

# Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School

## Early Learning Centre Parent Information Handbook



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# Welcome to Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School Early Learning Centre

## Overview of Service

The program at Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School Early Learning Centre provides an enriched, supportive and loving environment for children from three to five years of age. We believe that all children are capable individuals who explore, discover, experiment and research.

As Early Childhood Educators we ensure that we facilitate all children's developmental levels by providing a quality program that focuses on each child's strengths, needs and interests.

Our early learning program is based on the Early Years Learning Framework, '*Belonging, Being and Becoming*'. We believe that all aspects of the development of young children are interrelated. The optimal development of a young child depends on the nurturing of positive, supportive and individual relationships with both adults and peers. Our staffs engage children in and encourage a collaborative approach to learning to ensure the best possible outcomes for all children.

This handbook provides you with information about our Community. Please feel free to extend your knowledge of our service through contact and discussion with the Principal, Assistant Director, Early Childhood Teacher and other members of staff. We value your support and contributions. We encourage you to spend time in the centre with your child. To ensure we provide the highest quality care and education, we follow established guidelines, policies and procedures, inspired by early learning theorists including Reggio Emilia, Piaget, Vygotsky, Gardner and Montessori.

## At Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School Early Learning Centre Early Learning Educators will:

- Recognise children as having a strong sense of identity, as being dynamic, competent, creative, curious, autonomous individuals who are connected with and contribute to their world
- Cater for the diverse needs of all children
- Interact positively with all children, believing in their success
- Use questioning skills and conversations to extend knowledge and thinking and actively engage with children
- Provide encouragement and be supportive of children and their needs at all times
- Act as facilitators of learning
- Role model positive behaviour
- Build meaningful relationships with families, providing a link between the child and the family, in order to actively share information
- Ensure the provision of a quality environment for children and families
- Work as a team to lay the foundations of a quality early learning program
- At Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School Early Learning Centre parents will:
  - Be given recognition as being the child's first and most influential contact with their world and the people in it
  - Be encouraged to participate in the program and be an active part of Centre life
  - Be aware and take responsibility for the vital role that they play in their child's learning
  - Be encouraged to make valuable contributions to the program
  - Be a part of developing reciprocal relationships with Staff and the Centre as a whole

## **The program at Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School Early Learning Centre:**

- Provides inquiry based learning
- We focus on the foundations of learning of children using NT Preschool Curriculum and EYLF
- Welcomes interaction and participation between the School and the Early Learning Centre
- Provides for excursions where children are able to apply and test knowledge in real life situations
- Recognises the importance of home and family and understands that adults are learners too
- Is inclusive and stimulating and exploration and discovery are valued
- Is both planned and emergent
- Is child-centred, based on the strengths, needs, interests and abilities of children
- Occurs both indoors and outdoors, with a natural flow between the two
- Is play based, but with provisions for formal learning times where children are helped to gain confidence and competence in early literacy, numeracy, science, technology and the arts through play-based learning.
- Is regularly reflected upon
- Values and includes the contributions of children and families
- Provides opportunities for developing children's self-expression and confidence in creative art, drama, music, movement and dance
- Is based on the Early Years Learning Framework, Belonging, Being and Becoming
- Recognises, reflects and draws on the work and beliefs of many educational theorists including the Reggio approach, Piaget, Vygotsky, Gardner and Montessori but most importantly is influenced by the children, families and Staff who make up the Centre.



## STAFF LIST

Director	Mr. Reuben Johnson
Asst. Director	Mrs. Cherry Grant
Finance Officer	Mr. Neeraj Khetarpal
Booking Officer	Mrs. Flordeliza Cafirma
Early Childhood Teacher	Mr. Hup Lye
ELC Educators/ Staff Members	Please see entrance wall for all educators names and photos

All our staff are dedicated to providing your child with quality care and education. Relief staff may be employed when permanent staff are sick or on holidays. All staffing levels are set in accordance with the Child Care Act and Regulations

### Hours of Operation

Monday to Friday: 7.00am – 6.00pm.

Closed on Public Holidays. (Full Fees Apply)

Closed for two weeks over Christmas and New Year including public holidays (no fees are charged)

### 2022 Fees

Fulltime \$480      Daily \$96

- Fees are to be paid 2 weeks in advance. Families agree to indemnify the School against any, charges or expenses which might incur as a result of recovery of any overdue amounts, or immediately consult confidentially with the Principal in the case of difficulty with meeting payments.

Fees are reviewed in light of the budget annually. The Director, in consultation with the School Board, the CEO and other CEO Early Childhood facilities sets the fee level. Parents will be given notice of any fee increase before 1<sup>st</sup> of September of the current year. Acceptable mode of payments – direct debit, EFT, credit card and cash. Statements and invoices are issued weekly.

### Childcare Assistance

The service participates in the Child Care Management System (CCMS). Guidelines in claiming and administering Childcare Benefits as directed by the Family Assistance Office and other Government bodies will be followed. The service is registered with the National Childcare Association Council and participates in the Quality Framework and Accreditation System.

