



# Adventures

Preschool & Long Day Care

## Parent Handbook

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## **Introduction**

Welcome to ADVENTURES Pre-school and Long Day Care Centre.

As a preschool we are focused on preparing your child for a confident and capable start to Kindergarten. For our younger children and babies we provide the cuddles and care they need to thrive and reach their individual milestones.

For every age group we make the learning fun!

## **Preschool goals**

ADVENTURES helps to prepare your child for school by promoting:

- Language development and communication (incl: letters, sounds & pre-reading)
- Early mathematical understandings (incl: numbers, shapes and measurement)
- Social and emotional competence (incl: social skills in group settings)
- Health and physical wellbeing (incl: hand writing, cutting and pencil grip)
- Active learning processes (incl: problem solving, testing and estimating)
- Positive attitude to learning (incl: experiencing success to encourage confidence)

Our preschool program aims to provide a smooth transition between preschool and the Kindergarten Key Learning Areas

## **Staff**

The Director, Nerrilee Lysaght, holds university qualifications in both Early Childhood Teaching and Infants/Primary School Teaching. All staff at Adventures have tertiary qualifications in Child Care and First Aid.

Ongoing professional development is a priority for management and staff at Adventures.

Relief staff may be employed at various times to enable staff to attend training and professional development. Relief staff may also be employed when permanent staff are on leave.

We encourage visits from students attending school, TAFE and University.

## **Programming**

What is an enjoyable play time is also a sophisticated learning experience for a young child. For each age group we develop programs for the children based on observations, parent input, our knowledge of early childhood development and the national Early Years Learning Framework.

Development records for your child are available for you to look at with a staff member or through the Adventures parent portal.

In every activity, children are developing strong foundations for academic and social learning such as literacy, numeracy, science and technology, self esteem, social skills and independence.

We are happy to discuss in detail the underpinning knowledge and skills being developed when a child is playing and participating in various activities.

## **Attendance patterns**

Children are offered enrolment for a minimum of two days a week. Enrolments for 2 or 3 days must include either a Monday and/or a Friday to allow suitable combinations of days for all families at the service.

The centre closes for 2 weeks at Christmas/New Year and public holidays. We do not charge fees for these days.

Should you be going on holidays we offer two weeks of reduced fees to maintain your child's place in the centre. Likewise please let us know if you require extra days to attend meetings, lunches, etc and we will endeavour to arrange casual care for your child.

## **Priority of access**

Adventures Preschool complies with Family Assistance guidelines which require the allocation of places to families with the greatest need for child care.

Priority is given to families who require care for more than one child and to families who already have a child enrolled at the centre. Families requiring full time care followed by 4 days then 3 days are also given priority of access.

## **Your child's group**

Your child will have one of the following groups as their home-base. Our policy is that children remain in their group until they are developmentally ready to move on to the next group and a place is available. From time to time your child may participate in activities in different rooms. During these times the appropriate staff:child ratios will be maintained.

**Nursery:** 6 months to 2 years

**Toddlers:** 2 years to 3 years

**Preschoolers:** over 3 years and toilet-trained.

## **Orientation and settling your child**

When your child first joins Adventures, it helps for her/him to stay for short periods and to be left with the same person each day. We encourage you to have an Orientation Session with your child between 9.30am-11.30am on a day to be arranged with the office before care commences.

Even after your child is familiar and comfortable with the centre, family members are welcome to visit anytime and use the drop off and pick up time as an opportunity to chat with staff and play with their children.

## **Medication**

If your child requires medicine to be administered during the day, please complete the "Permission to Administer Medication Form". Please also inform the staff but **a verbal request alone is not enough.**

Hand medicines to staff. Do not leave medicines or creams in your child's bag.

A child cannot attend the centre for the first 24 hours after commencing antibiotics.

## **Arriving**

1. Hand over your child to a member of staff and inform us of any special circumstances.
2. Sign in your child on the day sheet and add any special instructions for the day.

3. Put your child's bag and spare clothing in the locker space provided.
4. Complete a 'Permission to Administer Medication' form if any medication is to be administered during the day. Bring this to the attention of your child's group leader.
5. 30+ sunscreen is available for you to apply to your child before you leave. Staff will assume your child has sunscreen on unless you tell them otherwise.
6. Always say goodbye to your child no matter how difficult. While it may be tempting to leave quietly this can cause children to feel more anxious.
7. If you have time to settle your child for the day they are less likely to protest your departure.

