



Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre Inc

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# 2018 Out of School Hours Care Handbook

- ◆ Before School Care
- ◆ After School Care
- ◆ Vacation Care
- ◆ Curriculum day care

Main Office Ph: 5996 9056

Childcare Office Ph:5996 9878 (Before 9am & after  
3:00pm only)

Main Office hours

Tuesday & Wednesday 8.30 am – 5.45 pm

Monday, Thursday & Friday 8.30 am – 4.15 pm

Email: [admin@merindapark.com.au](mailto:admin@merindapark.com.au)

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# Welcome to Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre Inc, Out of School Hours Care Program.

*This handbook has been created as a guide for families using our service.*

Our Out of School Hours Care Program aims to provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment for children at the highest possible standard.

Please read this handbook and keep for your reference. The Children's Services Manager is available to answer any queries or questions you may have.

We hope your child/ren enjoy their time with us.

## *Philosophy*

“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 within the community actively supporting growth and development.

It is our belief that all children have the right for inclusion regardless of social, cultural and linguistic diversity (including learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstances and geographic location) to access high quality care within a homely, safe, caring and comfortable environment promoting play and leisure experiences for all children as well as a strong sense of wellbeing and belonging..

We aim to provide:

- Families in our Community with affordable childcare supporting parent involvement in the Centre's activities.
- high quality childcare which meets the needs of both the parents and the children
- nutritional breakfast and afternoon tea and drink as part of the program to foster the children's sense of health and wellbeing

We aim to work:

- Within the Education and Care Services National Regulations and Children's Services Regulations in Victoria under the Department of Education and Training (DET)
- To regularly evaluate the services to ensure that the service continues to meet the family, children and wider community's needs

- To support and guide students and volunteers by imparting the knowledge and experiences of our Educators, to better understand children and families;
- Within the United Nations Rights of the Child;
- Within the Early Years Learning Framework of Out of School Age Care “my time, Our Place Framework for School Aged Children in Australia”
- Within the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority

We believe in:

- liaising with parents in order to provide all children in care with a safe, healthy, stimulating, nurturing and educational environment appropriate to the individual development levels and needs of the children;
- Encouraging appropriate behaviour through positive guidance by instilling children with the confidence to accept responsibility for their own actions. With inappropriate behaviour being guided in a way that shows respect for the individual, whilst encouraging self-discipline and respect for others;
- taking into account children’s developmental stages when planning activities and experiences;
- encouraging non-sexist, non-racist and non-violent attitudes of all educators, students, parents, children and volunteers;
- creating an environment which promotes the development of trust, self-confidence, self-expression, acceptance and respect for others rights, values and needs;
- creating an environment which promotes the growth of independence, initiative, co-operation, self-control, self-respect and choices in decision making when appropriate;
- encouraging and support the professional growth of all educators;
- employing experienced educators professionally trained and dedicated to sharing experiences and learning opportunities with each child;
- providing opportunities for professional development for educators that will benefit the educator and centre for many years
- Ensuring that all children have the opportunity to connect with the wider community through our centre by involving the children in excursions, incursions and special events.
- Extending and developing each child’s skills, knowledge and interests by providing the children with educational experiences that will give them the best chance in life to reach their full potential.
- Allowing children to develop their own social skills through social play and educators being able to provide various opportunities for social interaction between school groups.

MPLCC OSHC philosophy upholds the:-

- UN Convention for the Rights of the Child
- Early Childhood Australia’s Code of Ethics
- The Victoria Early Years Learning and Development Framework

## Objectives

The philosophy is implemented by the following objectives:

- To offer a flexible program that responds to the care and recreational needs of all children
- To provide an environment for all children that;
  - Is both safe and challenging for all children, and
  - Fosters all children's individuality, recognises individual needs and promotes the physical health and well being of all children.
- To ensure that the program accurately reflects the needs of all children and families/caregivers by;
  - Acknowledging the importance of families/caregivers contributions to the program,
  - Encouraging comments and feedback from all families/caregivers, and
  - Acknowledging and being aware of the cultural background of families/caregivers.
- To meet the National Quality Standards for Out of School Hours Care under the Education & Care Services National Law & Regulation 2011.

## Introduction

The Out of School Hours Program is a not for profit service to Primary School age children attending Primary Schools in our area. The Out of School Hours Program at MPLCC was established in April 1994 and has been built up to the successful program that it is today.

## Services Provided

Outside School Hours Care My Time-Our Place-“Framework for School Aged Care” in Australia aims to provide school age children in Out of School Hours care throughout Australia, with high quality care that best promotes their learning and development while recognising the importance of social interactions and recreation.

The broad objective of the Framework is to ensure that children in outside school hours care have stimulating, positive experiences and interactions that foster their self-esteem and confidence. It aims to extend & enrich children's wellbeing & development in school care settings.

Working in collaboration with children and in partnership with families, educators use the outcomes to guide their planning for children's wellbeing and learning. In order to engage children actively in learning, educators identify children's strengths and interests, choose appropriate strategies and design the environments.

The Childcare Benefit (CCB) is accessible for all families, as the programs at this service are funded by the Commonwealth Government and registered with the Department of Health & Human Services

<http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/Centrelink/child-care-benefit> (Family Assistance Office).

## Management

According to our constitution, a Committee of Management is elected at our Annual General Meeting. All members are elected for a 1 year period.

All participants of MPLCC are encouraged and invited to become financial members. The Annual Membership fee is \$5 per person, per year and is payable to become a Committee of Management member that meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 7.00pm. More details are available from the CEO.

## Co-ordination

The Children's Services Manager is responsible in conjunction with the CEO for the day-to-day management of the service. Some of these responsibilities include:

- Supervision of Educators & children
- Record keeping
- Marketing & promotion
- Liaison with families
- Liaison with the community

## Confidentiality

Childcare Educators are required to maintain strict confidentiality and not disclose to any unauthorised person any confidential and private information regarding Educators, children or families/caregivers.

## Communication

Communication is a vital part of providing a quality service to families/caregivers. The Children's Services Manager is available most days to discuss any issues or concerns you may have however due to staffing ratios it may be necessary to make an appointment.

## Policies and Procedures

MPLCC is committed to providing quality services driven by the policies and procedures which have been developed or reviewed with parents, children and/or staff involvement then adopted by the Committee of Management & CEO. They clearly state what the service will provide and how it will be provided. These policies are kept in a folder in the Children's Services Manager's office and are available to families/caregivers on request. Policies and procedures are developed in accordance with the National Quality Standards for Out of School Hours Care and Children's Services Regulations and are reviewed every 3 years or as required. Policies requiring review will be placed at the sign in sheets for parent comment (if appropriate).

## Commitment to Child Safe Standards

Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre has a commitment to child safety by having:-

- a zero tolerance for child abuse
- actively works to listen to and empower children
- systems to protect children from abuse, and will take all allegations and concerns very seriously and responds to them consistently in line with the organisation's policies and procedures
- a commitment to promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.



## Service Information

### Operation Times

Program operating times for the Out of School Hours Care Program are:

Before School Care 6.30 am – 9.00 am

After School Care 3.00 pm – 6.00 pm

Vacation Care / Curriculum Days 6.30 am – 6.00 pm

Breakfast is provided before 8.00am during Before School & Vacation Care.

### Fee Structure

The Out of School Care Program operates on a not for profit basis. Surplus will be expended on equipment & resources for the children's programs, minor upgrades and service improvements, as specified by the Committee of Management.

Fees are set to cover the cost of the program and to meet the projected budget for the service. They are subject to change.

Fees are charged on a per session basis, per child. Fees are charged to all booked sessions.

Attendances are entered onto the computer the following week for the previous week attendances to calculate the fees payable.

Statements are emailed out to parents on a fortnightly basis. A \$2 fee is charged to families who request a paper based statement. Fees can be paid weekly or fortnightly to Reception or can be placed in a sealed envelope and left securely in the safe in the childcare room after office hours.

Fees can also be paid by cash, cheque, EFTPOS or credit card over the phone. You will be issued with a receipt during office hours 8.30am – 5.45pm Tuesday & Wednesday or 8.30am – 4.15pm Monday, Thursday - Friday. (If you pay your account outside of office hours, change will not be given at that time)

Fees can be paid directly into the Bank. See Administration staff or your invoice for bank details.

\*Payment plans can be negotiated with the Centre Administration Manager, if financial difficulties occur

\*Children will NOT be accepted back into the program until all accounts are settled. If your account continues to be over \$200.00 administration will contact you to have the account paid. If payment is not received by an agreed date, the Centre will withdraw your child from care until the account total is under \$200.00.

All unpaid fees will be placed in the hands of the debt collector – Prushka. The parent and/or Guardian will be responsible for all costs incurred during the debt collection process.

### Bookings

Bookings can be made by telephoning Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre on 5996 9056 or the Childcare room on 59969878 (not always someone in the office).

Permanent Bookings (Definition: Regular bookings used each week)

All families with a permanent booking will be charged for days they don't attend. Please contact OSHC as soon as you are aware that your child will be unable to attend.

