

2019

Moorooka Early Learning Centre Parent Handbook



Welcome to Moorooka Early Learning Centre

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Opening times 6.30am to 6.30pm
52 weeks per year
Service CRN number: 407 256 384L

Welcome to our Service.



The Parent Handbook outlines important information you will need to be aware of while you are a part of our MELC family. It is important that you read over this booklet and ask questions about matters you do not understand.

Our Service has an open-door policy. You and your family are welcome to visit the Service at any time.

Introduction

Welcome to Moorooka Early Learning Centre. Finding a new education and care Service for your child can be a daunting task. At Moorooka Early Learning Centre our aim is to provide a secure and happy environment where children can develop their intellectual, social, emotional, physical, aesthetic skills to become competent and confident individuals. It is also important for you as a parent/guardian, feel safe in the knowledge that your child is receiving the best possible care.

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

Welcomed, recognised, acknowledged and respected by all our Educators.

That your child is really known by, and really knows, the people who care for him or her.

You are given lots of information about what is occurring and are asked for your views.

You are involved in making decisions about your child's experiences.

You and your child are received and greeted upon arrival.

Your child is happy, secure and engaged.

Your child is not just looked after but really cared for.

Contact Persons

Owner/Approved Provider: Barbara White
Nominated Supervisor and Director: Raquel Prior
Early Childhood Teacher: Raquel Prior
Senior Kindy Educators: Raquel Prior, Shae Cooper and Janai Ross
Junior Kindy Educators: Renata Pusic and Natalie Sutton

Our Philosophy

“It is not what you do for your children, but what you have taught them to do for themselves that will make them successful human beings. “

We believe that children are naturally curious, eager to learn, infinitely capable and possess unlimited potential. Through play children actively make sense of the world around them while building relationships.

We believe that families are the most valuable educators in a child’s life and should guide and contribute to their learning at Kindergarten.

We believe that creation of a positive learning environment is vital to play, social development and cognitive learning. Children engage best when they are in an environment that they enjoy.

We believe children deserve to be surrounded by a community that encourages them to develop, grow and reach their individual potential. Community is more than a location, it is a network of relationships that assist children in developing a sense of identity, belonging and security.

Our Educators

Qualified educators and staff work together at Moorooka Early Learning Centre to provide your child with a high quality, play based early education program. All of our educators hold or are studying towards appropriate qualifications and licences for their positions. At Moorooka Early Learning we go above and beyond the national regulations by ensuring all educators are trained in First Aid, CPR and asthma and anaphylaxis management so you can feel assured they will be ready to take action in the event of an injury or medical emergency. We also work to build a pool of regular relief educators for times when our educators are out of the service for professional learning opportunities, holidays or should they be unwell.

Education, Curriculum and Learning

Our Program

We will share in your child's investigations, passions and discoveries and actively engage, support and extend their thinking through play. Our educators will use specific teaching strategies to expand on your child's disposition for learning and their understandings in literacy, numeracy, and other areas of development. Educators are open to your child's ideas and will foster their social and emotional growth and provoke their curiosity. Our experienced educators will build on your child's strengths and interests through their play, to grow their learning and support their development.

What does play-based learning look like?

Learning and enrichment of play will happen in ways that are meaningful and relevant to your child. For example, your child may be playing in the sandpit and their educator will encourage them to draw maps in the sand and label them, or measure the water levels in the dam they have built. In this example the educator is purposely supporting your child's interest to explore opportunities for literacy and numeracy development. You might also see educators supporting your child and others to set up a shop where the children can transfer their real life knowledge to their play and extend on their learning. This may include developing labels and signs, making money / credit cards, researching what is required for a shop, negotiating roles played by friends and solving problems. Our educators will encourage your child to explore and investigate a range of materials, and express their thinking, and emerging understandings in a variety of ways. We will support their curiosity and creativity and encourage them to investigate and solve problems. We will help them to capture their learning and share their thinking.

Documenting

We know how important it is to understand what your child is learning, and the experiences they are engaging in. At MELC we do our best to make learning visual for families by displaying activities and sharing updates through email and class dojo. After reflecting as a team, we have decided that digital documentation is the most accessible and sustainable practice for our educators, our children and our families. Upon enrolment each family will gain access to the class dojo, which will link them directly to their child's learning portfolio where photos are shared. In our Senior Kindy room we display a week in review, which captures all areas of interest, teacher led activities as well as spontaneous learning that occurs each week. Our Junior Kindy Educator, Renata, has an in depth programming folder which is accessible to families to keep up to date with learning that is occurring.