It is a parent's responsibility to have their eligibility for Childcare Assistance assessed by Centrelink. Childcare Assistance will be deducted from fees in accordance with Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services requirements.

Childcare benefits cannot be deducted from fees until the assessment notice from the Family Assistance Office is received with the child's own CRN. Family benefits are not credited to your account unless CRN numbers are provided by families on enrolment forms.

### Advance Payments

Before commencing, a payment of 2 weeks fees is to be paid in advance. After commencing fees must stay 2 weeks in advance at all times.

*If you are going to be late picking up your child, please contact us promptly. We know there are the occasional unavoidable delays. However, we will **charge a late fee of \$50.00 at 6pm plus \$1.00 per minute thereafter.** Please use change of booking forms for change of care.*

## **Absences**

Please notify office of all absences. (These are payed days)

## **Allowable Absences**

Each child is entitled to forty two (42) allowable absences per financial year (including public holidays). Full fees are charged during Public Holidays. For more information, please contact Centrelink.

## **Parents Electronic Sign In/Out (ESI)**

When arriving the centre, enter your mobile number and PIN number. If you have not yet created a pin via your parent portal, the system will recognise this and prompt you to create one. Please follow the steps on the screen. Click Sign in and Save.

When you collect the child - repeat the steps but click sign out and then save.

- **If a staff member has marked your child as absent**, a 'Confirm Absences' message will appear on the parent next login. You will need to confirm this before signing your child in/or out for the day.
- **If staff member has signed your child in/out**, a 'Confirm Attendances' message will appear the next time parent one or two logs in. You will need to confirm before signing in/out for the day.

## **Change of Booking Days**

Written notification is required at least two (2) weeks in advance. We will endeavour to change days but it will depend on availability of places.

## **End of Care/ Termination of Enrolment**

Written notification is required at least two (2) weeks, or more, prior to the child's last day. An exit interview will be required to be booked prior to the last day and accounts will need to be settled before students last day.

Please use notification change of days, holidays and termination form.

If moving to Transition at Mother Teresa School, an enrolment form must be completed and given to the School Office.

## **Arrival and Pick Up**

To ensure that children arrive and depart safely and happily we ask that:

- Children are escorted to a staff member on arrival
- Your child's arrival and departure is acknowledged with a staff member.
- Parents/guardians sign children in and out on the register each day (this is a most important legal document, and also ensures we have an accurate roll in the case of an emergency evacuation).
- If you are unable to collect your child, please email as everything needs to be in writing to inform staff as to who will be picking up your child. This person should be an authorised person noted on your child's enrolment form and will be asked for identification on arrival.

Please note that the Centre is not legally open until **7.00am**, therefore you cannot drop your child off any earlier than this. If you are going to be late any time please contact the office. The centre closes at **6.00pm**.

### **Car Parking**

Please ensure you park in marked bays and not the "Kiss and Go" area.

### **Saying Goodbye**

It may be difficult to leave your child for the first time. Staff understands it is as hard for parents as it is for children, so please call if you would like to check on your child.

Here are some suggestions on how to leave your child:

- Say, "Goodbye, I'm going now and I will be back this afternoon".
- Give them a kiss and a hug, then leave.

Don't leave then come back if you hear your child crying. This confuses children and just makes it harder for you to leave.

Always farewell staff so that they know you are leaving. This is a signal for them to give a little extra support to your child should they need it.

Parents and children need time to adjust. Allow time so your child can show you things and places that interest them on arrival and departure.

### **Changes to Information**

Please notify us promptly of any changes to information regarding your child. Change of contact numbers, address, employer and persons authorised to collect your child are most important so that we are able to contact you at all times.

### **Parent Participation**

Parents are always encouraged to participate in the program by sharing special skills, e.g.: cooking, puppet making, music, etc and also by collecting junk for art and helping with social functions. Your involvement helps us provide an enriched learning program for all.

NB: polystyrene cups, meat trays, toilet rolls cannot be used due to safety and health regulations. Please read the Parent Information board. The school newsletter is sent home fortnightly. There is a Parent Communication Book situated next to the sign in/ out register, so if there is anything you would like us to know, please use this book.

### **Excursions**

We believe that excursions are an integral part of children's learning. We have a local excursion form which all parents sign on enrolment. This gives staff permission to take your child to the library, assemblies, school oval etc all of which are within the Mother Teresa School premises. Excursions out of school premises require parents to sign a permission slip before your child can attend. Parent participation is highly appreciated when taking groups on excursions to assist with supervision and share the learning!

### **Clothing**

All children are required to the Mother Teresa School Uniform. Please include a spare set of uniform in your child's bag. Children must wear a school hat and sunscreen at all times when outdoors. Please inform staff if your child is allergic to any sunscreens. Please provide a school hat with your child's name clearly written on it. Please label all items clearly.