Fees apply if we have to look for a child who is on the roll but then after searching we find is not going to be attending.

Casual Bookings (Definition: Care used on an as needs basis)

Casual bookings are dependent on vacancies. The program may be fully booked and is unable to guarantee care in emergency situations. If emergency or casual care is required

due to unexpected circumstances please contact the Childrens Services Manager by 1pm or leave a message at Reception. An Educator will get back to you as soon as possible.

## Fees

Fees are charged per session not by the hour.

	Permanent Booking Fees	Casual Booking Fees
Before School Care	\$15.00 (max before CCB rebate)	\$17.00 (max before CCB Rebate)
After School Care	\$16.00 (max before CCB rebate)	\$18.00 (max before CCB Rebate)
Vacation Care	\$40.00 (max before CCB rebate)	
Curriculum Days	\$40.00 (max before CCB rebate)	

Childcare Rebate is calculated as follows:

**\*\*Please note: there are significant changes coming from 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018\*\***

Current Government rate\* x session hours x your percentage x 85% = rebate.

Eg. \$4.24 x 2.5 x 93.03% x 85% = \$8.38 rebate. So instead of paying \$15.00 each morning for Before School Care the fee would be \$6.62. In addition parents will get 35% of the \$6.62\*\* returned to them as the Child Care Rebate or can be paid directly to MPLCC as part payment for your account. Therefore in the long run daily sessions would cost \$4.30.

\*The government rate changes each financial year (next change-2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018)

\*\*This fee is based on a personal percentage of 93.03%. This percentage will vary per family depending on income levels. Parents should refer queries about personal percentages back to FAO.

For more information regarding the 35% Child Care Rebate please refer to the following website:

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/enablers/payment-options-child-care-rebate#a1>

### Early School Finishes Fees

If school finishes at 1.00 pm or 1.30 pm the fee is \$22.00 per child (less CCB)

If school finishes at 2.00 pm or 2.30 pm the fee is \$18.00 per child (less CCB)  
(These fees include the normal after school fee of \$16.00 per child)

### Non Attendance

It is vital that Educators or Administration staff are informed if your child/ren is NOT ATTENDING on any booked day.

If your child is unable to attend any session and we do not receive more than 24 hours notice, you will be charged the full fee for the session. If you notify MPLCC more than 24 hours in advance that your child will not be attending a session, you will be charged half the normal fee. (see also Non reported absences for additional fees where we have to search for a child Page 10)

If you are planning a holiday during a period that your child is booked in for care, we require written notification of the dates which you will not be requiring care. The Children's Services Manager must be provided with two weeks' notice that care will not be required due to holidays. This is to ensure that you do not get charged and allows us to plan for staffing, catering and activities. Upon your return from your holiday your child/ren's place at the program will resume.

### Curriculum Day

Curriculum Day Care is charged at the Vacation Care rate. If MPLCC cannot provide care due to lack of demand, children from the school with a Curriculum Day, will not be charged. However, if care is available and families/caregivers of children normally booked, opt not to take up care on a Curriculum Day, a half fee will be charged for their normal bookings.

## Public Holidays

Children who would normally be booked in on a day that falls on a public holiday; accounts will be charged accordingly either for Before School or After School Care or both. Public holidays are included in the initial 42 absence days if the service would have normally provided care to the absent child on the public holiday, and if fees have been charged in respect of the absent child for the day.

## Vacation Care

Vacation Care fees are payable in full, including all excursions/incursions when booking in forms are returned to confirm placement. All outstanding Out of School Hours fees need to be paid in full before booking in for Vacation Care.

Absences during Vacation Care / Curriculum Day will be included as part of the initial absences.

All Vacation Care fees must be finalised before commencement of the program

Educators are rostered to meet the required ratio of children attending. The cost of excursions and special activities (incursions) is in addition to the daily fees. Children attending excursions must have the appropriate permission form signed. No refunds are given for excursions booked and not attended. No care is available at the Centre when there is an excursion.

## Initial Absences

Each child is eligible to receive CCB for an initial 42 absence days per financial year. These absences can be used for any reason, provided care would otherwise have been provided on the absence day. No evidence of the absence circumstance is required for the initial 42 absence days.

If a child has already used their initial 42 days absence, no further absences should be reported, unless those absences are Additional Absences.

## Additional Absences

Once a child has used all their initial 42 absence days, additional absences will require supporting documentation such as:

- A medical certificate
- Parent's rotating shift or rostered day off
- Shared custody arrangements.

There is no limit on the number of additional absences, provided relevant supporting documentation is produced.

## Cancellation of Service

If you are cancelling your child/rens care permanently it must be in writing and handed to the Children's Services Manager giving 2 weeks' notice. The child/ren must attend those two weeks in order to apply childcare benefit (CCB) if the child/ren will be absent for those two weeks or do not attend your childcare benefit (CCB) will be cancelled and full fees will be charged.- *This is a new procedure.*

## Change of booking to change care (Permanent Care)

A change of permanent booking requires 2 days' notice. This time is required to ensure that adequate places for children and educators are available. The OSHC program must adhere to guidelines and time is needed to make adjustments.

## Shared Care

Where a child is cared for separately by both parents and one parent does not require care, a holding fee will apply for those days of unused care.

This applies where the child is booked in on a permanent basis. It will be the responsibility of the parent who has care booked to pay the holding fees. The holding fee is half the normal fee per session per day.

Parents whose care may alter each week determined by: eg work roster, can pay a holding fee to reserve all days of the week in their name. These days that attract a holding fee are classified as an absence with FAO. Each child is allowed 42 absences per financial year (July-June) without proof. Any type of absences after the 42 used will require documented proof to attract CCB off fees.

## Other Fees

An enrolment fee of \$20.00 will be charged per child per year which includes the cost of Merinda Park supplying a sunsmart hat and a small tube of SPF 50+ sunscreen.

Should a child arrive for Vacation Care for an excursion without a refillable drink bottle at any time of the year or a sunsmart hat & sunscreen from 1<sup>st</sup> September through to 1<sup>st</sup> April, the child will be supplied with a bottle of water and/or a hat from our stock that we sell at reception. A charge of \$1.50 for the water and/or \$15 for the hat (if initial hat supplied is lost) will be added to accounts for payment.

## Late Collection Fee

All children are to be collected from the program no later than 6.00pm.

There is no provision for child/ren to be picked up after 6.00pm, which is the time that the Educators finish work. If staff are put in a position where a child is not collected by 6.00pm, a late fee of \$1 per minute per child for the first 10 minutes and thereafter \$4.00 per minute per child, will be charged up to 2 hours. Eg. If you are 15 minutes late then the late fee would be \$30.00. Late fees do not attract CCB Rebate & is the full responsibility of the parent/caregiver to pay.

Educators will endeavour to contact the families/caregivers or emergency person nominated. If no contact can be made with the families/caregivers or emergency person nominated, the following procedure will occur:

- If we are unable to contact either emergency contacts or parent/guardian, the child will be cared for at the Centre for up to 2 hours. After this time the Children's Services Protection Service will be notified and the child will then be placed in the care of an authorised caregiver.
- A contact number will be left on the door of the Centre for you to contact the caregiver. You will need identification to collect your child. Police will be notified.

OSHC direct telephone number is: 5996 9878. Please use between 6.30am – 9.00am and 3.00pm-6.00pm only. Emails should be directed to Athena Jones – [athena@merindapark.com.au](mailto:athena@merindapark.com.au)

## Non Reported Absences

Parents/caregivers who fail to notify the Centre when a child is not going to be attending Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre will be charged a fee to cover the costs of calls and time involved trying to locate the child.

The first time parents neglect to contact the Centre to inform us of a child's non attendance we will give you a reminder of how important it is to contact us of which there will be no fees

attached. However, if you fail to give notice again a fee of \$10.00 will be added to your account, should this occur again then the fee will be increased \$5.00 every time thereafter. This fee does not attract CCB.

## Enrolment

### Information

Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre, Inc., offers a non discriminative approach programming which is inclusive of all children. Consideration is given to factors such as cultural, ethnicity, language, gender and ability when planning the children's program. The program responds to individual needs, interests and requests by providing a range of activities for all children attending the service. *We encourage families to visit the Centre to meet with Educators and see the program before enrolment/commencement.*

### Forms

An enrolment form must be filled out before your child can attend the OSHC Program. No child will be accepted unless an enrolment form is fully completed and any additional documentation eg: medication forms etc, are attached. Bookings will only be accepted with an original enrolment form, faxed forms are not accepted. A new enrolment form must be completed each year.

- These forms are available from the OSHC Office, Reception and website,
- All sections must be completed and signed,
- Please ensure that your emergency contacts/approved nominees are reliable,
- Please designate who is able to pick up your child,
- All medical and behavioural information must be placed on the enrolment form,
- Parents must inform the program of any changes of contact numbers and address,
- If you have sole custody of a child, a copy of the court order is to be kept on file in a lockable file
- Immunisation Evidence: We need a certificate available from your GP, Medicare  
Or  
Australian Immunisation Registry (Their contact phone number is  
1800 653 809) Medicare Australia or online at [www.medicareaustralia.gov.au](http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au)
- Management & Action Plan if your child/ren have Asthma, Anaphylaxis, Epilepsy  
or a medical condition

We have a registered number of places for each program. Once maximum enrolments are received, any further applications are placed on a waiting list and contacted by the Children's Services Manager when a place becomes available.