The Early Years Learning Framework

All Educators at our Service are trained and experienced in areas of early education and care. Due to our high standard and commitment of our Educators, we are able to provide developmental and educational programs for each group of children. Our educators are guided by the Early Years Learning Framework to develop a daily program, observe the children in their care and plan their programs around the needs and interests of the children in child free time.



Early Years Learning Framework Learning (EYLF) Learning

Outcomes:

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

- Children feel safe, secure, and supported
- Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency
- Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities
- Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect

Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

- Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation
- Children respond to diversity with respect
- Children become aware of fairness
- Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

- Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing
- Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

- Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity
- Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, enquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating
- Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another
- Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials

Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

- Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes
- Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts
- Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media
- Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work
- Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking

If your child's Educator feels there is an area of concern, they will inform you and advise where help may be sought, e.g. speech therapist. It is always your decision to follow this up. Educators are willing to discuss any aspect of development with parents.

Kindergarten

We operate an approved Kindergarten funded program Monday - Friday. We have a qualified Teacher who runs a comprehensive program from 8:30am to 4pm each day. Children at our service will automatically be enrolled into this program the year before they commence prep. We do recommend our Kindergarten children attend a minimum of three days to take full advantage of the program and our Teacher. The room routine is flexible and learning activities are based on children's interests and preparing them for School life.



Enrolling your child

Thank you for choosing to enrol your child at Moorooka Early Learning. Before you start, we would love to organise orientation activities so you and your child can become familiar with our service. This is a great opportunity for you to ask lots of questions, to find out where everything is located at the service, and for us to learn more about you, your child and your family.

Before your Child Starts

Take the opportunity to spend some time with us before your child starts. This may be one visit or a number of visits over a few weeks. Meet your child's teachers, explore play areas and observe our program in action. This will support both you and your child on this new journey and will help you both feel more confident on your child's first day. Please speak to our Director about specific orientation activities. In the lead up to your child's first day, take time to talk with them about what their first day will be like; discuss the things they will bring with them to Kindy, the people who will be looking after them, the children they will play with and the experiences they will engage in. Remind your child of what they saw when they visited Kindy; the locker for their bag, the toilets, and the play areas.

Their First Day

You and your child may be a bit nervous about the first day, and this is completely normal. Your child's teachers will be on hand to support you as you start this new journey together. Here are a few tips to help make the first day as smooth as possible:

- All children are different; some will bound off and join other children as soon as they arrive, and others will require a bit more time to feel comfortable, so give yourselves plenty of time to settle in on that first day
- Your child may cry and get a bit upset. Reassure them that you will be returning later that day, and feel confident knowing our experienced educators will make your child feel safe, secure and comfortable
- Make sure your child knows where their belongings are – let them see where their bag is, and that their food is in the fridge.
- Call at any time during the day to see how your child is going and how they are settling in.

When you arrive

- Wash your and your child's hands
- Sign your child in on the service's digital kiosk – located in the Senior Kindy Room
- Put your child's bag in their locker, or on the hook provided
- Put your child's food in the fridge. We recommend a plastic lunch container as all food is refrigerated in the rooms.
- If you haven't applied sunscreen at home, apply sunscreen. We will encourage your child to play in the shade for the first 20 minutes
- Share any news or important information with us - did your child have a bad night's sleep, are there signs of teething, did they bump their head this morning, are family or friends coming to stay tonight?
- Say Goodbye.

When you collect your child:

- Sign your child out on the service's digital kiosk
- Talk with educators about your child's day and read through the relevant communication boards
- Collect your child's belongings
- Wash your and your child's hands

Helping maintain a safe, healthy environment

To support our commitment to the happiness, health and safety of all children, educators and visitors, we ask that you assist us with the following:

- Ensure that your child's bag and all recycled materials that you gift to the service (such as cardboard boxes, toys, egg cartons) are checked for items that could potentially harm a child such as plastic bags, batteries, sharp items and medications
- Refrain from smoking. From 1 September 2016 smoking was banned at early childhood education and care services and for 5 metres beyond their boundaries
- Do not leave any children/siblings unattended in our Kindy or the car park when dropping off and collecting your child/ren
- Use extreme caution when entering and exiting the car park
- Close all gates and doors as you enter / exit rooms, buildings, and playgrounds.
- Advise your service immediately if you or your emergency contact's details have changed.

What to Bring

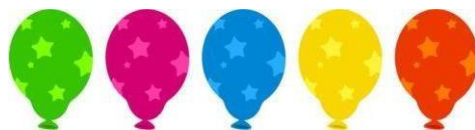
All Children:

- Food – Morning Tea, Lunch, Afternoon tea – Named
- A water bottle - Named
- A change of clothing that is weather appropriate (younger children- especially those toilet training- will need extra changes)
- A hat – a full brimmed wide hat.
- Sheet Set
- Comforter for sleep time if required.

