

Lifelong Learning Centres

LOVE. LEARN. GROW.



FAMILY HANDBOOK





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Lifelong Learning Centres celebrate individuality, by bringing the magic of children into everything we do. Our unique research-based approach to early years education is designed to grow a love of lifelong learning in every child, from birth to school age and beyond, to help them reach their full potential.



LOVE. LEARN. GROW.

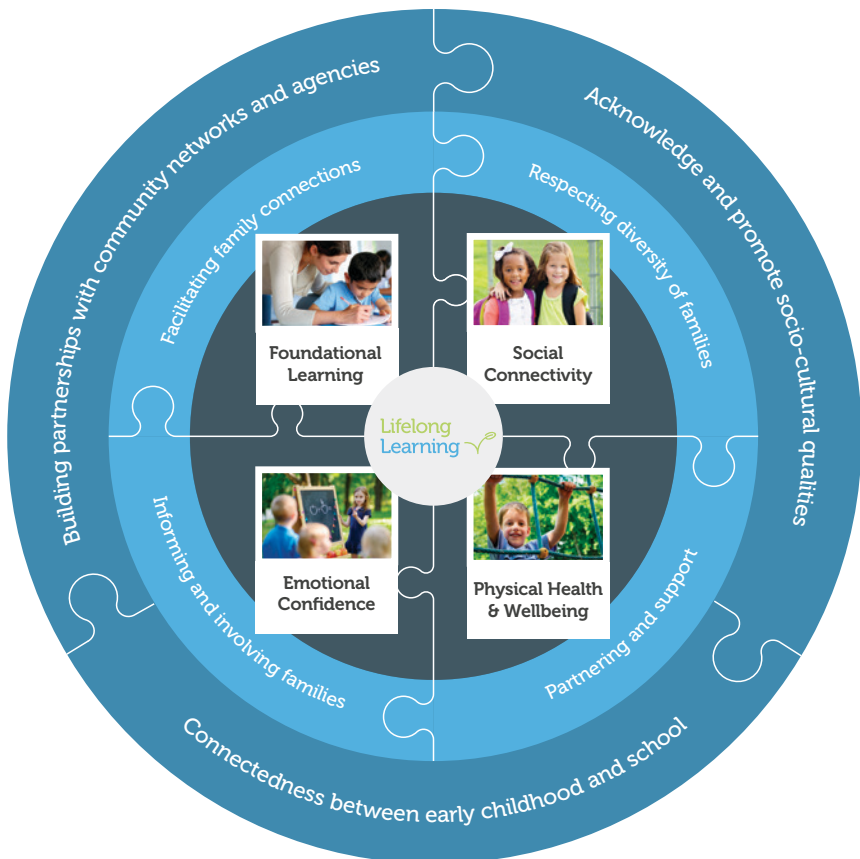


Our Approach

Growing and instilling a love of Lifelong Learning

The Lifelong Learning approach to early years education was designed exclusively by Affinity Education Group. Lifelong Learning is a play-based, child-focused approach based on the research of well-known educators and philosophers, and is based on four key intentions:

- » Building emotional confidence
- » Supporting social connectivity
- » Providing foundational learning
- » Encouraging physical health and wellbeing.



Lifelong Learning: Healthy Beginnings – Birth to One Year

Lifelong Learning: Healthy Beginnings builds nurturing, warm and loving relationships that promote the holistic growth and development of babies through the first year of life. It is designed to gently transition babies into the learning environment and to establish secure attachments with educators.

During their first year, babies develop a trust in people and their environment. Without this secure foundation, learning in other areas cannot flourish. Lifelong Learning: Healthy Beginnings supports those first connections to allow for emotional security, and self-identity and self-confidence to emerge.

Throughout the play-based approach, educators are attuned to the individual preferences and personalities of babies and families, and support babies to engage in, explore and discover their learning environments and relationships.



Lifelong Learning: Early Experiences – One to Three Years

Lifelong Learning: Early Experiences follows on from the secure attachments and strong foundations built in the first year. It uses this safe base to encourage children to explore and experiment with their surroundings. Experiences will be introduced that challenge and inspire but also nurture and embrace children.

Opportunities and relationships support the development of self-identity and an awareness of themselves, their peers and environments.

Learning is ongoing and open ended. Educators reflect on children's interests and capabilities and provide opportunities for children to contribute to their own learning and development. Children's opinions will be considered in all decisions affecting them.