### **Picking up your child**

1. Please arrive to collect your child **by 5.55 pm**. If you are unavoidably delayed, please phone the Director (late fees will be charged for collections after 6pm).
2. Notify a staff member when you collect your child.
3. Collect your child's spare clothing and any medication.
4. Sign out your child on the day sheet noting actual time of departure and check for any comments regarding your child.
5. Check your parent pocket and the notice board for any communication to families.

### **Absent children/ Holidays**

1. Please inform the Centre if your child is absent and let staff know the reason.
2. If attending a doctor, ask for a medical certificate and give it to the centre for Child Care Benefit purposes.
3. Please provide us with 2 weeks notice in writing before taking holidays.

## **Communication with parents**

We have an open door policy and encourage you to talk to us at any time either formally or informally. We welcome any information about your child which will assist us to develop suitable programs and improve our policies.

**Notice Boards** - Notices of events, lost and found ads, general messages from the Director to parents and other material of general interest is pinned onto the notice board.

**Newsletter** - We compile a newsletter every term which is published on the website. Parents are encouraged to contribute information of general interest.

**QKEYLM** - information specific to your child's learning and development and general information about the activities in your child's room is published daily. You will be provided with a username and password to access this information.

## **Fees**

Unlike many other centres we do not charge for public holidays or for 2 weeks over Christmas/New Year. Fees for all booked days are due and payable on the Friday of the current week. Fees will include days when your child is absent due to illness.

To secure your child's place at Adventures Preschool a four week deposit must be paid. This is the equivalent of four full week's fees which will be used to cover the first four weeks of attendance.

You must advise Adventures Preschool at least 4 weeks prior to your child leaving the centre or you will be charged for the days of non-attendance.



Fees may be paid by:

1. Funds transfer using internet banking (clearly indicating your child's name) OR
2. Cheque - deposited in the fee box or handed to the Director

### **Late pick-up fee**

If children remain at the centre after 6pm a late fee of \$30 will be charged for the first 10 minutes or part thereof, and \$20 per 10 minutes or part thereof after that. This fee is not eligible for Child Care Benefit. Two staff members must be paid extra for any time they are at the centre after hours. It is important to notify staff if you are going to be late so that they do not unnecessarily start calling you, other emergency contacts or the police.

### **Fee assistance**

A 50% out of pocket Commonwealth Government subsidy (up to \$7500 per child, per year) is provided to families to help with the cost of quality child care.

Any additional assistance you receive depends on your family income. The Family Assistance Office (Ph: 13 6150) will assess your family income and notify you by mail as to your entitlements. You will need to pay the full amount until we receive notification determining your entitlement.

### **Confidentiality**

All enrolment information, personal and family details, medical and health records, incident forms, protective care records and children's individual programming and progress records are available to parents. Please ask your group leader for access as these records will be

kept in a secure locality in order to ensure confidentiality.

Information may be disclosed to regulatory bodies such as the NSW Department of Education and Communities, Family Assistance Office or the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services. In case of emergency, information will also be provided to medical professionals and/or police.

## **Sun protection**

We promote sun safety and aim to reduce exposure to UV rays through sun protection behaviours, organisation of activities, the outdoor environment and education of children, staff and parents.

Staff will ensure hats are worn during outdoor play at all times throughout the year. We encourage a "no hat, play in the shade" policy.

We provide SPF 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen lotion and parents are required to apply the lotion on arrival. Staff will re-apply sunscreen when required throughout the day.

Parents are encouraged to provide protective clothing for outdoor play. Singlet tops or dresses and backless dresses will not provide a child's skin with sufficient protection from the sun.

Children under 12 months of age and those children/staff unable to wear sunscreen for medical reasons will only use the shaded areas of the playground.

## **Clothing**

A complete set of clothing including underwear and socks is required for each day of attendance. While toileting accidents may be rare for your child, spills with water, paint, food and drinks may require a change of clothes.

Overalls, belts, braces and buckles are often difficult for children to manage independently at toilet times.