Enrolments can also be restricted by the number of bus trips required to each school. This will be at the discretion of the Children's Services Manager and senior Childcare Educators.

### Signing In Book

- All children must be signed in and out on the attendance sheets; for Before & After School Care, as well as Vacation Care with the time and signature of the parent/caregiver or authroised nominee.
- Educators will mark the roll with the time your child leaves for school and arrives at the Centre in the afternoon; you are required to sign these times for Before & After School Care.
- Please notify staff if your child is not coming on a designated attendance day.
- Your child's attendance is taken from the attendance booking form.
- Casual attendance requires the parent to inform the Centre when your child is attending, only if a place is available

- Educators will not allow a child to leave the Centre unless they are with a parent or authorised person. Children will NOT be sent home alone.
- The Bus has a copy of the attendance sheets to ensure children are collected
- If a parent/caregiver sends an unauthorised person to collect a child, a letter of authority or a phone call, is required. A licence or appropriate identification must be sighted and be over the age of 18.
- If your child's name is highlighted on the attendance sheet, this requires a parent/caregiver to speak to an Educator.

## Attendance by Prep Children

The OSHC Program ensures that all prep children complete a successful transition into the program. A request for a copy of the transition learning & development statement is on the enrolment form. An Educator will collect the prep child/ren attending the program from their classroom each day until they are settled in and able to find their own way to the collection point. An Educator will assist the integration of a prep child into all aspects of an OSHC program.

## Evaluation

We believe continual assessment and evaluation of the program by the Children's Services Manager, Educators, parents and children is an integral part of program planning. In order to facilitate this belief, the program will undertake various surveys throughout the year in order to gain information for future planning. Children, parents /caregiver and Educators will be surveyed to ensure the program offered reflects both children and parental needs and interests.

A variety of survey techniques will be used with the children which may include formal discussion, younger children drawing what they like in the program, written surveys, and children's interest checklists.

From 2017, feedback can be given via our website [www.merindapark.com.au](http://www.merindapark.com.au) We appreciate both positive and negative constructive feedback.

## Registration Tips

### 1. Think about your situation.

Family arrangements can be quite complex, with extended, divided and merged families, and when it comes to transporting children, we understand your plans may also include neighbours and friends. So here are some things to think about when completing your enrolment form.

#### **Which parent should be the account holder?**

A key consideration here is who the children are associated with on the records held by the Family Assistance Office or Centrelink. Having your account in the same name as the official primary care provider can make it easier to process the various government rebates. This does not prevent two parents having access to the same account if desired, or for either parent paying the account.

#### **Who should/should not be able to collect the child/ren?**

In some families this is a simple question. In others, it's far more complicated. Provide us with the information we need to support you. If restrictions apply please let us know.

#### **Does your child/ren have any special needs or interests?**

We treat every child as an individual, and we want to know how we can help them have a good time and get the most out of their day. You know this information better than anyone, so think about what you would like to tell us about each of your children.

### Does your child/ren have any allergies or medical conditions?

We want to keep your child/ren safe and happy, so it is essential for us to know if they have any allergies or medical conditions.

## 2. Get your information together

The following tips are intended to help you organise your information so that you can get through the registration process quickly.

Information Checklist	Tip
<b>Parents/Guardians</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact details for Parent and/or Guardian</li> <li>Customer Reference Number (CRN)</li> </ul>	<p>If you intend to claim the Child Care Benefit or the Child Care Rebate, you must be the person registered for subsidies.</p> <p>For more information on what you are entitled to and how to claim, you can contact the Family Assistance Office on 13 61 50.</p>
<b>Additional Contacts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact details for additional contacts</li> </ul>	<p>You can add multiple contacts who are authorised to collect your child/ren from the Centre, make bookings and make account enquiries. Additional contacts will be contacted in an emergency if you are unavailable.</p>
<b>Children</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name, age, CRN</li> <li>Supporting documentation:</li> <li>Cultural/religious considerations</li> <li>Allergies</li> <li>Medical conditions</li> <li>Contact details for Doctor</li> </ul>	<p>Include any special requirements your child/ren may have, if your child/ren have medical requirements you will be asked to provide documentation in the following step.</p> <p>Contact information for your family doctor or medical centre is required and must be obtained to meet our legislative obligations.</p>
<b>Documents</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Court orders</li> <li>Medical certificates/documents</li> </ul>	<p>If applicable you are required to supply any document related to medical conditions or relevant court orders. Your child/ren cannot attend the program until all relevant documents are provided.</p>
<b>Summary</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guardians</li> <li>Additional contacts</li> <li>Child/ren</li> <li>Attached documents</li> </ul>	<p>You will be reminded that if there is any missing information or documentation, you will need to supply all documentation before the enrolment process is complete. <b>NO child can commence until the enrolment process is complete.</b></p>

## Child Care Benefit (CCB)

### Information

**\*\*CCB & CCR will be changing as at 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018. Please keep an eye out for information as it becomes available.\*\***

Child Care Benefit is a payment made to families to assist with the costs of childcare. Child Care Benefit for approved care can be received as a reduced fee through the approved child care service. MPLCC is an approved service.

For more information and to find out if you are eligible, you need to contact the Family Assistance Office.

Parents/caregivers must register with the Family Assistance Office that they are attending a childcare service by:-

- phone 13 6150

- internet <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/Centrelink/child-care-benefit>

- or in person.

The parent who is registered with FAO must supply MPLCC with their Parent/Caregiver CRN & the child's CRN to enable the Centre to claim their CCB against their account.

## Priority Of Access

Enrolments are accepted in line with the Commonwealth Government priority of access guidelines. These guidelines are referred to when a service has a large waiting list and a number of parents/care givers competing for a limited number of vacant places.

These are:

- First Priority: Children at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- Second Priority: Children of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under Section 14 of the "A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999".
- Third Priority: Any other child

Within each priority mentioned above, further priorities exist in each category. A copy of this is available from the Children's Services Manager.

## Transport

### Bus Transport

All children are transported to and from school in our community bus which is registered with the Safety Transport Victoria meeting the regulations set down by this body. All children are required to wear seat belts and under 7 years of age must be transported in a booster seat. The driver travels with a mobile phone. The bus can take up to approximately 45 minutes to complete the return run to all schools:

Rangebank Primary School                      }for both BSC & ASC  
Courtenay Gardens Primary School        }

In the case of unforeseen circumstances (if the Centre bus breaks down) or if the number of children exceed the positions available on the bus for viable trips, if parents sign the consent their child/ren may be taken to school in the MPLCC car.

### Pick up points

We have designated meeting points for each school:

- Rangebank PS – Junior basketball playground leading into Teachers car park.
- Courtenay Gardens PS: - Beside the building, nearest exit to Courtenay Ave gate & bus stop.
- St. Therese's PS: - Canteen area

These locations may change at times depending on availability of space at each school. Children will be notified in advance if arrangements change.

There is a procedure that Educators follow if your child misses the bus.

School runs are determined according to the demand of the school community's needs.

There is a behaviour policy for the bus. All who travel on the bus are asked to remember that they are representing MPLCC.



## Code of Conduct On The Bus

Educators discuss limits with children each term. Please ensure your child/ren are aware of these limits.

- Be aware of the safety for everyone, when getting on and off the bus
- We never distract the driver
- When getting on the bus walk to the back of the bus and find an empty seat, keeping in mind younger children first as they require a booster seat.
- Place your seat belt on
  - Ask for help if needed
- We never eat food or drink on the bus.
- Behave so that the journey is enjoyable for all, we never
  - Jump
  - Use bad language
  - Yell
  - Fight
- We never take off seat belts until the bus has stopped and an Educator has opened the side door.
- Please look after our buses

Children must be at pick up points promptly. Enjoy your ride in a safe and responsible manner

## Staffing and Qualifications

### Staffing

The service is licensed to take up to 80 children

The Regulations state that the staff ratio is:

1 – 30 children – two staff of which 1 Educator holds a Diploma of Children’s Services

30 – 45 children – three Educators of which 2 Educators hold a Diploma of Children’s Services

45 – 60 children – four Educators of which 2 staff hold a Diploma of Children’s Services

Excursions: 1 Educator to 8 children } These are based on the

Swimming: 1 Educator to 5 children } National Standards.

### Qualifications

All of our employees are trained educators and have:

- Children Services qualifications
- Working with Children Check and Police Check
- First aid training
- CPR training
- Anaphylaxis Management training
- Asthma Management training

See OSHC display in the entrance to childcare for Educators photos.

As Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre is a training and learning Centre, we take pride in training students within our Out of School Hours Care program under the supervision of our qualified Educators.