Educators gently support interactions between children, allow opportunities for solitary, small and large group play and encourage children's sense of adventure and natural curiosity. Educators understand that children are capable and will allow independence and courage to thrive.



Lifelong Learning: School Readiness – Three to Five Years

Lifelong Learning: School Readiness stimulates young minds, builds confidence, resilience and positive self-image, and supports children's transition to school, preparing them for a positive start. It acknowledges that all children are capable of achievement as educators meet each child's individual needs.

Starting school is an exciting time in a child's lifelong learning journey. Educators facilitating the Lifelong Learning: School Readiness approach foster a sense of belonging, a positive disposition for learning and natural desire to engage with educational opportunities for life.

Traditionally, school readiness programs have focused on a child's academic abilities, but early childhood professionals understand that social, emotional and physical aspects of the child must be nurtured in order for their intellectual or academic areas to grow. This is the major focus of this approach.



Lifelong Learning: Growing Independence – Five to Twelve Years

Lifelong Learning: Growing Independence encourages individuality, self-expression and creativity in children to allow their confidence and personalities to shine. It acknowledges that children don't come from the same mould and that, outside of school, they have the freedom and choice to engage in a stimulating yet relaxed and enjoyable environment with supporting educators.

Due to the demands of school, educators facilitating Lifelong Learning: Growing Independence will be sensitive to children's needs and respond with care and respect to the rhythms of children. Collaboration and consultation with children will ensure their opinions are heard and actioned, ensuring a sense of belonging and connectedness, which is extremely important in these years.



State Learning Frameworks

Each Lifelong Learning Centre owned and operated by Affinity Education Group develops programs and learning provisions which are child-driven, and shaped around approved learning frameworks. The following frameworks are used in our centres:

- » Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia
- » My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia
- » Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework
- » Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines
- » Western Australian Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Copies of these frameworks are available at your centre. Please ask your Centre Manager for more information.

Opportunities are made available to families throughout the year to learn more about our educational programs. However, if you would like more information at any time regarding our centre philosophy, programs or learning frameworks or how we can best support your child's learning and participation, please ask your child's educator, or make an appointment to speak with your Centre Manager.

National Quality Framework

Our centre practices, policies and procedures align with legislative expectation as outlined in the National Quality Framework. This means that every effort is made to comply with the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulation, the approved learning frameworks and the National Quality Standards.

Copies of the Law, Regulations, learning frameworks and quality standards are available at your centre. Please ask your Centre Manager for more information.

Our role in your child's education and care

For many children, attending an early learning service is their first experience away from family. We hope to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere at the centre and like to think that we are an extension of the child's home-life. Our educators are attuned to the needs, personalities and interests of each child and establish trusting and secure relationships to allow children to feel the confidence to connect with others and explore their learning potential.

Our educators carefully document and analyse children's learning and participation, and after reflection and consultation with children and families, use this information to guide curriculum decisions, program provisions and

interactions. Educators engage with children, in play and conversation, to support learning and acquisition of new skills.

Our educators provide inclusive environments which allow for choice, challenge, group engagement or solitary play and a flexible routine that adapts with the children's natural rhythms, interests and needs.

Depending on their role, all educators hold nationally recognised early childhood qualifications, or are actively studying towards the completion of them. All employees undergo state based processes to be approved for working with children and most also hold first aid and CPR certificates and asthma and anaphylaxis management training certificates.

Successful partnerships

We recognise that families are the first and most important influence in a child's life. Our educators are here to complement that relationship and aim to stay completely connected with families to share in decisions that affect the child and to incorporate your expectations into our learning goals.

At any time, you are able, and encouraged, to contribute to the program or learning environment, share ideas or concerns or join in the serious fun that we have on a daily basis. Family participation sends strong and positive messages to your child that you support them and are a part of their learning environment.

Any successful partnership is based on open communication. Our educators will share important aspects about the centre and your child's care and development. Verbal face-to-face communication is important to us and helps to establish our relationship. Educators will make time to speak with you at arrival and departure times and will be available by appointment for more formal information sharing. Please ask your Centre Manager or child's educator if you wish to arrange an appointment.

Communication will also take the form of emails, newsletters, displays and notices in the centre and digital forms such as Facebook and Storypark.

