



Central Park Child Care Centre 2017 PARENT HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

On behalf of the Staff and Parent Committee, we would like to warmly welcome your family to Central Park Child Care Centre (CPCCC).

CPCCC offers quality childcare to residents of the City of Stonnington. It is a parent-managed, community-based childcare centre caring for 24 children ranging from six months to school age.

We understand that this may be your child's first experience of being separated from their home environment. We have very professional staff and strategies in place to ensure the transition between home and the centre runs smoothly. We strongly encourage you to visit the centre before your child commences at CPCCC. This will assist with your child becoming familiar with the centre as well as the educators.

We hope your child's experience at the centre is an enriching time, filled with endless opportunities of fun, learning and laughter.

Staff for 2017 are as follows:

Co-ordinator Marlene Ries
Diploma Qualified Early Childhood

Assistant
Co-ordinator/
Educational
Leader Celine Pieterse
Diploma Qualified Early Childhood

Educators Georgie Westney
Early Childhood Teacher

Prue Osborne
Diploma Qualified Early Childhood

Educators Raj Kumari
Diploma Qualified Early Childhood

Rachel Smyth
Diploma Qualified Early Childhood

Jamie Kwon
Diploma Qualified Early Childhood

Navneet Saggu
Children's Services Certificate 3

Inster Ahmed
Children's Services Certificate 3

Prue Jones
Children's Services Certificate 3

Anna Ingham
Children's Services Certificate 3.

OUR HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

CPCCC was established in 1982 by an enthusiastic and committed group of parents whose values initiated a partnership with the City of Stonnington to provide a service that allowed for affordable, quality childcare. A Committee of Management was formed by parents and has continued to provide an integral role in the running of the centre. This Committee works closely with the Staff and Coordinator to ensure that there is a strong focus on family and community involvement and a continuation of the centre's core philosophy and values.

Here at CPCCC we are committed to providing a happy, relaxed, stimulating and safe home-like environment in which children, parents and staff feel welcome. Our centre aims to assist families in fostering all aspects of children's development and learning through positive interactions. We achieve this through a multi-age family grouping, which promotes closer bonds and meaningful relationships between educators, children and families. The natural environment is seen as the third teacher with equal importance placed on the indoor and outdoor environments.

We encourage children to develop caring and nurturing attitudes towards others and the world around them. This is promoted through positive relationships and sustainable practices. Harmonious relationships are supported through the language, behaviour and interactions role-modelled by staff. CPCCC provides an environment, in which all families, children and staff feel accepted, valued, welcomed and encouraged to participate in all areas of the program. We embrace strong links with both the local and wider community through family participation and incursions. Staff, children, families and all visitors to our centre are respected and treated

equally regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, ability, religion or cultural diversity.

At CPCCC we have an expectation that all of our educators will uphold a high level of professionalism at all times. All of our educators have early childhood qualifications and we encourage all members of our team to attend ongoing professional development relevant to their position. We strive to create an environment rich in reflective practice which gives the team opportunities to openly discuss how we can continue to maintain high-quality education and care for all children attending CPCCC.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

“Children learn most effectively if they are offered a structure in which they can be free to choose and experiment and have time to carry out ideas.” (Early childhood curriculum guidelines, Office of Pre-Schools and Child Care).

We provide non-rushed, open-ended programs with an emphasis on natural and recycled play materials. Our play-based programs are guided by the Early Years Learning Frameworks (EYLF) which upholds the rights of every child to receive high-quality child care, while respecting and valuing individual differences and developmental needs. This includes the principles of ‘belonging, being and becoming.’ Our programs encourage children to explore, create and extend on their learning, natural curiosity, interests and to be active in their own decision making. Children’s knowledge and ideas are extended through intentional teaching to promote an enjoyment and love of discovery and learning.

The children are offered a program in which they are free to make their own choices. Simultaneous indoor/outdoor programs, informal routines such as morning and afternoon team, lunchtimes and sleep/rest times are examples of this. Here, the children learn and develop skills useful in later life.

Each child is an individual with their own strengths and needs, therefore each child will be considered individually and not compared with others. We encourage children to feel secure and positive about themselves and to develop to their optimum potential by providing open-ended activities such as playdough, clay, collage (pasting), painting, drawing, sand play and water play.

We will value everything your child does.

MULTI-AGE GROUPING

CPCCC operates using a multi-age grouping format, where children from all ages are grouped together for the duration of the session. The staff are totally committed to multi-age grouping and believe there are many advantages to running such a program for the children, staff and parents.

