



Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre Inc

A0028764B

ABN 69 093 616 835

Melways Ref. 129 F8

Registered ACE Provider 3952

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OCCASIONAL CARE PARENT HANDBOOK 2012

Phone (03) 5996 9056 Office

Office hours 8.30am – 4.15pm

Email: mmerinda@bigpond.net.au

Website: www.merindapark.com.au

Occasional Care provides quality childcare for your pre-school age children in a fun, relaxed and safe environment.

Dear Parents,

Thank you for making the choice of using our facilities for the care of your child/ren. We trust that you and your child will have a happy association with us.

AIM

Our aim for all children is to provide a safe a secure play-based learning environment, based on needs, interests and experiences of the individual.

In July 2009, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed Belonging, Being and Becoming, the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) for Australia. This is the first early learning framework to be nationally endorsed for use by educators in a range of early childhood settings.

At MPLCC we have endorsed the Framework and believe in Belonging, Being and Becoming and its values embodied in the principles and practices of the EYLF.

The Victorian and National Frameworks identify five learning outcomes for children.

These include that children:

- ❖ Have a strong sense of identity
- ❖ Are connected with and contribute to their world
- ❖ Have a strong sense of wellbeing
- ❖ Are active and involved learners
- ❖ Are effective communicators

Our programs take into account the children's strengths, capabilities, culture, interest and experiences to enhance their learning.

OUR PROGRAMS

We offer a wide range of experiences for the children. Our Educators support play-based learning environments where children are encouraged to play, learn and enjoy themselves; feeling secure, knowing that someone will comfort and help them when needed.

We support children to explore and experiment, to build on their interests, strengths and needs. At the end of the day, a journal will be displayed to show families about the children's day. We appreciate feedback and information from families to help us support the children's learning & development.

PHILOSOPHY OF CARE

"Learning and growing with the community"

Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre aims to provide quality childcare, with consideration given to the needs of all children, families and the community actively supporting growth and development.

It is our belief to acknowledge the diversity of the families and children in our community by providing high quality child care.

SESSION TIMES

9.30am – 2.30pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday.

Bookings essential to ensure positions available on the day.

There is no hourly rate for occasional care services.

Permanent Bookings are available by leaving a two week deposit at the start of the term.
Children need to be rebooked at reception for each term.

BOOKING

We encourage families to visit the Centre to meet with Educators and see the program. An enrolment form must be completed before your child can start the program. A new enrolment form must be completed each year and it is your responsibility to ensure we have current contact details and health information about children during the year. Bookings are essential, as we have regulated staff/child ratios. Casual bookings for occasional care will be accepted if there are vacancies, however preference is given to permanent bookings.

WHAT TO BRING TO EACH SESSION

- ❖ Lunch-sandwich & fruit and a smaller snack for afternoon tea.
- ❖ A drink of water, in a refillable drinking container, with his/her name clearly marked.
- ❖ Sun hat or coat with the child's name clearly marked. NO HAT NO PLAY.
- ❖ Spare change of clothes, right down to socks.
- ❖ At least 2 nappies for nappy changes.
- ❖ Please name your child's bag and all belongings clearly.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- ❖ Dress your child in comfortable **play** clothes and sturdy shoes – NO THONGS OR SLIP ON SHOES
- ❖ Sunsmart clothing for play outside – no backless clothing or singlet tops
- ❖ **Please ensure all articles are clearly named.**

WHEN DROPPING CHILDREN OFF

We cannot accept children into the room before session time. The Educators need that time to set up the room and prepare activities. We ask that you wait in the foyer until the Educator welcomes you into the room. For children's safety, we ask that when entering the Childcare room you shut the door immediately behind you.

SIGNING IN/OUT BOOK

Each child must be signed in at the commencement and out at the end of each session. You must inform us if someone else will be collecting your child. If any unexpected situations arise, please notify us by phone. Anyone who is collecting your child must be over 18 years of age and listed on the enrolment form. We do require photo ID when children are collected by the emergency contact.

If you have any concerns regarding your child please do not hesitate to speak to an Educator after the session when all other children have left or by making an appointment.

LATE PICK UP

If children are picked up late from care then parents will be required to pay \$1.00 per minute. Educators are not legally responsible for children outside set hours. If a child is not collected one hour after the normal closing time then the relevant authorities will be notified if emergency contacts are also unavailable.

Casual bookings are available by phone during the week and making a payment before the session. Bookings will only be taken when there is a vacancy. **Casual bookings** need to be confirmed the day prior to care required to ensure that there is a vacancy available.

Costs

| 5 Hour Session | Full Cost | Concession | | 3 Hour Session | Full Cost | Concession |
|----------------|-----------|------------|--|----------------|-----------|------------|
| 1 Child | \$23.00 | \$21.00 | | 1 Child | \$14.50 | \$12.50 |
| 2 Children | \$31.00 | \$29.00 | | 2 Children | \$19.50 | \$17.50 |
| 3 Children | \$36.00 | \$34.00 | | 3 Children | \$22.50 | \$19.50 |

Occasional Care offers holders of Pensioner Concession cards, discount rates. To receive this discount you must present your current concession card to the Administration staff. Payment is required on the day of care.

If your child will not be attending on the day they are booked in we would appreciate a call to let us know. A holding fee of \$6.00 will be charged for the position being held for your child for that day. This applies to all permanent bookings.

The centre is closed for Occasional Care on public holidays and during school holidays.

FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

Families can contact the Centre Administration Manager to arrange a payment plan if financial hardship occurs. Families with outstanding fees at the end of the term with no payment plan arranged will be contacted and their spot in the program will be reviewed. Fee inquiries can be put in writing to the Accounts department.

FIRE AND EVACUATION PROCEDURE

We have steps that are taken to ensure that everyone in the centre is evacuated in case of emergencies. There are also signs and fire extinguishers placed around the centre. Every term the Educators and children practice evacuation procedures.

If you are in the Centre when you hear the air siren please follow procedures carefully and follow the instructions of the person in charge. Children will be evacuated through the double gates of the playground and assemble in the shelter at the park behind our centre. Parents must not leave the assembly area until notified by authorised persons.

MANAGING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR

All Educators are directed to encourage the positive aspects of all children's behaviour. When children are displaying inappropriate behaviour they will be guided to another activity.

QUALIFIED STAFF

As a Limited Hours Type 2 Service, Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre employs qualified staff or staff obtaining qualifications in Children's Services. Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre will ensure that the child/staff ratio as set out in Regulations 55.2(a) & (b) Children's Service Regulations 2009 will be met at all times.

SUNSMART

Our sunsmart policy has been developed to ensure that all the children attending this centre are protected from the skin damage caused by harmful U.V. rays. It is to be implemented throughout the year, but particularly between September and April inclusive and from May until August if the U.V index reaches 3 and above as per www.bom.gov.au/weather/uv .

- ❖ Children will be required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears whenever they are outside.
- ❖ Children must not wear singlets, tank tops, or backless tops while in care

- ❖ Children must wear suitable footwear. NO THONGS OR SLIP ON SANDALS.
- ❖ Children who do not have their hats with them will be asked to play indoors or in an area protected from the sun.
- ❖ SPF30+ must be applied to your child before they are brought to the centre. This guards them against any skin irritations caused by the use of different sunscreen.
- ❖ Outdoor activities will be minimized between 11.00am and 3.00pm (Daylight EST).

HEALTH

It is the responsibility of parents to notify us if a child is ill or has an infectious disease. The Health Department has stringent guidelines regarding the period of exclusion for infectious diseases. We will notify parents when there is an infectious disease at the centre, verbally or by placing a notice near the sign in sheet.

It is also in the best interest of your child and other children at the centre for sick children to stay away. Some minor illnesses, which also require exclusion are: Fevers, Diarrhoea, Vomiting, Conjunctivitis, Impetigo, Head Lice, Cold Sores, Hand, foot and mouth disease. If your child appears to become unwell during the session you or your emergency contact person will be contacted requesting the child be collected ASAP.

ASTHMA

If your child is asthmatic, we must have an asthma plan from your doctor on file. We require a medication form to be completed and signed by the parents. Educators are unable to administer medication without written consent. Please give asthma medication to staff for safe keeping.

ANAPHYLAXIS POLICY

Parents/guardians of a child at risk of anaphylaxis shall:

- Inform staff, either on enrolment or on diagnosis, of their child's allergies.
- Provide staff with a current Medical Management Plan signed by a Registered Medical Practitioner and included with the enrolment form.
- Provide staff with a complete EpiPen kit.
- Regularly check the EpiPen expiry date.
- Assist staff by offering information and answering any questions regarding their child's allergies.
- Notify the staff of any changes to their child's allergy status and provide a new anaphylaxis action plan in accordance with these changes.
- Communicate all relevant information and concerns to staff, for example, any matter relating to the health of the child.
- Comply with the Centre's policy that no child who has been prescribed an EpiPen is permitted to attend the service or its programs without that EpiPen.

ACCIDENTS / ILLNESS / INCIDENTS

- If your child is ill or injured, the appropriate staff member will administer first aid.
- A staff member will fill out an accident/incident report stating time, injury and first aid administered. Parents will be notified and the accident report will require the parent, guardian or authorised person's to date, time & sign the accident/illness form.
- If your child becomes ill whilst in our care, the parent/guardian or authorised person will be contacted to make arrangements to have the child taken home. The staff will make the child as comfortable as possible while they are waiting for the parent. If you are unable to be contacted, we will notify your emergency contact person.
- An ambulance will be called in case of extreme illness or accident.
- PLEASE DO NOT SEND A CHILD WHO IS ILL.

FOOD HANDLING

As a registered food handling organization, we now require parents to advise us before they bring in any food to be shared amongst the children. Any cooking done with the children will follow the appropriated food handling regulations.

Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre is a smoke free zone.

COMPLAINTS

If you have any concerns about any aspects of our services please address them to:

- ❖ Kathryn Bellis – Early Childhood Co-ordinator
- ❖ Mrs. Jan Gilchrist –CEO of Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre Inc.
- ❖ The President – Committee of Management should an issue arise that cannot be settled by either the Co-ordinator or CEO.
- ❖ The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 280 Thomas Street Dandenong Ph: 9096 9595.
- ❖ Your feedback about our service is highly valued. Please feel free to discuss your views with us at any time.

PRIVACY INFORMATION

Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre is in receipt of Government funding for some of the programs and services it offers. We are required to provide statistical data to government for these funds but all data provided is managed in line with the Information Privacy Act 2000 and its principals.

You may be contacted in the future by a government agency or its representative, re your satisfaction with the services that you received from Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre. Only your contact details will be provided then they are destroyed. Further details re the Act and the Information Privacy Principles can be found at

<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>

We hope your child or children enjoy their stay with us.