Please ensure that our centre has current contact details for yourself and other authorised persons including phone numbers and emails to allow communication to be maintained, particularly in the case of emergencies.

Documenting your child's learning and participation

As part of the ongoing cycle of planning, the children's learning and participation is documented, analysed and evaluated and used to inform the program. This can take many forms including written observations of events and development, photos, artwork, learning stories and reflections.

Evidence of children's learning will be displayed in and around the room and each educator will keep written documentation that you are able to view at any time.

Storypark is a web-based site that houses your child's learning and development profile. It is a completely safe and private platform, only accessible by you, your child's educators and those whom you authorise. Educators use this tool to share your child's achievements and milestones, funny events and photos of their day. It has the ability to link your child's actions with skills they are building.

Storypark is an ideal way of staying connected with families. You can even contribute to the content on Storypark, share family interests or weekend events and post photos of your own. Invite other family members, or other professionals that work with your child such as allied health or medical specialists, to join and contribute too.

Special events

From time to time, to enhance the learning opportunities in our programs,



special events may be organised. These may take the form of excursions or incursions (visitors to the centre) or weekly or fortnightly extracurricular classes. Notification will be given to families and your permission (and extra payment, where applicable) will be sought prior to your child's involvement. Children who are not engaged in these experiences, will remain with an educator and be offered alternate learning experiences.

Orientation

Starting at an early childhood centre may be an exciting time for children and families, although it may also be an emotional or anxious time. Prior to your child's first day, an orientation is encouraged to familiarise both you and your child with the centre and the educators. The orientation will be tailored to you and your child's needs. It might be a quick drop in the day before or might be a series of short visits leading up the first day. It may also involve shorter days once the child has started to ease them into the routine.

Please ask your Centre Manager about how they can accommodate your needs over the orientation period.

First day

During enrolment or orientation, your Centre Manager will explain what services the centre provides and what you will need to provide for your child. The following is a general list of what you may be required to bring each day:

- » a complete change of clothes, appropriate for the weather (a few sets if learning to use the toilet)
- » a wide-brimmed hat
- » a drink bottle for water and milk bottles for babies and toddlers, as required
- » a sheet set
- » morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea, late snack, unless provided by your centre
- » nappies, if required (at least 5 per day)
- » a dummy, if necessary, with a cap or container for storage
- » a photo of the family
- » a special comforter (blanket or teddy for example, that the child may be attached to)

To avoid loss or confusion, please ensure all belongings are clearly labelled.

Settling in

Separation can be difficult for some children and families. Speak with your Centre Manager or child's educator if you, or your child, experience anxiety or distress, and our educators can support you. Tips to help your child settle include:

- » Visit our centre prior to your child's first day. Meet our educators and get a feel for the room.
- » Stay with your child and play for a little while on their first day, or first few days, to help engage them in play.
- » Bring a comforter or favourite cuddle toy, or a family photo to help your child feel safe.

- » Always say goodbye, rather than sneaking away. This helps to develop trust.
- » Follow a regular routine each time you arrive at our centre. Your child will become familiar with the routine.
- » Maintain relationships with our educators. If your child sees you connecting with their educator, they will also feel more connected.
- » Feel free to call our centre at any time to find out how your child is settling.

What to wear

Our programs and learning opportunities involve physical activity, exploration, a little mess at times and serious fun. Please dress your child in unrestrictive clothing that allows for comfort, is easily removed for toileting and is appropriate for the climate. Please also consider sun protection in the warmer months. We recommend children wear comfortable, closed-in, non-slip shoes that can be easily removed to assist in physical activity and also independence.

Please ensure all items are clearly labelled to minimise the risk of misplacement.

Items to leave at home

With the exception of a special comforter teddy or blanket, or similar, we recommend keeping other toys at home. There will be opportunities in the program, such as 'show and share', to bring in and share other special things. For the safety and wellbeing of all children, other items that must not be left in children's bags include medications, sharp objects, plastic bags, mobile phones or valuable or breakable items. Where valuable items are brought into our centre, we will not be held liable for loss or damage.

Lost property

Our educators will do their best to keep track of all children's belongings. Where items become misplaced, please check the lost property basket, located in each room.

Special celebrations

Our centre recognises the rich cultures of our families and communities and will incorporate special celebrations or community events into the program. If your family has any traditions, interests or cultural celebrations that you wish to share with our centre, please speak with your Centre Manager or child's educator.

