity for you, as the parent / guardian to discuss any items you may have. Although our Team Members are always there to assist and discuss any items as they arise, this is an invaluable opportunity to speak freely without interruption. Our Service will endeavour to provide a suitable time for each parent to attend.

Storypark and Social Media

Julia Creek Early Learning Centre has a strong commitment to the safety and wellbeing of all children. In an effort to connect and engage with families in a modern world, whilst also protecting children online, we have a private Facebook page for currently enrolled families only. Only currently enrolled families will have access and this is moderated and overseen by the Nominated Supervisor as well as at least one other responsible person at the Service, when a child UN-enrolls from the Service, the family will be removed from the group as soon as practical. Posts by families to the group will be monitored and moderated where necessary. Content may include, but is not limited to; photos of special events/visitors/ day to day happenings, communication about health and wellbeing, parenting advice, nutrition advice, upcoming events, administrative information, local news etc. Anything that is posted in the group CANNOT be shared outside the group, if someone is found to be sharing anything from the private group they will be issued with a written warning and if it happens again they may be removed from the group; this is to protect the safety of the children at our Service. If a Parent does not wish for their child to appear on Social Media, they are able to opt out, or in, at any time by informing the Service in writing and filling out a 'Photo Permission' form with their updated preferences.

Each year, and upon enrollment, families will be asked to sign a 'Photo Permission' form, this will include a list of places that photos are likely to be shared; including Social Media platforms and Media outlets

Our Service uses Storypark as a way to digitally and sustainably document children's learning. Parents are asked to give consent, through the platform, for children's photos and information to be shared on Storypark. Parents are informed that they are the Admin of their child's account and they control who has access to the information on there. Storypark is used as a way to communicate and connect with not only Parents, but also Grandparents and special people in the children's lives who may not be close by. Storypark does not replace face-to-face communication, but instead is used as a tool to enhance and compliment our connection to families and highlight the children's learning and ongoing progress.

Team Member Recruitment, Selection and Retention

Children need to develop trusting relationships with Team Members. When devising our Service roster we consider the continuity of care for each child. When Team Members are on leave we endeavour to advise parents / guardians and children and if possible use Team Members which are already familiar to our Service.

Team Member meetings are conducted regularly and each Team Member is encouraged to attend. We encourage Team Members to use this forum to discuss any suggestions or to raise any concerns they may have. We promote an environment of respect and value each Team member's input. At our Service we endeavour to create a dedicated team of early childhood professionals.

Team Member Training and Development

A quality program relies upon our Team Members having a thorough knowledge of current theory and practice in early childhood. We continually work toward developing and implementing formal programs for Team member orientation, training and development, including external training and education as well as in house professional development sessions.

Our investment in Team Member training and development ensures that our current and future skill requirements meet legal obligations and assist individual career development. We ensure that at least one (1) Team Member with the prescribed first aid competency is present at the Service at all times though endeavor to have all qualified.

Educator Philosophies

Our Educators take time to develop not only our Service philosophy but also their own philosophies and these are available to families in our room. Our Educators consider a variety of perspectives regarding child learning and development and practices within early childhood education.

Students and Visitors

We welcome the opportunity to share our knowledge with students and volunteers and seize the opportunity to learn new skills from them too! All students and volunteers are required to undergo suitability screening by the Commission for Children and Young People (Positive Notice blue care for Child related Employment, which is to be displayed at all times).

All students and volunteers will be interviewed and have orientation visits supervised by our Service. Our students and volunteers will also be asked to sign that they have read, understood and will abide by our Student and Visitors Handbook.

All students and volunteers will be supervised by our Team Members and will not be left alone to care for children under any circumstances.

Compliance History Logbook

Our Service will maintain a Compliance History Logbook at all times that is available for families and visitors should they wish to view this. Please ask your Nominated Supervisor if you would like to view the Logbook.

Excursions

As a part of the Julia Creek Early Learning Centre's regular program, and our connection to our small rural community, we engage in a combination of regular outings and planned excursions. Our Service values child led learning and the close connections that the children have within their community. We regularly take the children to the parks around town, to see big machines at work, to visit the stores in the main street, the Cafes, to purchase materials and ingredients to follow current interests and, to engage in social events planned in town. This also includes forming strong connections with the local State School by having visits throughout the year, engaging in a transition to School program and participating in activities up at the School.

We often visit the Fire Station and occasionally the Police and Ambulance Station as a part of our commitment to the health and safety of our children and to help foster and grow their ability to respond appropriately in an emergency situation. We will usually walk or utilize the Council bus, weather pending. Annual excursion forms are provided each year and upon enrollment and permission is sort from all parents for their children to participate in regular outings. Parents are informed on the day when we are heading out. You will receive a text with the destination along with the planned time of departure and the planned time of return. There are also whiteboards on each entrance door which are filled in prior to each outing; they state the Who, Where, Date, Time and Contact details of the responsible person.

We also engage in planned Excursions that may take us out of town. This involves us notifying families of the destination and seeking additional permission prior to the day of the excursion in the form of a signed permission form. One of our annual excursions is the end of year Kindy trip. This has become an annual event; we take our graduating Kinders on a special trip to either Mt Isa or Winton to help celebrate their time with us and to participate in some fun, planned activities, whilst also supporting our surrounding local communities. Planned excursions are based on children's current interests and as a way to connect with our wider community.

Risk assessments are updated annually (or in the event of any changes to potential risk factors) for our regular outings and for each planned excursion.