In a multi-age grouping centre, younger children have the opportunity to observe and imitate a wide range of skills demonstrated by older children. From staff observations and experience, it is noted that they tend to engage in more complex and interactive play when involved in multi-age groups. For older children, social and emotional behaviour is enhanced; for example, they have the chance to practise and master social skills such as leadership, turn-taking, safety awareness and responsibility for younger children. The benefit of these developed social skills can be helpful for parents in the home environment, especially when the family is expecting a new baby. Another advantage of the multi-age group setting is that children who have siblings attending the centre have opportunities to spend time with each other.

A multi-age group environment can also be beneficial to children who lack confidence with their peers allowing them to communicate and interact with children they feel more comfortable with.

Our staff members feel an important advantage of multi-age grouping is that they are able to work as a cohesive team pooling ideas and resources to provide a program that is fresh, exciting and beneficial to all children. Multi-age grouping allows for creativity in program planning. Staff are not moulded into the routine of providing the same age-appropriate set materials and activities but have the flexibility to provide open-ended play experiences that are suitable for children of all ages just by modifying or adding to them. With a multi-age grouping centre, staff have maximum use of space and equipment.

Finally, we feel that the greatest reward in being involved in a multi-age group setting is that as a 'family' we see children grow from an early age through all ages of development to become unique individuals.

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Children learn appropriate behaviour through observing others. Staff at CPCCC use this as a basis for behaviour management. Limits are set with due respect to age/stage expectations. Staff ignore minor negative behaviour, as this is often attention-seeking.

A Child's Bill of Rights:

Let me grow as I am,

And try to understand why I want to grow like me,

Not like my mum wants me to be,

Nor like my dad hopes I'll be,

Please try to understand and help me grow,

Just like me.

MANAGEMENT OF THE CENTRE

CPCCC is a non-profit organisation that is managed by a co-ordinator in conjunction with a committee of parents/guardians. This committee of management is an essential part of our centre; without this dedicated group of parents we would not continue to operate. The committee is elected at the annual general meeting, which is held in March each year, and monthly committee meetings are thereafter held throughout the year.

Please consider getting involved by joining the committee of management and helping to make a real difference to the day care centre you have chosen for your child.

HOURS OF OPERATION

CPCCC opens for 2017 on Monday, 9 January and is thereafter open Monday to Friday from 8.30am until 5.30pm. CPCCC is closed for all public holidays and a period of time over Christmas.

POLICIES

The smooth operation of CPCCC is determined by our policies. These are living documents which are constantly under review. Please take the time to read them and feel free to discuss issues with the centre co-ordinator. Full details of each policy can be viewed in the policy and information handbook located in the centre's entrance foyer or on our website www.centralparkchildcare.org.au

STARTING THE YEAR AT CPCCC

The attendance book

On arrival, the following information must be recorded in the attendance book:

- Time of arrival

- Signature of person delivering the child to the service
- Name of person expected to collect the child
- Expected collection time.

Please also ensure a staff member knows the child has arrived and we encourage parents to say goodbye so their child is aware they are leaving. Staff must be notified if anyone other than the parent will be collecting the child, and if it is to be a person not on their enrolment form, this information must be in writing. Identification will be required before the child is released.

What your child should bring

Parents are requested to bring the following items for their child when they attend the centre:

- A labelled bag containing a complete change of labelled clothes
- If your child wears nappies, please provide approximately four nappies per day – any unused nappies will be sent home
- If your child is toilet-training, please supply two complete sets of extra clothing
- If your baby is bottle-fed, please bring the necessary prepared bottles which must be clearly labelled
- One piece of fruit each day to contribute towards morning tea. Please place this in the basket on the kitchen bench
- A healthy lunch in a named box, to be placed on the lunch trolley in the kitchen or in the fridge
- A separate container with a healthy afternoon tea to be placed on the lunch trolley in the kitchen or in the fridge
- A labelled bottle of water to be placed in the trolley usually located just outside the door of the kitchen
- Any comfort items necessary for your child's routines, including dummies, which should be placed in the dummy box in the foyer, in a labelled container

- A suitable labelled sun hat that protects your child's face, neck and ears. No hat = no outdoor play (refer to the sun protection policy)
- In winter, a hat and a coat.

Some children attending the centre will have allergies. Although it is not possible to achieve a completely allergen-free environment, CPCCC aims to provide 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. As such, the centre has a policy of prohibiting products containing nuts. A 'no sharing policy' for food is also followed by staff.