All named and placed in a bag that is able to be secured.

Birthdays

Your child's birthday is a special event in his/her life. To celebrate your child's birthday, you are welcome to bring jelly, iceblocks or a cake . Please check with your child's teacher prior to birthday, in case of other children having special dietary requirements.



Clothing

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

The Service will only have a limited supply of spare clothing. Please supply at least one change of clothing and underclothing in case of accidents, for all children.

Please mark your child’s clothing and replace name tags if they fade in the wash. Ensure clothing is weather appropriate. Please ensure that toddlers have three complete changes of clothing and plenty of training pants while toilet training.

Please do not dress your child in clothing with cords e.g. shorts, hats etc. As these have the potential to become caught on equipment and may cause serio



Belongings

Please ensure all belongings are clearly labelled such as dummies, clothes, socks, containers etc. Lost property will be displayed for parent collection in your child’s room. Parent co-operation in labelling assists the Service in keeping your child’s belongings together.

The Service discourages toys from home and we will not hold any responsibility for any personal belongings. Please let an Educator know if your child has a Show and Tell item.

If your Child brings a comforter please name and leave in his or her bag and let an Educator know that it is available if us harm to your children.

Behaviour Guidance

Just like most skills, behaviour is learned and developed in social situations. Our specially designed early childhood programs and resources enable our educators to guide and promote your child’s social and emotional wellbeing. Our educators will aim to build a relationship with your child and family in order to create a safe, supportive environment for learning. Our educators will engage your child in experiences which model positive language and social behaviour and offer them the opportunity to develop a positive self-image, and understanding of others. If educators feel your child requires further support in building their social and emotional skills, they will work with them and include your family through this process.

Rest and Sleep

We understand that rest and relaxation is an important part of your child’s day, and ‘resting’ and ‘relaxing’ occur differently for each child. We will offer your child opportunities to relax and rest throughout the day, in ways that meet their individual needs. This might include a sleep, a break with a comfortable cushion to dream on, or a rest on a rug outside in the shade reading a book.

Communication

What is the best way to communicate with you?

Everybody has a different communication style and time for communication. We understand that mornings and afternoons can be a little rushed, and not the best time to discuss your child. We have many types of communication we use for families in the Service just like you. We send out emails on Friday's with an update of current projects at the centre, upcoming events and policy changes. We also communicate through our private Class Dojo, that only parents and educators have access to.

We encourage families to communicate with us in a variety of ways. We are always interested to hear about what your family has been doing, as these interests often carry through to the centre.

What can you expect from Educators?

Educators will make efforts to communicate effectively with families.

- Educators will inform families promptly and sensitively of any out of the ordinary incidents affecting their child.
- Educators will share with children's families some of the specific interactions they had with the children during the day.
- Information on children's eating and sleeping patterns at the Service will be provided to families through verbal communication and through the room information sheets.
- When families and Educators make a joint decision that effect children's progress, interest and experience, a record will be kept in the appropriate form. (These may include new events like toilet training.)

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

Parent Involvement

This is vital to ensure maintenance of a quality service. Your contribution of ideas, experiences and skills are welcomed and greatly valued. You may be able to share your skills and experiences in Music, Craft, Cooking and Storytelling etc to enhance your child's program at the Service. Parents are welcome to visit or call the Service at any time. If you have any talents or hobbies, we welcome and encourage to please share them with the children. See our 'ways to get involved' page at the back of the handbook for ideas and suggestions.

Delivery and Collection from the Service

We are always committed to ensuring your child's safety , and when you enrol your child, we ask that you provide the name and contact details of any adults who will drop off and collect your child. If an adult arrives to collect your child and educators do not know who they are, they will be asked for photo identification. This allows educators to confirm, against the Enrolment Booklet, that this person is someone you have nominated to pick up your child. If you need someone, who is not listed in the Enrolment Booklet, to drop off and pick up your child, you need to provide to us this person's details. If there are any court orders, parenting plans, directive orders, or other official documentation relating to your child, you must provide a copy to the service upon enrolment or as soon as the documents are issued. Court orders must be stamped with an official seal. Having copies of the documents will allow your educator/s to respect and adhere to the requirements of the orders, including access to your child and receiving information about your child from the service.

Fees and Accounts

Current Fee Schedule

Fees are determined by your Childcare Subsidy assessment. Sessions are allocated based on hours available per fortnight.