### Accidents / Illness / Incidents / Anaphylaxis

All Educators hold a First Aid Certificate – Provide and Emergency First Aid Response in an Education & Care Setting-HLTAID004. Good practice with regards to the administration of medication is essential to ensure that the appropriate dose of medicines is administered to the child. Medication includes all prescription and over the counter drugs. (refer Medication Policy-Appendix 1)

MPLCC in line with the Education & Care Services National Regulations No. 136 will ensure that at all times there is at least one Educator who holds a current first aid qualification, at least one Educator who has undertaken current approved anaphylaxis management training and at least one Educator who has undertaken current approved emergency asthma management training.

In order to ensure that the interests of the Educators, children & parents/guardians/approved persons are not compromised, medication will only be administered with explicit permission from parent/caregiver/approved nominee.

- If your child is ill or injured, the appropriate first aid qualified person will administer first aid.
- An Educator will fill out an accident/incident report stating time, injury and first aid administered. Parents/caregiver will be notified and the accident report will require the parent/caregiver or approved nominees signature.
- If your child becomes ill whilst in our care, the parent/caregiver or approved nominee will be contacted to make arrangements to have the child taken home. The Educator will make the child as comfortable as possible while they are waiting for the parent/caregiver. If you are unable to be contacted, we will notify one of the authorised nominees.
- If your child is asthmatic, we must have an asthma management & action plan from your doctor on file.
- An ambulance will be called in case of extreme illness or accident.
- PLEASE DO NOT SEND A CHILD WHO IS ILL.

### Anaphylaxis policy

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

- Inform Educators, either on enrolment or on diagnosis, of their child's allergies.
- Provide Educators with an anaphylaxis management & action plan and written consent to use the EpiPen/Anapen in line with the action plan.
- Provide Educators with a complete EpiPen/Anapen kit in a named insulated bag.
- Regularly check the EpiPen/Anapen expiry date.
- Assist Educators by offering information and answering any questions regarding their child's allergies.

- Notify the Educators of any changes to their child's allergy status and provide a new anaphylaxis management & action plan in accordance with these changes.
- Communicate all relevant information and concerns to Educators, 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/Anapen is permitted to attend the service or its programs without that EpiPen/Anapen.

*Merinda Park's Anaphylaxis policy is attached, please refer to Appendix 2.*

## Asthma

Asthma is a chronic health condition affecting 1 in 6 children. It is a major cause for childhood admission to hospital and the most common cause of school absenteeism.

While an average of four people die in Victoria each week from asthma, many of these deaths are preventable. Community education and correct management will assist to minimize the impact of asthma.

It is generally accepted that children under the age of 6 do not have the skills and ability to recognize and manage their own asthma effectively. With this in mind, MPLCC recognises the need to educate its' staff and parents/carers about asthma and to promote responsible asthma management strategies

If your child is asthmatic, we must have an Asthma Management & Action Plan from your doctor on file along with a Medical Communication form and Medication Authorisation form.

*Merinda Park's asthma policy is attached. Refer Appendix 3.*

## Medication

All medication must be clearly marked with the child's name and the dosage must be clear on the Pharmacists dispensing label.

*Do not leave medication of any nature in your child's bag.*

Medication will be stored in a locked box.

### Prescribed Medications

Prescribed medication will only be administered if the Pharmaceutical label is current and intact. Medication will only be administered to the person specified on the label and the Doctor's direction will be strictly adhered to.

### Non Prescribed Medication

Non prescribed medication will only be administered following direction on the bottle/box when parents/carers have designated dosage and signed a Medication Authorisation Form eg: Panadol, Asthma Puffers.

*Merinda Park's Medication Policy is attached, please refer to Appendix 1.*

## Infectious Diseases

The Out of School Hours Care Program policy on infectious diseases outlines the exclusion practices for children who have an infectious disease or who have been exposed to an infectious disease. MPLCC will ensure that the policy is practiced. The OSHC program will practice correct hygiene and follow requirements from State & Commonwealth legislation.

MPLCC will ensure that parents/caregivers/approved persons will be notified of any infectious disease present at the Centre. Children will be excluded from the OSHC program in accordance with appropriate legislation.

Link: <http://ideas.health.vic.gov.au/guidelines/school-exclusion-table.asp>

## Dental Hygiene

Your child's teeth are important. Educators will encourage all children to brush their teeth after eating breakfast. Please provide a named tooth brush and toothpaste to be stored in the child's school bag.

## Clothing / Equipment

Please ensure your child is clothed properly, especially on excursions including suitable footwear. NO THONGS or SLIP ON SANDALS, i.e. footwear must have a strap at the heel. A waterproof jacket is required for winter. Please put your child's name on all items. All items left at the end of term are sent to charity organisations. Uniforms are sent to appropriate schools.

Children must not wear singlets, tank tops, or backless tops while in care. Children who are in Before and/or After School Care who don't have hats will be required to stay indoors or under shade outdoors. For children attending Vacation Care who don't have hats, they will be supplied with a new one from our stock held at reception for sale. The cost of \$15 for the hat will be charged to the Parent's/Carer's account.

## Sunsmart Policy

Our Sunsmart Policy has been developed to ensure that all children attending MPLCC are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful ultraviolet radiation (UV) rays of the sun as advised by the Cancer Council of Victoria. The policy is effective between September and April including excursions but is advised to be implemented all year round. Children without a sunsmart hat will not be allowed to play outside or on excursion days will be supplied with a new one from Reception with the cost of \$15 added to the Parent's/Carer's account. We encourage Parents/Caregivers to supply Sunscreen SPF50+ as well, to ensure complete protection of your child/ren's skin during Sept-April inclusive.

MPLCC requires children to wear sunsmart hats that protect their face, neck and ears whenever they are outside, i.e. legionnaire or broad-brimmed hats. Children must wear their own sunsmart hats and not share hats.

MPLCC will be supplying 1 container of sunscreen & a sunsmart hat with your initial enrolment.

## Head Lice Policy

A child found to have live lice will be separated from other children and asked to wear a hat on their head in case eggs begin hatching which will ensure prevention of the spreading of the lice. The parents will be notified immediately and asked to collect their child and begin treatment.

Whether eggs or live lice are detected the child's head will be also sprayed with a mixture of tea tree oil and water. If other children request they will have their heads sprayed also. (if you do not wish your child's head to be sprayed please contact us.)

A sign notifying parents/families that there has been a case of head lice detected will be placed on the attendance sheets.

## Smoking

A person must **not** smoke:-

- (a) inside a building on Council Land;
- (b) within 10 metres of the entrance to a building on Council Land *including any Council workplace*;
- (c) within 10 metres of a building on a reserve located on Council Land;
- (d) within 10 metres of the playground on any Council Land.

## Security

MPLCC has surveillance cameras installed around the building including the playground & foyer areas. These are to protect the Centre and identify anyone on the premises that shouldn't be or vandalising the building. The display screen for the cameras is located in the CEO's office and is not accessible to the public. The only use of footage would be for police use or identification of illegal activities.

## Food

OSHC provides a health-promoting environment, which gives an opportunity for children to experience healthy eating & physical activity during the program.

### Lunches / Snacks

- Children are provided with breakfast before 8.00am, which consists of cereal, toast, juice, fresh fruit and water. Children are encouraged in the planning of a healthy afternoon tea/snack menu eg: sandwiches, salads, soup, with fresh fruit/vegetable offered as an alternative. Water is always available inside and outside.
- Parents/caregivers are asked to supply any other dietary needs or requirement, e.g. soya milk
- Children must bring a healthy morning tea, lunch and water in a refillable container with them during Vacation Care & Curriculum Day Care
- Special lunches will be provided at a minimal cost on special days.
- We are unable to heat children's lunches such as noodles, soup, pies, etc.

### Food Handling

As a registered food-handling organisation, we require parents/caregivers to advise us before they bring in any food to be shared amongst the children. Any cooking done with the children will follow the appropriate food handling regulations. We have a registered Class 2 food handling facility and must meet required standards/practices. This is a requirement of the Department of Human Services and City of Casey.

## Activities / Program

Children are encouraged to discuss activities & plan their program together with Educators. These ideas are then given to the Children's Services Manager & Educators to implement along with other activities they would like to do during that day or over the weekly program.

Children are given opportunities to modify their program to meet their individual needs, interests & abilities throughout the week.

Each day the opportunities for free play, craft, sports, board games, activity, computer games, outside play, T.V., reading, homework club (refer page 21) and quiet time will be made available.

Equipment such as sporting, board games, art and craft are to be shared, used properly and returned. If deliberate damage or loss of equipment occurs, the family of the child responsible will be required to replace them.

A copy of the weekly program is displayed near the sign in/out sheets. During Vacation Care the program is located on the noticeboard above the sign in book in the main hall.

## Program Procedure

The OSHC Program is committed to nurturing and extending each child's cognitive, physical, emotional and intellectual development in a child-friendly, supportive and fun environment. The service offers a planned, flexible and balanced program, which will respond to children, parents/caregivers and Educators needs.

Within the children's program, the service provides learning experiences that expose children to many different and varied subjects. Special events such as celebrations, cultural and fancy dress days are also undertaken.

All staffing arrangements are made within the recommended National Standards staff/child ratios.

Children and parents are given the opportunity to evaluate their programs through surveys and feedback to Educators.