Fruit or alternative healthy snacks may be brought in to celebrate a child's birthday as a preferred alternative to birthday cake. Please inform the Centre Manager of the ingredients of anything brought into the centre, to ensure the safety and health of children who may suffer allergies or an individual dietary needs.

Family Responsibilities

By enrolling at our centre, you are agreeing to abide by our policies and procedures as outlined in this handbook and in the Affinity policy manual, available at your centre.

Arrival and departure

It is a legislative requirement that you record your child's attendance by signing in and out at departure times using our digital kiosks. On arrival each day, you can place your child's belongings into a locker and any food or drink into the available fridge. Escort your child to where the children are grouped and our educators will greet you and your child and assist with the morning transition into our centre. Please ensure you leave your child with an educator and never drop them off into a room unattended or in the foyer of the centre.



Some antibacterial gel will be available for you and your child to use on arrival at, and departure from, the centre to minimise the spread of illness and infection.

If you arrive and outdoor play is underway, please ensure your child is wearing a hat. Sunscreen is available for you to apply to your child before you escort them outdoors to play.

When departing with your child, please ensure you sign your child out, collect their belongings and inform an educator of your departure. This time can also be used to share important information about your child's day.

The Centre Manager will advise of the process for signing in and out at your centre.

Authorised persons to collect

To ensure the safety of your child, authorised persons will be required to enter their own details in our digital kiosks at drop off and collection times. It is vitally important that you advise our centre of people whom are authorised to collect your child from our centre, and that you keep these details up to date. The enrolment form includes a page where you can document this information. Your child will only be allowed to leave our centre with authorised persons as identified by you on the enrolment form or by prior notice from you.

Our educators will check the authorised person's details against the information

contained in the enrolment form. Any person, not known by our educators, arriving to collect children will be asked to produce photo identification. If an unexpected person arrives at our centre to collect your child, you will be immediately notified to confirm if you have authorised this.

Persons collecting your child must be over 18, unless they are the parent. Children are not allowed to be released to older siblings, unless they are over 18 years old and documented as authorised persons.

Where custody orders are in place that affect the child, you must provide current court papers to have this enforced at our centre. In the case of a non-custodial parent arriving to collect your child, our Centre Manager will contact the police and then notify you of the incident. Our educators will follow the court instructions to the best of their ability. However, our centre will not be held liable in the event of a non-custodial person gaining access to a child.

Late collection

We appreciate your assistance in complying with our centre's opening and closing times. We are not licensed to operate outside of these hours. We ask that you arrive at the centre with enough time, prior to closing time, to collect your child and their belongings and exchange information, to allow the educators to close the centre as per our licensed operating times.

As a courtesy, it is expected that if you will be late in collecting your child, after closing time, that you phone the centre to advise of this. This allows educators to alleviate any anxiety in your child and allows educators to make their own plans.

If your child is not collected by closing time, a late fee will be applied to your account, even if the centre was notified of the lateness. If your child is not collected by closing time, and our centre has not been notified by you, our educators will phone you. If you are uncontactable at this time, our educators will call authorised persons as detailed on the enrolment form. If after 30 minutes, your child is still not collected, our educators will notify the police.

Health and Safety

Infant feeding

Centres are breastfeeding friendly environments. Breastfeeding mothers are welcome to attend the centre to feed their children at any time. Alternatively, families can bring clearly labelled bottles of expressed breastmilk for their children.

Families can provide formula for their children in a few ways:

- » Premeasured, dry formula powder in a sealed and labelled container, along with a bottle of premeasured, cooled boiled water. Our educators will mix and prepare the bottles at the required time.
- » Premade bottles of formula, prepared no more than 24 hours ahead of time.
- » A tin of formula and empty bottles which our educators can prepare, as required, and where space and facilities allow. This must be negotiated with the Centre Manager prior to your child attending.

All bottles, regardless of the contents, must be labelled with your child's name. For bottles containing breastmilk, the date the milk was expressed, or thawed, must also be on the label. All bottles containing any variety of milk (breast, formula, cow's, goat's, soy) will be stored towards the back of the main body of the fridge on arrival at the centre. Please do not place bottles of milk in the door of the fridge. Bottles will be heated at your request by standing them in a container of tepid water or by using a bottle warmer. The temperature of all heated fluids will be tested prior to offering it to your child.