Parents must notify the centre of any known allergies that their child may have.

Special foods and birthdays

CPCCC understands the enjoyment of a birthday/name day or other special celebration however, certain guidelines need to be taken into consideration to ensuring the health and wellbeing of the children who attend the centre. Therefore no cakes or other special foods are permitted. The centre will provide some other form of recognition to the child celebrating the occasion, e.g. a badge or a sticker.

Toys from home

It is preferable that children do not bring toys from home, unless they are a security item (these need to be well-labelled) as they tend to get mixed in with the centre's toys or become lost. This can then become distressing for your child. If children do bring items from home, please take the responsibility of collecting them as staff cannot leave their group of children to go looking for them.

Toileting

When children are able, they are assisted and encouraged to manage their own toileting. Please discuss with educators your child's stage of development, progress and needs in regards to your child's toileting awareness.

Rest and sleep

A 'non-stimulation period' is set aside each day to allow children to rest or sleep according to their needs. This time is usually offered in the middle of the day and after lunch to encourage children to rest and recharge their bodies in preparation for the busy afternoon. Rest and sleep periods for babies are flexible according to individual needs and routine.

Clothing

Our program often involves messy play. While all efforts are made to keep children's clothes clean, it can be difficult. For this reason we ask parents to send their children in 'play clothes.' Clothes should be practical and comfortable for the child to take part in the full range of activities offered. Parents are also encouraged to dress children in clothing that promotes independence and self-help skills, especially during toilet training.

Footwear, such as sneakers or shoes, are encouraged to be worn. Footwear such as thongs and clogs are not permitted as they are unsafe for your child's play.

All clothing is to be clearly labelled with the child's name to prevent items from being lost.

Settling your child into the centre

Prior to the first day we recommend that you visit the centre and stay for short times. You and your child will then be more familiar with the routine and staff before leaving your child for

a session. It will also help your child if they know that mum and dad are comfortable with the centre.

It is very important that you say goodbye to your child; this will build a trusting relationship with them. It is possible that your child will become distressed when you leave. It is less upsetting if when you are leaving you tell your child that you will be returning after they have a play and some lunch, giving them the opportunity of saying goodbye.

To ensure that your child's play is as pleasurable as possible, we need to have a good understanding of your child. This means making time to talk to staff about any changes that have or will be happening in your child's life.

Please feel welcome to visit the centre at any time and observe your child at play. We welcome any special talent that you may have to share with the children.

Communication

Communication within the centre community is imperative to ensure that we are meeting your needs and ensuring high-quality programs for all children. Carers are happy to talk with parents/guardians and are your first point of contact should you have any concerns or queries.

Each family on enrolment is assigned a communication pocket. These are located in the main foyer area. Some written communication from CPCCC will appear in these pockets however, to reduce our impact on the environment, fee invoices, receipts and the co-ordinator's newsletters are emailed to families separately.

All parents are invited to attend the monthly management committee meetings. If you have specific items you wish to place on the agenda, please notify the president or the co-ordinator so that your issue can be appropriately scheduled for discussion at the meeting. If you cannot attend, you can

submit a letter to be tabled at the meeting. Minutes from the committee of management meetings are available on request.

Illness and emergency care

All children attending the centre are entitled to a safe and healthy environment and, as such, the wellbeing of your child is of the highest priority. Children who are feeling unwell, or require medication, or cannot participate fully in the session should be kept at home to recover and prevent cross-infection to others. Symptoms of vomiting and diarrhoea should have ceased at least 24 hours prior to returning to the centre.

Please contact the centre as soon as possible if your child will not be attending.

Medication prescribed by a doctor can be administered to a child whilst at the centre, providing written authority is given in the medication book. Please notify the co-ordinator in this instance. The medication must be in the original containers bearing original labels, and with its expiry date clearly named, in placed in the medication box located in the foyer or the refrigerator.

No medication should be left in the child's bag at any time.

If a child becomes unwell during the day a staff member will contact the parent or a designated contact person to collect the child immediately.

In the event of an accident or illness involving your child the staff will:

- Administer first aid and/or seek emergency assistance if required
- Notify the parents/ guardians or, if unavailable, an emergency contact as per the enrolment forms

- Ensure the child is comfortable and remains under close supervision until a parent/guardian attends
- Record details in the accident/illness register
- Ensure the parent/guardian has cited details in the register when collecting the child and acknowledged treatment administered, by signing the register
- Comply with the procedures set out in the centre's policies.