Applicable to all age groups		
Administration Fee		\$50.00 on commencement
Hours granted per fortnight	Session Type	Fees per session
24hrs per fortnight	[a] 6 hrs from 9am – 3pm at discretion of management	[a] \$90/session
	[b] 12 hr session	[b] \$99/session
36hrs per fortnight 72hrs per fortnight	9 hr session	\$99/session
100hrs per fortnight	[a] 10hr session	[a] \$99/ session
	[b] 10hr session x 5 days	[b] \$95/session
Inclusions:	Nappies, wipes and sunscreen	
Additional Surcharges	Once off admin fee upon enrolment: \$50 (non-refundable) MELC organises incursions throughout the year for all age groups depending on their interest areas. Some of these incursions do attract a small surcharge for families that is determined at time of booking. Surcharges are generally between \$8-\$10 and are communicated in advance.	

Fees are payable weekly via EziDebit.

On your first week at our Service you will be required to pay your administration fee and be two weeks in advance with fees. Statements are sent out each Tuesday via email with payment due on Thursday. An EziDebit form must be completed upon enrolment by all families. In exceptional circumstances parents can opt for an alternative payment method, however these methods do incur an administration fee.

Accounts in arrears will be subject to care being cancelled, it is Service's policy that all accounts are to be one week in advance.

Late Fees

If your child is collected from the Service after 6.30pm, you will be charged a late fee which is \$15.00 first 10 minutes or part of. \$2.50 per minute after 6.40pm. This will be added onto your account.

Attendance and Absence

Once a child is enrolled at the Service, you will be offered available days for your child to be booked in each week. If you require additional days, this must be arranged with management and will depend on availability. Payment of fees must be continued during the child's absence for illness, public holidays, holidays, etc. When a child is absent for any reason we must be notified. The Service is open for fifty-two weeks per year; the only period during which we are closed is Public Holidays. Dates will be advised. Please sign for all public holidays and absences. Make Up days will be offered in lieu of Public Holidays depending on availability. Make up days must be used within 6 weeks of accrual.

Allowable Absences

Your child may be absent from the service for a total of 42 days per year, including public holidays and annual holidays. After this, a doctor's certificate must be obtained to continue receiving your Child Care Benefit. This is of particular importance, so it is your best interest to keep a record of absences

Waiting List

When our rooms have full enrolment, children's names will be put onto a waiting list. Once a position is vacant, parents are then contacted about placement. Our waiting list does give priority to working parents as per Priority of Access Guidelines.

Notice of Withdrawal

Two weeks' notice must be given to the nominated supervisor in writing. If the required notice is not given two weeks fees will be payable.

Health & Safety

The Service provides a healthy and safe environment for children, Educators and families to grow and develop in – as such the Service has a health and safety and hygiene policy regarding illnesses and medications. Children with contagious illnesses are required to be kept at home and a doctor's certificate must be presented to show that the infection cannot be passed when the child returns to the Service.

Immunisation and Illness

When children are playing and coming into contact with one another regularly, illnesses and infectious diseases can occur and spread. If your child is unwell, educators will contact you to come and collect them. To ensure your child gets the rest they need to recover, we ask that when your child is unwell, they stay at home until they are better. You can find the full publication of exclusion periods Staying healthy in childcare, 5th edition at www.nhmrc.gov.au No child will be admitted with obvious signs of any highly contagious infection or illness.

Parents are required to provide copies their child's immunisation records to have on file at the services. Also, to provide copies of updated records while at attendance at the service.

Medication

Educators will be able to administer medication to children who are recovering from illness. All medications must have a Chemist label stating the child's name and administration details. A medication form must be completed and signed by parents before any medication will be given. All prescription medication must be prescribed for your child and not another family member- unless stated otherwise by a doctor's certificate. Medication must be in date and in its original packaging.

The medication must be handed to an Educator to store in a locked container in fridge. Please DO NOT leave medication in your child's bag.

The Educator who gives medication requires a medication form to be completed by the parent and have a correct Chemist label this is for all medications, Panadol, nappy cream, eye drops etc.

Any child who has commenced an antibiotic must not attend the Service for 24 hours from commencement.

Medical Conditions

If your child has a medical condition, such as anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes or epilepsy, we ask that you detail their condition in their Enrolment Booklet. We also ask that you attach to this booklet a comprehensive current medical management plan from your child's medical practitioner, and engage in a conversation with your service, before your child starts, about your child's needs to ensure they can care for your child appropriately and assist with the management of their condition. The commencement of your child's enrolment may need to be delayed so that our educators and staff can engage in specialised training to ensure they are capable and confident in meeting the needs of your child's particular medical condition.