Babies and children will drink their bottles while sitting up at the table, or in a high chair, or while being nursed by educators. In line with recommended practice, babies and children will not be propped up onto pillows or allowed to lie in bed/cot with their bottle. This will minimise the risk of choking, inhaling milk or having milk trickle into your child's ears or eyes. Please discuss your preferred feeding methods with your child's educator.

When babies move onto solids, please discuss your child's food experiences with our educators. Our centre will only offer foods to babies that have already been introduced at home, or after consultation with families.

Rest and sleep

Your child will be offered the opportunity to rest and sleep throughout the day. Individual routines will be accommodated, where possible, and your child's daily rest and sleep activity will be communicated with you. Our centre believes that children sleep if and when they need it, so your child will not be forced to sleep,

or woken from sleep. Comfort and support to get to sleep can be provided if requested by you or your child.

If your child does not fall asleep after resting, they will be offered some quiet activities such as puzzles, books or drawing.

Babies will be assigned their own cots and strict SIDS recommendations are followed. Individual calming and soothing techniques can be discussed with your child's educator.

Emergencies

It is important that you provide our centre with the contact details of at least two people who may be contacted to collect your child in the case of an emergency or illness, in the event that you are uncontactable. These people may be the same as the authorised persons or additional people.

Our educators have been trained in emergency evacuation procedures. From time to time, evacuation drills will be practised to familiarise the children with emergency practices. The children will assemble at the designated meeting point and return to the building once the roll is marked. In the event of a real emergency evacuation, you will be notified as soon as possible. It is essential you keep us updated of new mobile phone numbers for this reason.

Incidents

In the event your child is involved in a minor incident, educators will comfort them, administer first aid, as appropriate, and complete an incident form. You will be notified of the incident and asked to read and sign the incident form on collection of your child. If the incident involves injury to your child's head or face or if your child is unable to be consoled, you will be notified immediately.

In the event an incident of a more serious nature occurs, which is beyond minor first aid, educators will call an ambulance to request medical attention and then notify you. Educators will complete an incident report which you will be asked to read and sign upon your arrival at the centre.

Where the attending medical officers deem it necessary, they will transport your child to a hospital for treatment. If you, or another authorised person, has not arrived at the centre by this time, your child's educator or Centre Manager will travel in the ambulance with your child and remain with them at the hospital.

Families will be liable for any ambulance or medical costs incurred.

Any serious incident must be reported by our centre to our Regulatory Authority. If you seek medical attention following an incident at our centre, please notify the Centre Manager, as we are obliged to report this occurrence within a 24-hour period.

Illness and exclusion

As an important step in the control of infection, we ask that if your child is unwell, that you keep them at home and inform the centre of their condition and any diagnoses from a medical practitioner.

If your child becomes ill while at our centre, you will be contacted and requested to collect them. If you are uncontactable, an alternate authorised person will be contacted. This is to ensure your child receives the care they need and to minimise the risk of infection to others.

You will be contacted to collect your child under, but not limited to, the following circumstances:

- » instances of vomiting, diarrhoea, rash, eye discharge or any other symptom regarded as contagious
- » high temperatures, not relieved by first aid measures, where paracetamol is required
- » where the child is unable to participate in usual routines and activities, is listless or particularly out of sorts
- » when the Centre Manager decides that educators are unable to provide the care the child requires
- » where a vaccine-preventable disease is diagnosed, if your child has not been vaccinated

In the interest of your child's health and comfort and the wellbeing of all centre users, your child will be excluded from our centre under, but not limited to, the following circumstances:

- » during the period where your child has a condition or illness that is contagious through normal social contact. Exclusion periods as per National Health and Medical Research Council apply.
- » where a medical practitioner has recommended they stay away from the centre
- » during the first 24-hours of being prescribed antibiotics
- » within 24-48 hours of vomiting or diarrhoea
- » within 48-hours of being hospitalised
- » if our Centre Manager or educators suspect, on arrival, that the child is unwell enough to attend for the day
- » where a vaccine-preventable disease is diagnosed, if your child has not been vaccinated, until the centre is deemed clear of the illness
- » where your child requires medication as part of an ongoing medical management plan (e.g.; asthma or anaphylaxis) and the medication is not present with the child. A child can only attend if their medication is present.