Soiled clothes will be rinsed if necessary but unfortunately we are unable to wash clothes at the centre. These items will be placed in a double plastic bag ready for collection.

Comfortable, closed shoes or sandals are suitable for indoor and outdoor play, climbing and walking. Thongs, clogs and slip-on shoes do not provide sufficient protection for active children.

Please make sure your child's name is on ALL clothing and other belongings.

## **What to bring**

Enough formula/breastmilk for the day in clearly labeled bottles. Please also provide a labeled water bottle each day. You should also provide cream for staff to use in the event your child has, or develops nappy rash.

A hat and a change of clothes including underwear, socks and a jacket.

If your child is celebrating a birthday you are welcome to send a cake (**mini-cupcakes** are easy to share). Please keep decorative food colouring and lollies to a minimum. Please do not send lolly bags.

We are a **nut free** centre so please be mindful that cakes or other foods containing nuts will not be served at the centre.

We have plenty of interesting resources and toys so please do not bring items to the centre which could be potentially dangerous to young children, create conflict or get lost or damaged. "Security" toys, such as teddy bears and dolls, are fine if they help your child feel happier and more secure. Soft toys will not be given to babies in cots.

### **Complaints and compliments**

If you have any concerns or compliments regarding the centre, please approach your child's group leader in the first instance. If you feel that a concern is unable to be resolved or you feel uncomfortable please feel free to approach the Nominated Supervisor or the Director at any time.

### **Hours of operation**

We are open from 7.30am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday throughout the year except for public holidays and a two week break over the Christmas/New Year period.

To allow staff to close the centre at 6.00pm please ensure that you arrive **by 5.55pm** at the latest.

### **Emergency procedures**

An emergency evacuation plan is displayed in your child's room. The centre will have fire drills on a regular basis to ensure that children can be evacuated from the centre quickly and easily. If you are on the premises during a fire drill you are required to follow staff's instructions and participate.

## **Policies, regulations and quality assurance**

A complete set of policies will be kept in the office and available on the Adventures website.

Our policies are reviewed on a regular basis and your input to this process will be requested throughout the year. Importantly if you feel any policy requires modification we welcome your suggestions.

We are licensed by the NSW Department of Education and Communities and operate under the National Education and Care Services Law and Regulations. A copy of these regulations is available from the office or by downloading the full document from [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au).

The quality of our service is monitored by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

## **Immunisation**

**If your child has not been vaccinated** for any reason, this should be indicated on the enrolment form. All children who have not been immunised must be removed from the centre for a period of two weeks whenever there is an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease. Fees are still payable during this period.

**If a child has not been fully immunised** for whatever reason parents will be asked to give written notice.

**Whenever your child has another immunisation**, the updated immunisation statement should be given to the Director so that the centre records can be updated.

The Family Assistance Office may also cancel any benefits if immunisations are not kept up to date.

## **Exclusion of sick children**

The exclusion of sick children is intended for the protection of children and adults in the Centre. The close proximity of children increases the risk of cross infection. We ask that you respect the health and wellbeing of other families and staff in the centre when considering sending your child for the day.

Sick children need to be in the care of their parents so that they can make important health decisions. If parents cannot be contacted and a child is sufficiently ill or distressed while at the centre, an ambulance will be called to take the child to hospital.

**If your child has been 'off colour', or ill the previous night, please keep your child at home.** If you feel that the child may be well enough to attend centre, please inform staff on arrival. **Staff are not permitted to diagnose any rash or blisters.** Please provide a medical certificate providing clearance before entering your child's room. The Director or her delegate has the final say on whether or not the child is healthy enough to remain at the centre.

**If your child falls ill during the day** a staff member will phone the parent who must come immediately to collect the child. If you cannot be contacted the emergency contact you have given will be asked to collect your child.

**If your child has contracted an infectious disease** you must notify the centre immediately. There are specific quarantine times for infectious diseases, during which time your child will not be allowed to attend the centre. Notices will be displayed, for all parents, if the Centre has an outbreak of an infectious illness.

Children are not permitted to attend the centre within 24 hours of commencing antibiotics, after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea.

Children will also be excluded if they have **head lice**. This exclusion will continue until treatment has been used and all live lice and eggs are completely removed. Fees are payable during any periods of exclusion.