Food Allergies

Please inform the Nominated Supervisor if your child has any allergy. We do have children in attendance with differing allergies. We ask parents to be mindful when packing lunches and to avoid high-risk allergens such as nuts and peanuts. Educators aim to implement strategies which will reduce the risks of cross contamination and exposure to allergens.

Incidents and Injuries

In the event of any child related incident:

- We will contact you for all significant incidents, and you may be asked to collect your child. Educators will continue to monitor and care for your child until he/she is collected.
- A detailed incident report will be completed in preparation for you to review and sign at the end of your child's day. A copy of the report will be provided to you if requested.
- Where your child requires medical treatment beyond immediate First Aid, and we are unable to contact you, we will ensure your child is cared for and comforted. We will contact your emergency contact(s) or call an ambulance. It is very important to make sure your list of emergency contact(s) is up to date at all times.

Emergency Drills

Throughout the year the Service will hold emergency drills which occur at any given time throughout the day. These are carried out in a well-organised and orderly manner. Also, Educators will be trained in using the fire extinguishers that are in the Service. An emergency escape plan will be in every room.

Grievances, Complaints and Feedback

If for any reason you are not happy with the Service's level of care or care environment we want to know immediately. You can discuss this with Educators or formally write a letter. When any matter is raised the Service will be following our Grievance Procedure Policy. All Service policies are made available to parents. Positive feedback is most welcome too.

Conclusion

We guarantee your child will have a happy, safe and secure relationship with the Service and our educators and that the time he or she is in our care will be positive and fulfilling. Our team of educators are looking forward to getting to know your child and your family. Please remember that when your family becomes involved with the service, no matter how small or big your involvement, your child will be experiencing a connection between home and our service. Please read this handbook carefully so you fully understand the commitment that you are undertaking and your responsibilities to the service.

Important Contacts and Information for Families

Regulatory Authorities

Our Service complies with the National Quality Framework (NQF) including the National Quality Standard (NQS), the Early Years Learning Framework and the National Regulations (Education and Care Services National Regulations).

Our Service is regulated by the national body for early education and care – the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) as well as the state licensing department in our State/Territory. To contact our Regulatory Authority, please refer to the contact details below –

Queensland

Office for Early Childhood Education and Care www.education.qld.gov.au
1800 637 711, ecec@deta.qld.gov.au, PO BOX 15033 CITY EAST QLD 4002

The Service provides families with current information on child and family resources and services accessible in the local community.

ACECQA is the national body ensuring early childhood education and care across Australia is high quality

Address:	Level 15, 255 Elizabeth Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000
Postal Address:	PO Box A292, Sydney, NSW 2000
Email:	enquiries@acecqa.gov.au
Phone:	1800 181 088

Family Assistance Office

Phone: 13 6150

Australian Childhood Immunisation Register

Phone: 1800 653 809

Informative Websites For Parents

Raising Children Network

The Australian parenting website: comprehensive, practical, expert child health and parenting information and activities covering children aged 0-8 years. raisingchildren.net.au/

Better Health Channel - quality consumer health information quality-assured, regularly reviewed, health and wellbeing information and services. This site is sponsored by the State Government of Victoria www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/

Ways to get involved

We welcome all family members to our Service and we encourage when possible for families to be involved in your child's program. There are many ways for your family to be involved. We understand that our busy lives can't always afford the time, however any contribution no matter how big or small is much appreciated. Here are just a few ideas.

Your Occupation

Your child loves you and when they get to childcare all they talk about is you. You are the most important person in their world. We welcome all parents to the Service to talk about their occupation or hobby. Everything parents do interest children and these talks are the best educational resources you can provide for the Service. After occupational discussions we use it in our programming and the ideas explored from parent talks can last for weeks.

Your Home Culture

Your home culture is most welcomed in our Service, we would greatly appreciate if you were able to share with our Service aspects of your culture and family life. This would assist us to enrich the lives of all our families and children.

Reading (especially good for grandparents)

Children love to be read to. If you or your parents have the time, please contact your room Educators to organise a day for reading.

Useful Junk - We are always on the lookout for recyclable items for the rooms. Empty food containers, ribbons, wrapping paper, towel tubes (not toilet or egg or milk re-hygiene and allergy) paper or anything interesting from your work is much appreciated. Items can be left on our donation station at pick up or drop off.

Family Photos – Our aim is to create a warm, friendly and homely environment. One way we like to achieve this is by having family photos displayed. Please bring in a copy of your family for us to display in the room.

Concerts and Special Events

Our Service organises special events throughout the year. Keep an eye out as your child is sure to be a star! Any outside shows will be billed to your account.

Suggestions

If you have any other suggestion or idea on how we best can work together in the Service and together with your child's program please let us know.