## Daily Routines: A Brief Overview

### Before School Care

6.30am	Open.
6.30am – 8.00am	Children arrive at the program and make their own healthy breakfast
6.30am – 7.45am	Children participate in a variety of activities (children's choice)
7.45am – 8.00am	Children finish activities & commence packing up
8.00am – 8.30am	Children participate in Gross Motor activities & outdoor play – weather permitting (Skipping, poison ball) or group discussion.
8.30am onwards	Depart to schools

### After School Care

Open. Educators arrive and prepare afternoon tea and set up daily activities, start to collect children from schools

3.00pm – 3.30pm	Children begin arriving. Children signed in by Educators. Bags are put away and children have free play
3.30pm – 4.00pm	Afternoon tea is served
4.15pm – 5.30pm	Non-planned activities begin (children's choice) & children have the option to participate or initiate their own supervised play
5.30pm – 6.00pm	Educators & children assist in the packing up of activities & equipment
6.00pm	Program closes

## Vacation Care

6.30am	Open
6.30 am – 8.00 am	Breakfast
6.30 am – 9.30 am	Free play
9.30 am – 10.00 am	Come together
10.00 am – 10.30 am	Morning tea
10.30 am – 12.30 pm	Activity
12.30 pm – 1.30 pm	Lunch
1.30 pm – 3.00 pm	Activity
3.00 pm – 3.30 pm	Afternoon tea
3.30 pm – 5.30 pm	Open play
5.30 pm – 6.00 pm	Pack up & lock up

## Special Activities

An information sheet is supplied to all participants of special activities

## Positive Guidance of Children

The OSHC Program is committed to developing a secure, caring and stimulating environment, which enhances children's self-esteem and encourages them to interact positively and to co-operate with others.

## Behaviour procedure

This procedure was developed to establish a process of dealing with behavioural problems in the Out of School Hours Care Program for OSHC Educators to follow. Everyone will be informed on enrolment into the program.

### The process for dealing with children's behaviour:

1. Educators try regular behaviour management
2. Educators try extra strategies for management of difficult behaviour
3. Educators take the child and talk seriously to them about their behaviour
4. Educators speak to parents to work out strategies to deal with behaviour:
  - a. Immediately if the behaviour is:
    - 1) Abusive language at worker/staff
    - 2) Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property
    - 3) Verbal Bullying includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.
    - 4) Covert bullying which is designed to harm someone's reputation and/or cause humiliation.
    - 5) Cyber bullying using digital technologies
    - 6) Endangering the safety of themselves, others and workers
5. An incident form will be completed which will be given to the parents/caregivers, the Children's Services Manager or Senior Educators will speak to the child and the parents/caregivers.
6. If the child endangers himself /others physically for the safety of all, parents/caregivers will be requested to collect their child from the Centre.
7. After all strategies of behaviour management have been in place and the inappropriate behaviour continues regularly, the Children's Services Manager deems this unsafe then suspension of the child will be imminent,

8. The Children's Services Manager must notify Chief Executive Officer, once a child is pending a suspension.

## Procedure for suspension

Parents/caregivers will be sent a letter or telephoned to attend a pre-suspension meeting (meeting time will be allocated to suit all parties) or will be contacted verbally or by phone.

Both child and parents/caregivers, person in charge, Educators or Children's Services Manager must attend the pre-suspension meeting. If parents /caregivers do not contact Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre or attend the meeting, the child will automatically be suspended. A letter of suspension will be mailed notifying the parent of the immediate suspension.

## Inclusion

MPLCC Out of School Hours Care Program offers a non discriminative approach to programming, which is inclusive of all children. Consideration is given to factors such as culture, ethnicity, language, gender, social class and ability when planning the children's program.

The program responds to individual needs, interests and requests by providing a range of activities for all children attending the service. The children's program offers a balance of activities, ensuring flexibility and providing for child-initiated activities. Children and parents/caregivers input is valued when Educators are preparing the program to ensure that it meets the needs of all concerned at all times.

MPLCC ensures that all children including those with additional needs participate in the planned activities of all Children's Services program.

## Computer Use

Children are allowed under supervision to access the Computer room and access to the Internet. Parents/caregivers and children will be required to sign an agreement with regards to Internet Code of Conduct. Refer to Appendix 4.

## Toys from Home

The service recognises that children sometimes bring their own toys (named) to school, however children are responsible for these toys whilst at the program. Toys that are not named and left at the Centre will go in to general use. Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre does not take any responsibility for the breaking of or replacing of any toys, games, mobile phones, etc children bring from home.

## Computers, Television, Video Games, Electronic Games

The program endeavours to reflect children's interests in the program, therefore activities such as videos, television, computers and electronic games will be offered within a balanced program of activities. The amount of time children can participate in these activities will, however, be limited.

The service will ensure that the content of program and games will be appropriate for all children present and will not contain any physical or verbal violence or ridicule. These activities will be limited to C and G ratings.



On occasions PG videos/dvd's/ electronic games may be viewed under supervision of Educators. Parents can request their children to not view these by indicating on their enrolment form then alternate activities will be arranged to meet their needs.

## Celebrations & Festivities

The OSHC program acknowledges that celebrations and festivals assist children to learn about other people and cultures. To facilitate this, the service will endeavour to include a variety of celebrations and festivities throughout the year within the children's program. The program will include a range of experiences representing everyday life, and celebrations will not focus on one specific festival or aspect of the culture. Children are, however, encouraged to celebrate festivities related to their culture or lifestyle.

We do encourage parents/caregivers to help in these celebrations, e.g. bringing in a cake to celebrate their birthday but as we are a registered kitchen, strict guidelines must be followed. Please see staff for advice. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to provide ideas into the program and help select materials for the provision of culturally relevant experiences.

## Alterations to Program

Activities are subject to change due to flexibility of delivery of the program and the children's choices. You will be notified of any significant changes to the program.

## Evacuation Procedures

Evacuation procedures are displayed in each room and will be implemented in the event of any emergency in the Centre. If you hear an air horn, follow the direction of the person in charge. At various times in the year we will practice an emergency drill.

## Grievance and Complaints

If you have any concerns about any aspect of our service, please address them to:

1. The Children's Services Manager, Athena Jones
2. MPLCC CEO, Jan Gilchrist
3. The President MPLCC Committee of Management, PO Box 7144, Cranbourne North 3977
4. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Level 3 165-169 Thomas Street, Dandenong 3175. Phone 1300 555 526
5. ACECQA – Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority Board, 175 Liverpool Street, Sydney NSW. Phone 1300 422 327

## Code of Conduct for Children

Educators discuss children's conduct each term. Please ensure your child is aware of their rights/limits.

- Socially interact in a safe environment
- Be accepted, respected and valued as an individual
- Be given a fair hearing
- Travel to and from school & excursions safely and without harassment

Children's responsibilities

- Recognise and respect the rights of others
- Accept, respect and value others as individuals

- Respect all property
- Express themselves in an acceptable manner

#### Children's Limits

- We keep our hands and feet to ourselves
- We keep within our own personal space
- We walk inside
- We get permission from the owner before we borrow something
- We inform staff when attending toilets
- We stay in the grounds of the Centre unless we are accompanied by an Educator or parents
- We use good manners when we speak
- We respect others and their feelings
- We ask for permission before touching or taking things
- We speak politely to staff and others
- We allow the speaker to finish speaking before replying
- We respect our property as well as other peoples property

### Code of Conduct for Parents/Caregivers

- Parents/caregivers do not have the right to speak to other children.
- Parents/caregivers cannot discipline other children.
- There will be no swearing or raised voices

### Code of Conduct for Educators

- Socially interact in a safe environment
- Be accepted, respected and valued as an individual
- Be given a fair hearing
- Centre Staff members & Educators have the right to ask a person to leave the premises if they or the children feel intimidated or threatened in any way

#### Educators responsibilities

- To ensure the safety of all children and Educators
- Recognise and respect the rights of others
- Accept, respect and value others as individuals
- Respect all property
- To role model acceptable manners and behaviour at all times

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **What types of activities are there for my child/ren to choose from at before and after school care?**

All programs and activities are designed to be fun while catering for the diversity of children involved. Daily programs have a structured framework with a degree of flexibility that enables creative and adventurous play, inquisitive and energetic activities so the caring and

thoughtful side of children can flourish.

Some activities include board games, jigsaws, construction materials, plastic play food, dress ups, musical instruments, cars and trains.

Sporting equipment available at programs include bats, balls, hoops, beanbags and skipping ropes. Some larger programs with dedicated space also have large game tables for fozball, ping pong and air-hockey.

### **What does my child/ren need to bring to before and after school care?**

They need a hat, water bottle and any medication that may be required and is indicated in the associated Medical Management Plan.

### **Do you charge by the hour or session?**

MPLCC provides session based care at all programs so we charge per session. The fee is set in partnership with the Committee of Management, taking the total duration of each session into consideration.

### **Are there charges for late pick-ups from the program?**

Late pick-up charges of \$10.00 for the first 10 minutes (or part thereof) per child apply plus \$4.00 per minute after that. These charges apply after the program finishing time.