Immunisation

All children who are enrolled in early childhood services must now be fully immunised as per the policy of the State Government.

Please follow the link to see the schedule for immunisation:
<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/immunisation-schedule-vaccine-eligibility-criteria/immunisation-schedule-victoria>

From 1 January 2016, an objection to vaccines is no longer an exemption category; the only conditions that continue to be exempt from the requirements are children with medical conditions or natural immunity (certified in writing by a doctor) or those who have or are participating in approved medical research.

A copy of each child's immunisation record must be provided to the centre prior to the child's commencement and re-supplied each time they receive a new vaccine.

Safety and emergency procedures

Evacuation and emergency procedures are displayed within the centre. Parents are asked to be familiar with these procedures in the event of an emergency occurring while in the centre. Emergency drills will be carried out each term.

FEES AND LEVIES

Fees

CPCCC operates on a tight, well-planned annual budget and childcare fees are the main source of income. It is therefore imperative invoices are paid as requested. Unpaid fees can place CPCCC in financial and operational jeopardy.

Billing will begin from the first day the centre re-opens for the new year.

Invoices are issued quarterly and are payable strictly within seven days.

The fee structure as at January 2017, before any Child Care Benefit is a daily rate of \$105.

Cancellation or alteration of care requirements

If a parent wishes to cancel a child's place, two weeks' notice must be given in writing to the co-ordinator to provide adequate opportunity for the position to be filled by other children in need. Two weeks' written notice is required if you wish to alter your days of care.

Late cancellation fee

If the child is collected late (after 5.30pm), the parent and both staff will co-sign the attendance book indicating the time the child was collected and a late fine will be imposed to meet staff overtime payments equating to \$2 per minute or part thereof.

Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate

Almost all Australian residents are eligible for some form of Government rebate. CPCCC is an Approved Service and, as such, we are able to offer eligible families the Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR). The CCR is NOT income tested. It pays up to 50 per cent of your out-of-

pocket costs, up to \$7,500 per child, per year. Some families are also eligible for the CCB. For more information on what you are entitled to and how to claim, or to get your Centre Link Customer Reference Number (CRN), visit the website www.familyassist.gov.au or phone 132 307.

Maintenance levy

In lieu of working bees, each family attending the centre is required to pay an annual maintenance levy of \$100 per child. Families may choose to pay the levy at the commencement of each year by cash, cheque or direct debit. In recognition of their contribution, executive committee members are exempt from the maintenance levy.

Membership fee

As we are an incorporated body, using the service requires membership of the association and payment of an annual membership fee of \$30. This fee is per family and is payable at the commencement of each year.

ABSENCES

Parents are requested to notify CPCCC if their child will be away on their booked day. We prefer that a phone call is made before 9.30am. This allows CPCCC enough time to notify parents who may be requiring extra care days. Fees are charged as permanent bookings; there is no reduction due to a child being absent. If you are going on holidays, please notify the centre in writing of the dates as it may be possible to 'sell' these days to another family member requiring extra days. In this instance you would not be charged for these days.

ENROLMENT

Enrolments are open in October for the following calendar year. Priority is given to the children of those families already attending.

Waiting list

CPCCC's waiting list is managed by the co-ordinator. Families interested in having their child/ren attend CPCCC must register their details on the waiting list by contacting the centre directly.

If a vacancy arises, it is first offered to families already enrolled in the service that may be wishing to extend the days they attend or commence a place for a sibling. If positions are not taken up, the co-ordinator will then allocate a family from the waiting list.

Enrolment

When a vacancy arises, the co-ordinator will contact the next family on the wait list to offer the day/s available. The family will then be invited to the centre for a tour, to meet key educators working at the centre and to ask any questions.

Once the family accepts the position:

- A letter of offer will be sent to formalise the day/s which have been accepted
- A \$200 holding deposit to secure the position is requested. This deposit is non-refundable and is credited towards the first week's fees upon commencement
- Deposit must be paid within seven days of the offer being made or the start of orientation (whichever comes first). If the holding deposit is not paid within this time, the place will be offered to the next family on the wait list.

Orientation

Once a family accepts a position at the centre, the co-ordinator will arrange a time with the family for their orientation visit. Subsequent visits can be arranged with either the co-ordinator or the educators in the child's room. During the first orientation visit, the family will also receive their parent handbook.

Once again, thank you for choosing CPCCC. Please feel free to speak with our carers at any time regarding any questions or feedback you have. We look forward to welcoming you into our family.