Children who have had a contagious illness, or suspected contagious condition, will require a letter from a medical practitioner stating they are fit and clear to return to the centre.

If your child is absent you will be required to confirm their absence/s on the digital kiosk on the next day of attendance at the centre. Regular fees will be charged for absent days.

Medication

Medication may be administered on the advice of a medical professional. Any medication that you request to have administered to your child, either prescribed or over the counter, must be specifically for your child. Only medication with a dispensing label will be administered and must contain the following details:

- » your child's name
- » the name of the medication
- » the dosage and dosage instructions
- » the doctor or pharmacist's name
- » the date issued
- » the expiry date

A medication authorisation form must be completed and signed by you, or the person delivering your child to the centre, and signed on collection of your child. Don't forget to collect the medication as well. This form must detail the name of the medication, when the last dose was administered and instructions for future dose/s. The information you provide on the medication authorisation form must match that of the dispensing label.

Medication will not be administered under the following circumstances:

- » an incomplete and unsigned medication authorisation form
- » medication without a dispensing label
- » a dispensing label that is illegible
- » medication past its expiry date
- » medication not prescribed for your child
- » if the medication has been prescribed within 24 hours
- » our centre will not administer the first dose of medication (with the exception of emergency paracetamol, see below)

Only a competent educator will administer medication and will be witnessed by another educator to ensure accuracy of the process, and both educators will sign the medication authorisation form. Our educators will do their best to administer

medication as instructed, however, will not force or distress a child in order to do so.

Please hand the medication over to an educator on arrival each morning for correct and safe storage. Medication is not to be left in your child's bag

Emergency paracetamol

An important inclusion in our enrolment form is your authorisation to the administration of a single dose of children's liquid paracetamol where your child develops a temperature.

In the event your child develops an elevated temperature, 38°C or higher, throughout the course of the day, our educators will take measures to try to reduce the temperature such as removing excessive clothing, offering cool water and wiping their face and neck with a damp washer. You will be contacted and informed of your child's condition.

If these measures are unsuccessful at bringing down the temperature, you will be notified and requested to collect your child. At this time, our educators will seek your verbal permission to administer one dose of children's liquid paracetamol following the directions on the label. Two educators must hear this verbal permission.

One of our competent educators will administer the paracetamol and another will witness the process to ensure accuracy. This will be documented on the emergency paracetamol form that you will be requested to sign on collection of your child.

If you, or another authorised person, does not come to collect your child within an agreed time, our Centre Manager may contact an ambulance in the case where your child's condition does not improve. Families will be liable for any ambulance of medical costs incurred.

Medical conditions including asthma and anaphylaxis

If your child has an ongoing medical or health condition, which may include, but is not limited to, asthma, allergies, anaphylaxis, epilepsy, diabetes, heart conditions, coeliac disease, cystic fibrosis or juvenile arthritis, it is your responsibility to disclose this on enrolment, or as soon as the condition becomes diagnosed. Our Centre Manager will issue you with a copy of our medical conditions procedure (and asthma and/or anaphylaxis/allergy procedures if applicable) and assist you to complete a medical management, risk minimisation and communication plan in conjunction with your child's doctor. This is a document that clearly outlines your child's condition and health care needs, any medications and actions to take if

symptoms become present or in the case of an emergency and how to minimise any risk to your child's health.

With your permission, this plan will be communicated to all educators in our centre, including any food preparation and service staff, so they are aware of your child's health needs. This may also be displayed, with your permission, in the centre so other centre users are familiar with your child's health needs, are aware of any risks, triggers or symptoms and actions to take in the case of an emergency.

If your child requires ongoing or emergency medication, you will be required to complete a long term medication form or emergency medication form, as relevant, to accompany a letter from your child's doctor. The medication may remain at the centre in secure storage, not in your child's bag, however, it is your responsibility to ensure medication is within the expiry date and to arrange for replacement as stock runs low.

If your child requires medication as part of the medical management plan, your child can only attend the centre, when their medication is present.

At least one educator, but in most cases, all educators have undergone certified training in asthma and anaphylaxis management. It is also important that families inform educators on how to administer medication so both your child and the educator feel comfortable.