### **Do I qualify for the Child Care Rebate or Child Care Benefit?**

The Australian Government offers two types of financial assistance for childcare: the Child Care Rebate (CCR) and the Child Care Benefit (CCB).

The Child Care Rebate (CCR) is not means tested and is available to almost all Australian families. It provides a rebate of 35% of fees after the CCB has been calculated and applied. The Child Care Benefit (CCB) is means tested and scaled, depending on family income. Call the Family Assistance Office on 13 61 50 to check your entitlements. This will change on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2018.

### **When will I be billed?**

Your statement for before and after school care use will be sent to you every two weeks via email.

Before we send your statement we first verify your child/rens attendance at the program and then submit the relevant information to the Federal Government for calculation of your benefits and rebates. Once any applicable reductions have been confirmed, your statement is issued.

This helps to ensure that you have received all applicable fee reductions and discounts provided by the government before paying your bill.

If you have any questions relating to your child/rens attendance, when statements are issued or due, or how to read your statement, please contact Reception on 5996 9056.

### **I am separated from my partner. Can we have separate accounts for my child/ren?**

Merinda Park understands families come in all shapes and sizes and we will work with you to find a solution to meet your family needs. Each parent who has a separate financial responsibility for the child/ren will require their own account.

It is important to note that Merinda Park has strict requirements around signing children in and out of the centre. Only specifically authorised adults are permitted to leave with children to ensure that safety, parental wishes and custody requirements are adhered to.

### **Custody arrangements are in place. How can I ensure these are adhered to?**

To ensure your child/rens care is appropriately managed we will require a copy of any applicable court orders. We will review the information and the documents will be attached to the child/rens records. All information is treated confidentially and with sensitivity.

If there are any changes, we ask that you notify us promptly.

Where a court order has been provided, we will ensure all appropriate Educators are aware

of it and its terms. If an attempt is made to breach the court orders, the parent/guardian with custody entitlements will be contacted immediately. The police will also be called.

### **What is the cancellation policy?**

The cancellation policy is reasonably simple. As it falls into four categories:

1. Cancellation before the booking deadline – no charge.
2. Cancellation after the booking deadline due to a genuine medical condition – no charge. Note: this will require supporting correspondence.
3. Cancellation after the booking deadline due to shift work changes – no charge. Note: this requires prior notification with Merinda Park that the parent is subject to shift work rosters.
4. All other cancellations will be marked as an absence and a fee charged.

### **What if I am having financial difficulty?**

We understand that from time to time families need a little extra help. We ensure a change in financial circumstances does not become a barrier to accessing high quality care. Please contact the Centre Admin Manager if you are experiencing financial difficulties.

### **What if my child has an allergy or medical condition?**

If your child/ren has an allergy or medical condition, we will require some additional information. You will be required to complete a medical management form for the appropriate condition. This form, along with any other required documentation, must be provided to staff at the program.

All Merinda Park staff are trained in First Aid, CPR, Asthma and Anaphylaxis Management.

## **Glossary**

There are lots of acronyms and abbreviations used in the Child Care sector. Here we explain some of the terms you might come across.

**ACECQA (The Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority):** the national body jointly governed by the Australian Government and state and territory governments. ACECQA guide and oversee the implementation of the National Quality Framework (NQF).

**OSHC (Outside School Hours Care), OOSH (Outside of school hours):** a commonly used term to refer to before and after school care programs and vacation care.

**CCR (Child Care Rebate):** is NOT income tested. It pays up to 35% of your out of pocket costs of up to \$7,500 per child each year. The rebate helps to cover the costs of approved child care, including out of school hours care.

**CCB (Child Care Benefit):** is income tested and scaled, resulting in potentially significant payments scaled according to the family’s income and the type and length of care between 0% and 85% of Merinda Park’s fees.

**Centrelink CRN/s (Customer Reference Number):** So that the CCB and CCR can be automatically applied to your account, you need to provide a Centrelink CRN for the parent acting as the Primary Account Holder and one for each child that will be attending the program. The CRN/s can be obtained from the Family Assistance office on 13 61 50.

**NQF (National Quality Framework):** on January 1, 2012, the National Quality Framework was established to raise quality and drive continuous improvement and consistency in education and care services across Australia. It now applies to most long day care, family day care, preschool (or kindergarten) and outside school hours care services.

## 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>

Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre  
141-147 Endeavour Drive,  
Cranbourne North. 3977



Melways Reference 129 F8

## Appendix 1 – Medication Policy



### Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre Inc

A0028764B

ABN 69 093 616 835

Melways Ref. 129 F8

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Written/Amended By:	Jan Gilchrist CEO	Policy No:	05/03
Authorised By:	CEO	Version:	6
Distributed to:	All Educators and VCAL staff	Date:	2 <sup>nd</sup> November 201700
Dates of previous issue:	17 <sup>th</sup> May, 2004 8 <sup>th</sup> May, 2008 4 <sup>th</sup> June 2014 11 <sup>th</sup> November 2014 27 <sup>th</sup> October 2015	Review date:	November 2018

### Medication Policy

Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre (MPLCC) has a duty of care to ensure that all persons are provided with a high level of protection during their attendance at the Centre.

Therefore, the basic principles of medication administration will be adhered to at all times while at MPLCC. Medication will only be administered to a child when it is prescribed for that child which has the original prescription label attached indicating the child's name, date and time to be administered, expiry date and full dosage information.

Exception will only be made in an emergency situation and staff will follow the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (National Regulations) Division 4 92-96* and *Children's Services Regulations 2009*

MPLCC reserves the right to contact a health care professional if staff/carer are unsure about administering medication to a child/ student, even if the parent or legal guardian has requested the medication to be administered.

#### Definitions:

For the purpose of this policy Medication is :

- Authorised by a health care professional and
- Dispensed by a pharmacist with a printed label, which includes the name of the child being prescribed the medication, the medication dosage and expiry date.
- All medication that does not meet the criteria for prescribed medication can be considered non-prescribed. This includes over the counter medication; medication dispensed by a naturopath/homeopath, or considered complimentary or alternative such as vitamins and cultural herbs or remedies.

## MEDICATION PROCEDURE

1. Medication must be handed to an Educator / staff / trainer who will be caring for the child.
2. Medication will only be administered with written consent from the person whose name is recorded on the child's/students enrolment form as being authorised to request or permit the administration of medication to the child/ student or is the students parent /guardian.
3. If an over the counter medication is required it will not be administered without written authorisation from a doctor and parent and this written notice must be provided to the Manager.
4. Medication requiring cool storage will be kept in the fridge within the area.
5. Medication not requiring cool storage will be kept in a locked container in the Managers office (Children's services or VCAL).
6. At the time of administering medication the Educator /staff / trainer shall:
  - ascertain required medication and dosage to be administered
  - ensure that the medication is administered from its original container bearing the original label and instructions and before expiry date.
  - Measure prescribed dosageA second staff member shall be present at the time of administering medication and shall;
  - obtain details from medication form;
  - check medication, dosage and amount measured; &
  - oversee administration to appropriate child.Both staff members to sign the appropriate section of the Medication Authorisation Form.

Ensure that when the parent/guardian of the child/student arrives with them at the Centre that they complete the Medication Authorisation Form.
7. Parents/guardians whose child suffers from a chronic condition (eg Asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, heart condition, hearing / sight problems) must on enrolment provide written signed and dated instructions indicating required medication and recommended treatment using the required Management & Action Plan form. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing updated medical information to the Centre as and when appropriate. In the case of Asthma and Anaphylaxis sufferers, the parent/ guardian must also complete the appropriate action plan. See appropriate policies
8. Under the Children's Services Act 2006 or Education and Care services National regulations "Authorisation to Administer Medication", written authorisation does not apply in an emergency if the person authorised to give permission has given oral authorisation for the administration of the medication to the child/student and, within 7 days after the oral authorisation was given, confirms the authorisation in writing. This would also apply to a student attending any other service under the age of 18.

## Appendix 2 – Anaphylaxis Policy



### Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre Inc

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<b>Written/Amended By:</b>	Jan Gilchrist CEO	<b>Policy No:</b>	22/03
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### ANAPHYLAXIS POLICY

Anaphylaxis is a severe, life-threatening allergic reaction. Up to 2% of the general population and up to five per cent of children are at risk. The most common causes in young children are eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, cow milk, bee or other insect stings, and some medications. This policy applies when a child, diagnosed as "being at risk of anaphylaxis" by a qualified medical practitioner is enrolled at the Centre. It also applies to parents, guardians, staff and management.

Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre believes that the safety and wellbeing of children who are at risk of anaphylaxis is a whole-of-community responsibility. The service is committed to:

- providing, as far as practicable, a safe and healthy environment in which children at risk of anaphylaxis can participate equally in all aspects of the children's program and experiences.
- raising awareness about allergies and anaphylaxis amongst the Centre community and children in attendance.
- actively involving the parents/guardians of each child at risk of anaphylaxis in assessing risks, developing risk minimisation strategies and management strategies for their child.
- ensuring each Educator and other relevant adults have adequate knowledge of allergies, anaphylaxis and emergency procedures.
- facilitating communication to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children at risk of anaphylaxis.