Attachment 1 – Exclusion Periods

Recommended minimum exclusion periods for infectious conditions for schools, pre-schools and child care centres are as follows:

Condition	Exclusion of Case	Exclusion of Contacts
Amoebiasis (<i>Entamoeba histolytica</i>)	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not Excluded
Campylobacter	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not Excluded
Candidiasis	See “Thrush”	
Chickenpox (Varicella)	Exclude until all blisters have dried. This is usually at least 5 days after the rash first appeared in unimmunized children and less in immunized children.	Any child with an immune deficiency (for example, leukaemia) or receiving chemotherapy should be excluded for their own protection. Otherwise, not excluded
CMV (Cytomegalovirus Infection)	Exclusion is NOT necessary	Not Excluded
Conjunctivitis	Exclude until the discharge from the eyes has stopped unless doctor has diagnosed a non-infectious conjunctivitis.	Not Excluded
Cryptosporidium Infection	Excluded until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.	Not Excluded
Diarrhoea (no organism identified)	Excluded until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not Excluded
Diphtheria	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received following at least 2 negative throat swabs, the first swab not less than 24 hours after finishing a course of antibiotics followed by another swab 48 hour later	Exclude contacts that live in the same house until cleared to return by appropriate health authority
German measles	See “Rubella”	
Giardiasis	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
Glandular fever (Mononucleosis, EBV)	Exclusion is NOT necessary	Not excluded

infection)		
Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease	Exclude until all blisters have dried	Not excluded
Haemophilus influenza type b (Hib)	Exclude until the person has received appropriate antibiotic treatment for at least 4 days	Not excluded
Head Lice (Pediculosis)	Exclusion is NOT necessary if effective treatment is commenced prior to the next day at child care (i.e. the child doesn't need to be sent home immediately if head lice are detected.)	Not excluded
Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before seven days after the onset of jaundice	Not excluded
Hepatitis B	Exclusion is NOT necessary	Not Excluded
Hepatitis C	Exclusion is NOT necessary	Not Excluded
Herpes simplex (cold sores, fever blisters)	Exclusion is not necessary if the person is developmentally capable of maintaining hygiene practices to minimize the risk of transmission. If the person is unable to comply with these practices they should be excluded until the sores are dry. Sores should be covered by a dressing where possible.	Not Excluded
Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV/AIDS)	Exclusion is NOT necessary. If the person is severely immunocompromised, they will be vulnerable to other people's illnesses.	Not Excluded
Hydatid Disease	Exclusion is NOT necessary	Not Excluded
Impetigo (school sores)	Exclude until appropriate antibiotic treatment has commenced. Any sores on exposed skin should be covered with a watertight dressing.	Not Excluded

Influenza and influenza-like illness	Exclude until well	Not Excluded
Legionnaires' Disease	Exclusion is NOT necessary	Not Excluded
Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by appropriate health authority	Not Excluded
Measles	Exclude for 4 days after the onset of the rash.	<p>Immunized and immune contacts are not excluded.</p> <p>Non-immunised contacts of a case are to be excluded from child care until 14 days after the first day of the appearance of rash in the last case, unless immunized within 72 hours of first contact during the infectious period with the first case.</p> <p>All unimmunised children should be excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case.</p>
Meningitis (bacterial)	Exclude until well and has received appropriate antibiotics	Not Excluded
Meningococcal Infection	Exclude until appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed	Not Excluded
Molluscum contagiosum	Exclusion is NOT necessary	Not Excluded
Mumps	Excluded for nine days after onset of swelling	Not Excluded
Norovirus	Excluded until there has not been a loose bowel motion or vomiting for 48 hours	Not Excluded
Parvovirus infection (fifth disease, erythema infectiosum, slapped cheek syndrome)	Exclusion is NOT necessary	Not Excluded
Pertussis	See "Whooping Cough"	
Respiratory Syncytial virus	Exclusion is NOT necessary	Not Excluded
Ringworm/tinea	Exclude until the day after appropriate antifungal treatment has	Not Excluded

	commenced	
Roseola	Exclusion is NOT necessary	Not Excluded
Ross River virus	Exclusion is NOT necessary	Not Excluded
Rotavirus infection	Children are to be excluded from the centre until there has not been a loose bowel motion or vomiting for 24 hours	Not Excluded
Rubella (German Measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of the rash	Not Excluded
Salmonella Infection	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not Excluded
Scabies	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced	Not Excluded
Scarlet fever	See “Streptococcal sore throat”	
School Sores	See “Impetigo”	
Shigella infection	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not Excluded
Streptococcal sore throat	Exclude until the person has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and feels well	Not Excluded
Thrush (candidiasis)	Exclusion is NOT necessary	Not Excluded
Toxoplasmosis	Exclusion is NOT necessary	Not Excluded
Tuberculosis (TB)	Exclude until medical certificate is produced from an appropriate health authority	Not excluded unless considered necessary by public health authorities
Typhoid, Paratyphoid	Exclude until medical certificate is produced from appropriate health authority	Not excluded unless considered necessary by appropriate health authorities
Varicella	See “Chickenpox”	
Viral gastroenteritis (viral diarrhea)	Children are to be excluded from the centre until there has not been a	Not Excluded

	loose bowel motion or vomiting for 24 hours	
Warts	Exclusion is NOT necessary	Not Excluded
Whooping Cough (pertusis)	Exclude until five days after starting appropriate antibiotic treatment of for 21 days from the onset of coughing	Contacts that live in the same house as the case and have received less than three doses of pertussis vaccine are to be excluded from the centre until they have had five days of an appropriate course of antibiotics. If antibiotics have not been taken, these contacts must be excluded for 21 days after their last exposure to the case while the person was infectious.
Worms	Exclusion not necessary if treatment has occurred	Not Excluded