You will be notified at the first sign of an asthma flare up or anaphylactic reaction, or other medical condition symptom. If your child shows no signs of improvement after initial treatment or medication an ambulance will be called. Where the onset of symptoms is sudden, or where time is critical, an ambulance will be called prior to you being contacted. If attending medical officers advise hospital treatment, our Centre Manager or your child's educator will travel in the ambulance with your child and remain with them in hospital, if you or another authorised person are not present. Families will be liable for any medical or ambulance costs incurred.

Our centre will inform all centre users of triggers (such as nuts) and will take precautions to avoid having trigger substances in the environment where possible.

Sun protection

Our centre promotes sun safe behaviours and follows guidelines as recommended by SunSmart in each state and territory. It is advised that you contribute to your child's sun protection by ensuring they have a wide-brimmed hat each day, dressing them in loose fitting clothes that covers the majority of their skin and apply sunscreen on, or prior to, arrival at the centre.

Throughout the day, our educators will re-apply children's sunscreen, or encourage older children to re-apply, at least 20 minutes prior to sun exposure. Outdoor activities will be planned to avoid the hottest part of the day, where possible, and children will be encouraged to play in the shade and drink water regularly.

Smoke-free environment

Our centre is a smoke-free area. Smoking is not permitted in or around a 10 metre radius of the premises including carpark and perimeter fencing, or in view of any child at the centre.

Hygiene practices

Our centre follows thorough cleaning procedures on a daily basis. Handwashing is the most effective method in minimising the spread of infection. Educators, children, families and visitors are encouraged to wash their hands throughout the day, and at arrival and departure times. Antiseptic hand gel is available in the foyer for your use.

Students and volunteers

From time to time, our centre may host students or volunteers to facilitate their practical experience in their studies and support them in their learning of the early childhood profession. Students and volunteers will participate in the program and may plan experiences for children, however, will not be left alone with the children. Students and volunteers will work under the direct supervision of our lead educators at all times.





Fees

Method of payment

We work with families to set up fortnightly direct debit payments which take into account their full fee payments for the entire year, including any Child Care Cap. Simply fill out the direct debit form provided to you on enrolment. Remember, if you're entitled to the Child Care Subsidy (CCS), a percentage of your fees will be paid direct to our centre, so you only need to pay the balance each fortnight. If the Child Care Cap applies to your family, we can estimate your payments over the entire year, so you pay the same fortnightly amount all year.

Fee responsibilities

To commence your child's enrolment, please pay your first week, plus one week in advance. Fees are charged for every booked day, whether your child is in attendance or not.

If at any time you experience significant financial hardship, or have trouble maintaining your fees, please speak to your Centre Manager, and notify Centrelink.

Our centre cannot operate successfully with ongoing debt. If your direct debit fees are dishonoured regularly, your child's care may be postponed or suspended. If you fall behind in child care payments, your Centre Manager will arrange a four-week payment plan.

The Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

Under the Child Care Package introduced on 2 July 2018, the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is available for eligible families. This is a single payment system made directly to childcare services, which supplements the fees paid by families.

The percentage of CCS you will receive is calculated according to your estimated annual family income, level of approved activity and type of child care. To receive the CCS you must create or update your family account with Centrelink (Department of Human Services) online prior to your child's first day of care. If you do not do this, you will pay full fees for child care.

In order to receive your entitled CCS, you must sign your child in and out of the centre each day at our digital kiosks, and confirm any absent days upon return. Children are entitled to 42 absent days per financial year. The Family Assistance Office outlines exceptions to the 42 allowable absences in a financial year, if your child requires more absent days. Any fees applied to your account due to late collection of your child are not subject to CCS.

CCS and immunisation

In order to receive CCS your child must be up to date with their immunisations according to the National Immunisation Schedule Program. A copy of the schedule is included in your enrolment pack. Your Centre Manager will take a copy of your child's immunisation history status letter for our records. For any subsequent vaccinations your child receives, please inform your Centre Manager.

Changes to bookings and cancellation

For any changes in bookings, a minimum of two weeks' written notice is required. If two weeks' notice is not given, regular fees will be applied. If you wish to cancel your child's booking, four weeks' notice is required. Your child must attend on their last day, or days, in order for CCS to be received. If you do not give notice of your child's cancellation, four weeks' full fees will be charged to you. The balance may be taken from any refunds owed to you.

Refunds

If you are eligible for a refund, you will be provided with a refund form by your Centre Manager. Approved refunds will be paid within two weeks.