#### The aim of this policy is to:

- minimise the risk of an anaphylactic reaction occurring while the child is in the care of the children's service.



- ensure that Educators respond appropriately to an anaphylactic reaction by initiating appropriate treatment, including competently administering an EpiPen®.
- raise awareness of anaphylaxis and its management through education and policy implementation to Centre users and parents.

This policy applies when a child diagnosed as being at risk of anaphylaxis by a qualified medical practitioner is enrolled at the children's service. It applies to children enrolled at the service, their parents/guardians, Educators and Approved Provider. It also applies to other relevant members of the service community, such as volunteers and visiting specialists.

The Centre recognises the importance of all Educators responsible for the child/ren at risk of anaphylaxis undertaking training that includes preventative measures to minimise the risk of an anaphylactic reaction, recognition of the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and emergency treatment, including administration of an EpiPen®.

Educators and parents/guardians need to be made aware that it is not possible to achieve a completely allergen-free environment in any service that is open to the general community. Educators need to be aware that it is not possible to eliminate all allergens from the environment. Instead there is a range of procedures and risk minimisation strategies to reduce the risk of a child having an anaphylactic reaction, including strategies to minimise the presence of the allergen in the service is required.

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or Manager of the service shall:

- conduct an assessment of the potential for accidental exposure to allergens while child/ren at risk of anaphylaxis are in the care of the service and develop a risk minimisation plan for the Centre in consultation with Educators and the families of the child/ren.
- ensure Educators responsible for the child/ren at risk of anaphylaxis attend anaphylaxis management training, that is reinforced at yearly intervals.
- ensure that all relieving Educators are aware of symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction, the child at risk of anaphylaxis, the child's allergies, Management and Action Plan for Anaphylaxis and EpiPen® kit. If the relieving Educators are not trained in anaphylaxis management, the Nominated supervisor or Certified Supervisor shall ensure at least one Educator trained in anaphylaxis management is present at the service and that Educators are aware that they are responsible for the administration of an EpiPen® in an emergency. If this is not possible parents/guardians must be informed of this situation before a child at risk of anaphylaxis is left at the Centre.
- ensure that no child who has been prescribed an EpiPen® is permitted to attend the service or its programs without that EpiPen® Anaphylaxis Management Plan signed by a treating Medical Practitioner.
- make parents/guardians aware of this policy, and provide access to it on request.
- encourage ongoing communication between parents/guardians and Educators regarding the current status of the child's allergies, this policy and its implementation.

### **Enrolment Checklist for Children at Risk of Anaphylaxis**

- A Management & Action Plan for Anaphylaxis is completed, which includes strategies to address the particular needs of each child at risk of anaphylaxis, and this plan is implemented

- Parents of a child at risk of anaphylaxis have been provided a copy of the Centre's Anaphylaxis policy
- All parents/guardians are made aware of the Anaphylaxis policy
- Management & Action plan for Anaphylaxis for the child is signed by the child's Medical Practitioner and is visible to all staff and displayed in a prominent position to ensure that all team members are aware of the child's anaphylaxis status, triggers and emergency procedures.
- EpiPen<sup>®</sup> (within expiry date) is available for use at any time the child is in the care at the Centre
- EpiPen<sup>®</sup> is stored in an insulated container, in a location easily accessible to adults (not locked away), inaccessible to children and away from direct sources of heat
- All Educators are aware of the EpiPen<sup>®</sup> kit location
- The Management & Action Plan for Anaphylaxis is in place and all staff understand the plan
- A treat box is available for special occasions (if relevant) and is clearly marked as belonging to the child at risk of anaphylaxis
- Parent/guardian's current contact details are available
- Information regarding any other medications or medical conditions (for example asthma) is available to Educators
- If food is prepared at the service, measures are in place to prevent contamination of the food given to the child at risk of anaphylaxis

**Educators responsible for the child at risk of anaphylaxis shall:**

- ensure a copy of the child's anaphylaxis action plan is visible to all Educators.
- follow the child's anaphylaxis action plan in the event of an allergic reaction, which may progress to anaphylaxis.
- in the situation where a child who has not been diagnosed as allergic, but who appears to be having an anaphylactic reaction:
  - Call an ambulance immediately by dialing 000.
  - Commence first aid.
  - Contact the parent/guardian.
  - Contact the approved nominee to be notified in the event of illness if the parent/guardian cannot be contacted.
- practice EpiPen<sup>®</sup> administration procedures using an EpiPen<sup>®</sup> trainer and "anaphylaxis scenarios" on a regular basis, preferably quarterly.
- ask all parents/guardians as part of the enrolment procedure, prior to their child's attendance at the service, whether the child has allergies and document this information on the child's enrolment record. If the child has allergies, ask the parents/guardians to provide a medical management plan signed by a Medical Practitioner.

- ensure that parents/guardians provide an Management & Action Plan for Anaphylaxis signed by the child's Medical Practitioner and a complete EpiPen<sup>®</sup> kit while the child is present at the service.
- ensure that the EpiPen<sup>®</sup> kit is stored in a location that is known to all staff, including relief staff; easily accessible to adults (not locked away); inaccessible to children; and away from direct sources of heat.
- ensure that the EpiPen<sup>®</sup> kit for each child at risk of anaphylaxis is carried by a trained adult on excursions that this child attends.
- regularly check the EpiPen<sup>®</sup> expiry date. (The manufacturer will only guarantee the effectiveness of the EpiPen<sup>®</sup> to the end of the nominated expiry month.)
- provide information to the service community about resources and support for managing allergies and anaphylaxis.

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

- inform Educators either on enrolment or on diagnosis, of their child's allergies.
- provide Educators with a Management and Action Plan for Anaphylaxis and written consent to use the EpiPen<sup>®</sup> in line with this action plan.
- provide Educators with a complete EpiPen<sup>®</sup> kit.
- regularly check the EpiPen<sup>®</sup> expiry date.
- assist Educators by offering information and answering any questions regarding their child's allergies.
- notify the Educators 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 Educators, for example, any matter relating to the health of the child.
- comply with the service's policy that no child who has been prescribed an EpiPen<sup>®</sup> is permitted to attend the service or its programs without that EpiPen<sup>®</sup>.
- the parent will sign the Medical Authorisation Form the first term of attendance and review each term after that

The following procedures should be implemented to help protect the child at risk of anaphylaxis from accidental exposure to food allergens:

In relation to the child at risk:

- This child should only eat food that has been specifically prepared for him/her.
  - Where the service is preparing food for the child, ensure that it has been prepared according to the parent's instructions.
  - Some parents will choose to provide all food for their child.
- All food for this child should be checked and approved by the child's parent/guardian and be in accordance with the risk minimisation plan.
- Bottles, other drinks and lunch boxes, including any treats, provided by the parents/guardians for this child should be clearly labelled with the child's name.

- There should be no trading or sharing of food, food utensils and containers with this child.
- In some circumstances it may be appropriate that a highly allergic child does not sit at the same table when others consume food or drink containing or potentially containing the allergen. However, children with allergies should not be separated from all children and should be socially included in all activities.
- Parents/guardians should provide a safe treat box for this child.
- Where this child is very young, provide his/her own high chair to minimise the risk of cross-contamination.
- When the “at risk child” is allergic to milk, ensure non-allergic babies are held when they drink formula/milk.
- Increase supervision of this child on special occasions such as excursions, incursions or family days.

In relation to other practices at the Centre:

- Ensure tables and bench tops are washed down after eating.
- Ensure hand washing for all children upon arrival at the service, before and after eating.
- Restrict use of food and food containers, boxes and packaging in crafts, cooking and science experiments, depending on the allergies of particular children. Staff should discuss the use of foods in such activities with parents/guardians of this child and these foods should be consistent with the Management & Action Plan for Anaphylaxis.
- All children need to be closely supervised at meal and snack times and consume food in specified areas. To minimise risk children should not ‘wander around’ the Centre with food.
- Educators should use non-food rewards, for example stickers, for all children.
- The Management & Action Plan for Anaphylaxis will inform the children’s service’s food purchases and menu planning.
- Educators preparing food should be instructed about measures necessary to prevent cross contamination between foods during the handling, preparation and serving of food – such as careful cleaning of food preparation areas and utensils.
- Where food is brought from home to the Centre, all parents/guardians will be asked not to send food containing specified allergens or ingredients as determined in the Management & Action Plan for Anaphylaxis.

### Possible exposure scenarios and strategies

Scenario	Strategy	Who is responsible
Food is provided by the children’s service and a food allergen is unable to be removed from the service’s menu (for example milk)	Menus are planned in conjunction with parents of at risk child/ren and food is prepared according to parents instructions	Educators & parents
	Alternatively the parent provides all of the food for the at risk child	
	Ensure separate storage of foods containing allergen	Educators
	Educators observe food handling, preparation and serving practices to minimise the risk of cross contamination. This includes hygiene of surfaces in kitchen and children’s eating area, food utensils and	Educators

	containers.	
	There is a system in place to ensure the at risk child is served only the food prepared for him/her	Educators
	An at risk child is served and consumes their food at a place considered to pose a low risk of contamination from allergens from another child's food. This place is not separate from all children and allows social inclusion at mealtimes.	Educators
	Children are regularly reminded of the importance of not food sharing with the at risk child.	Educators
	Children are supervised during eating	Educators
Party or celebration	Give plenty of notice to families about the event	Educators / parents
	Ensure a safe treat box is provided for the at risk child	Parent/ Educators
	Ensure the at risk child only has the food approved by his/her parent/guardian	Educators
	Specify a range of foods that families may send for the party and note particular foods and ingredients that should not be sent	Educators
Protection from insect bite allergies	Specify play areas that are lowest risk to the at risk child and encourage him/her and peers to play in the area	Educators
	Decrease the number of plants that attract bees	Educators / Management
	Ensure the at risk child wears shoes at all times outdoors	Educators
	Quickly manage any instance of insect infestation. It may be appropriate to request exclusion of the at risk child during the period required to eradicate the insects	Educators, OH&S rep and management
allergies	Avoid the use of party balloons or contact with latex gloves	Educators

Reference: National Quality Standards 2.1  
National Regulations 90, 168  
Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in early Childhood Education and Care Services  
Early Years Learning Framework and the My Time, Our Place Framework for Outside School Hours Care  
Website : [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)

## Appendix 3 – Asthma Policy



### Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre Inc

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Written/Amended By:	Jan Gilchrist CEO	Policy No:	21/03
Authorised By:	COM	Version:	6
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### ASTHMA POLICY

This policy applies to everyone who attends Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre (MPLCC) including children, Educators, other staff, students, volunteers and Committee of Management. However, it is generally accepted that children under the age of 6 do not have the skills and ability to recognise and manage their own asthma effectively. With this in mind there is a need to educate the staff and parents/guardians about asthma and to promote responsible asthma management strategies for children according to the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 Division 6 136. The aim is to have all Educators and all First Aid officers having Asthma Australia approved Asthma First Aid training.

#### Values

MPLCC is committed to:

- being a Asthma friendly service as outlined by Asthma Australia
- raising awareness about asthma among the Committee of Management , Educators, other staff, parents/guardians of children attending the service and any others dealing with children at the service;
- providing a safe and healthy environment for all centre users including children;
- providing an environment and experiences in which everyone with asthma can participate in order to realise their full potential; and
- providing a clear set of guidelines and expectations to be followed with regard to the management of asthma.

## Purpose

The aim of this policy is:

- for all users of the Centre who have asthma to receive appropriate attention as required;
- to respond to the needs of anyone who has not been diagnosed with asthma and who has an attack while at MPLCC.

## PROCEDURES

The Children's Services Manager and CEO shall, where appropriate:

- make staff aware of the asthma first aid management policy and procedure
- organise Asthma Management training for Educators and any other staff interested if required;
- organise asthma management information sessions for parents/guardians or anyone enrolled at the service;
- encourage open communication between parents/guardians and Educators regarding the status and impact of a child's asthma;
- provide funding for the staff to purchase a spacer device and asthma reliever medication for the first aid kit, as required; and
- have Asthma information available for all Educators and parents at all times if requested.

The Children's Services Manager & Educators who work in Children's Services shall, where appropriate;

- ask all parents/guardians as part of the enrolment procedure, prior to their child's attendance at the service, whether the child has been diagnosed with asthma and document this information on the child's enrolment record;
- provide families whose child has asthma with an Management & Action Plan for Asthma to complete. On completion, this will be attached to the child's enrolment record;
- compile a list of children with asthma and place it in an appropriate and readily accessible location, which is known to all Educators;
- regularly maintain any asthma component of the First Aid Kit, to ensure all medications are current and any asthma equipment is clean and ready for use;
- ensure the asthma component is included in the First Aid Kit taken on any activities outside the service;

- consult with the parent/guardians of children with asthma, in relation to the health and safety of their child and the supervised management of the child's asthma;
- identify and, where possible, minimise asthma triggers such as smoke pollens, viruses/colds, dust mite, exercise etc specific to each child;
- promptly communicate any concerns to parents if it is considered that a child's asthma is limiting his/her ability to participate fully in all activities;
- where necessary, modify activities for the child with asthma in accordance with their current needs;
- administer all regular prescribed asthma medication in accordance with the Medication Policy; and
- discuss with the parent/guardian the requirements of the Medication Policy and what is needed for their child.

Parents/guardians of a child with asthma will be required to:

- inform Educators, either on enrolment or on initial diagnosis, that their child has a history of asthma;
- provide all relevant information regarding the child's asthma via the Management & Action Plan for Asthma signed by the treating doctor;
- provide their child's medication, clearly dated and in the original labelled container. A spacer, and mask as required, should also be supplied;
- notify the Educators in writing, of any changes to the information of their child's asthma management and complete a new Management & Action Plan for Asthma, a new Medication Authorisation Form and sign the Medical Communication Plan;
- complete the required Medication Authorisation form and Medical Communication Plan when necessary for regular treatment;
- communicate all relevant information and concerns to Educators as the need arises. (eg if asthma symptoms were present the previous night); and
- consult with the Educators, in relation to the health and safety of their child and the supervised management of the child's asthma.

Plan of action for a child with diagnosed asthma.

- The Educators together with the parents/guardians of a child with asthma will discuss and agree on a plan of action for the emergency treatment of an asthma attack based on the *Asthma Victoria 4 step Asthma First Aid Plan*. This plan will be included on, or attached to, the child's Management & Action Plan for Asthma and enrolment record;



- This plan should include actions to be taken where the parent/guardian has provided asthma medication, and in situations where this may not be available;
- Action to be taken if a child suddenly collapses or has difficulty breathing with a possible asthma attack; and
- *Children with a known asthma condition:* Educators will follow the agreed plan of action for the child for the emergency treatment of an asthma attack.

*Children where Educators are not aware have pre-existing asthma will:-*

- call an ambulance immediately by dialing 000 or 112 if your mobile is out of phone range or credit;
- provide asthma reliever medication to the child immediately, if this is available and the staff member has Emergency Asthma Management training;
- contact the parent/guardian; and
- contact either the Children's Services Manager and CEO.

#### **4 Step Asthma First Aid Plan**

Step 1 - Sit the child upright – be calm and reassuring.

Step 2 - Without delay give 4 separate puffs of a reliever medication (blue/grey 'puffer/inhaler' – *Respolin, Ventolin, Asmol or Bricanyl*) one puff at a time via a spacer. Ask the child to breathe in and out 4 times after each puff.

Step 3 - Wait 4 minutes.

Step 4 - If there is no improvement continue to repeat steps 2 and 3. If still no improvement – call an ambulance immediately (Dial 000) and state that a child is having an asthma attack. Continue to use Steps 2 and 3 whilst waiting for the Ambulance.

#### Reference Phone Numbers

Asthma Victoria – (03) 9326 7088 or 1800 278 462

[www.asthma.org.au](http://www.asthma.org.au)

#### Resources:-

Education and Care Services National Law 2010

Education and Care Services regulations 2011

National Quality Standards QA 2, QA 7

Stay Healthy 5<sup>th</sup> Edition 2012

## Appendix 4 – Internet Use Policy



### Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre Inc

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### INTERNET USE POLICY

This policy is to ensure that all students are protected when using the Internet while at Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre. When a student under the age of 18 is enrolled in any program in the centre it is a requirement for them and their parents to sign an agreement about the use of the internet.

Students must always seek permission from a staff member and be under their supervision at all times when accessing the World Wide Web.

If students should accidentally access a site with unacceptable material on it they should immediately inform a staff member.

Students are not to look for, view or download unacceptable graphics, sounds or text files at any time. If students are unsure of what is acceptable they are to ask a staff member for assistance.

Access rights will be revoked for any person accessing and failing to notify the staff of any inappropriate material found while using the Centres' computers.

Students must not download any material from the Internet unless specific permission has been given by a staff member or trainer.

All staff will take responsibility for notifying the CEO or Centre Administration Manager of any inappropriate material so that access can be removed.

Staff need to be fully aware of their responsibilities in terms of Internet use due to the ease students can follow a history of previous sites and possibly enter sites which are inappropriate.

When using the Internet at Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre students will:

- only work on the web and access Internet resources within the area
- not give out personal information such as surnames, addresses, telephone numbers, parent's work addresses/telephone numbers
- never send a person my picture
- never send email
- not respond to any messages
- not use any material from other web sites unless I have permission from the person who created the material
- create or exchange messages that are offensive, harassing, obscene or threatening
- not visit websites containing objectionable (including pornographic) or criminal material
- not Undertake internet-enabled activities such as gambling, gaming, conducting a business or conducting illegal activities
- not create or exchange advertisements, solicitations, chain letters or other unsolicited or bulk email.

Breaches of this policy and the student/parent agreements will see the student lose Internet access rights for a period of time determined by the CEO, Department Manager or Staff or may even result in removal from the program they are attending permanently. This will be determined by the severity of the misuse of the Internet and how detrimental it is to the Centre.