Holidays

Fees are charged for all statutory public holidays unless your Centre Manager advises otherwise. Some centres may allow families to apply for holiday discounts. Please ask your Centre Manager if this is applicable to your centre.

Unplanned centre closures

Fees may be charged for any unplanned closure of the centre due to events outside our control. This may include for example, storms, flood, fire or cyclone. Any fees charged will be capped at two days.

Governance

Privacy

Our centre is committed to complying with the Australian Government Privacy Laws for the fair handling of personal information. Our centre respects families' right to privacy of their personal information and our staff will follow strict procedures to protect information collected, stored and used as part of the business operation. For more information please see our Privacy Policy which can be found on our website.

Child protection

Our educators have a duty of care, a legal and ethical obligation, to act in the best interest of children and to protect them from risk of harm or neglect. If our Centre Manager or educators come to suspect a child may be at risk of harm or neglect, they will follow strict legislative procedures to support the child and to report their concern to the relevant regulatory authority responsible for child safety.

Termination of enrolment

Termination of enrolment may be enforced under the following conditions:

- » inappropriate, abusive or threatening behaviour from a parent, family member, or their associate, towards children, educators, families or other visitors at the centre
- » ongoing physically or verbally aggressive behaviour by a child where other children and educators are at risk
- » continual lateness or non-payment of fees
- » for any other reason in our absolute discretion

Any such termination of enrolment may be effective immediately without notice. The centre is not required to give reasons. A refund of fees will be forwarded to the parents where the account is in credit.

Policy compliance and development

Each Lifelong Learning Centre follows the policies and procedures set by our owner Affinity Education Group. Affinity has a comprehensive set of policies and procedures which assist our centre to comply with legislative requirements and contemporary early childhood practice. Policies are available to view at your centre. These are systematically and continuously reviewed as regulations and recommendations change. You are welcome, and encouraged, to share your views and have input into these reviews.

Grievances

Our Centre Manager and educators hope to create a trusting relationship with you in which we all feel comfortable to share questions or concerns. Misunderstandings can occur when issues are not communicated effectively. If you have a grievance, we recommend addressing your child's educator first, or your Centre Manager, depending on the nature of the grievance. If a mutually acceptable outcome has not been reached, your grievance can be escalated to our management.

Love. Learn. Grow.

Your child is starting a wonderful journey as part of our centre community. As part of the Lifelong Learning Centres network owned and operated by Affinity Education Group, we strive to help each child reach their full potential and we look forward to the fun and learning ahead.



About Affinity Education Group

This centre is owned and operated by Affinity Education Group. As a leading provider of early childhood education, we are driven by our professional goals and values and are committed to ensuring we provide the best early childhood experience for you and your children.

Affinity's mission is to inspire and nurture individuals to reach their full potential.

Our values



BEING COMPLETELY CONNECTED

We bring out the best in each other, the communities and families we serve through collaboration and cooperation, communicating openly and sharing knowledge and information.



HAVING SERIOUS FUN

We all participate in making Affinity a fun place where we share a laugh, celebrate achievements and maintain perspective and balance for each other.



CREATING SHINING STARS

We support and enable each other to grow, learn and develop by giving the autonomy they need and having their back.



GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND

We act with genuine positivity, pride and energy and go out of our way to deliver value that goes above and beyond the ordinary.



LIVING THE TEAM SPIRIT

We all contribute the Affinity culture of winning attitudes, teamwork, cooperation and creating a sense of belonging for everyone.



DELIVERING OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONALISM

We take our work seriously by being professional and respecting each other for who we are, our individuality, knowledge, skills and experience.



Educators

Our teachers, educators and assistants know the value of high quality early education, and they strive to help every child in their care reach their full potential. All Affinity educators either hold or are working towards early childhood qualifications. One thing they all have in common is a passion for creating fun environments to work, play and learn.

Centre Managers

Our Centre Managers live the team spirit. They not only have a passion for working with children and families, but a passion for supporting their teams to grow and develop. They are supported to run their centres to best practice standards so they perform as exceptional businesses as well as exceptional early learning environments. They are the frontline of communication in each centre and their friendly, positive attitudes will make you feel welcome.



AFFINITY EDUCATION
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Visit www.affinityeducation.com.au

Lifelong Learning Starts Here

We nurture over 15,000 shining stars in more than 350 centres across Australia. Inspire individuality. Foresee potential. Achieve above and beyond.

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