Uniform can be purchased from the school office.



## Lost Property

Please check the lost property box regularly. Naming all items including socks, shoes and underwear can help staff in locating owners of lost property. The Lost Property Box will be emptied at the end of each term.

## Treasures from Home

Children are not permitted to bring toys from home to the Centre. Toys from home cause unnecessary conflict between children and they tend to get lost or broken. If toys are brought in, they will be taken away on arrival and put in the children's bag.

ELC Toys – If broken on purpose, toy will be charged for parents to pay.

## Sick Children

We are sure parents would appreciate our concern for protecting the health of all children attending the Centre. The Assistant Director/ Co-ordinator reserves the right to ask parents to collect children who are unwell.

Condition	Exclusion From The Centre
<b>Chicken Pox</b>	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least five days after the spots (eruption) first appear. Please note that some remaining scabs are not a reason for continued exclusion.
<b>Conjunctivitis</b>	Exclude until discharge from the eyes has ceased.
<b>Diarrhoea and vomiting (gastroenteritis)</b>	Exclude until bowel motions have returned to normal and at least 24 hours after the last abnormal bowel motion.
<b>Diphtheria</b>	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received following at least 2 negative throat swabs, the first not less than 24 hours after finishing a course of antibiotics and the other 48 hours later.
<b>Discoloured Eye or Nose Discharge</b>	Exclude until no coloured discharge from eye or nose.
<b>Head Lice</b>	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has started.
<b>Hepatitis A</b>	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before seven days after onset of illness or jaundice.
<b>Impetigo (School Sores)</b>	Exclude until treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces should be covered with a watertight dressing.
<b>Influenza</b>	Exclude until child feels well. No coloured discharge from the nose.
<b>Measles</b>	Exclude for at least four days after the onset of the rash.
<b>Mumps</b>	Exclude for nine days or until swelling has gone (whichever is sooner).
<b>Ringworm</b>	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has started.
<b>Rubella (German Measles)</b>	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of the rash.
<b>Whooping Cough (Pertussis)</b>	Exclude for 14 days after onset of illness, or after completing five days of antibiotic treatment, and a doctor certifies that the person is no longer infectious.

## Hygiene

Strict hand washing procedures are implemented. Children are encouraged to wash and dry their hands, before and after meals, after using the toilet and after messy activities. We would encourage you to continue this practice at home.

## Toileting

Please note that our Centre does not have the facilities for nappy changing. It is a requirement that children are already toilet trained. Staff will assist children to change (please remember to include labelled spare clothes in your child's bag) if they happen to have an accident.

## Nutrition

All meals are provided. Water is available at each mealtime and cold water is freely available. Children are encouraged to drink regularly from the bubbler during the day. Children should not come in with lollies or poppers, we encourage healthy eating in the centre. Please do not bring food from home especially when dropping off as we have children with allergies in the centre.

## Sleep/ Rest Times

If your child usually has a sleep during the day, please let us know the normal times and requirements for going to sleep. Our quiet rest/relaxation time is from 12.30 – 1.30. If children ask for a sleep/ rest, it is provided. Rest or sleep is offered if the child appears particularly tired or grumpy.

If you require your child to have a sleep a bed will be provided, Please supply a sheet for sleep time in a draw string bag (clearly labelled with your child's name) which will be sent home with your child on Fridays for washing.

## Medicine Administration

Prescription medicine will only be administered to your child whilst they are at the centre. No other medicine will be administered whilst your child is attending the centre.

If your child requires prescription medication, the medicine register must be completed and signed by the parent. Once the medication has been administered, the staff member doing so will sign to indicate that it has been carried through. **This procedure is to be completed on a daily basis, even if medication is to be administered for more than one day. The medication must be in the original named container.**

Medical Management Plans are required from the child's doctor for children at risk of Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Epilepsy or Diabetes. This is reviewed every 6 months and needs a new plan yearly.

For accountability, all medication will be administered by one staff member while being witnessed by another staff member. Staff are unable to administer medication without written authority from a parent or guardian or if there is no pharmaceutical label on the medication.

## Accidents/ Incidents

Staff members record any accidents on an Accident/ Incident Form. If your child has been hurt during the day, you will be asked to sign this document at the end of the day, so that you are aware of any incident involving your child throughout the day. If necessary, you will be contacted to collect your child. If you cannot be contacted, your emergency contacts will be called. If they are unable to be contacted, we will seek medical attention for your child. Any medical expenses incurred will be the parent's responsibility.

## **POLICY STATEMENT ON PROFESSIONALISM**

The quality of care for children, good relationships among educators, the confidence of parents and the reputation of the Service all depend on the professional attitude and behaviour of the educators and management. This policy aims to provide clear guidance to educators about the standards the Service requires as a condition of employment.

## **POLICY ON HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School Early Learning Centre aims to provide a healthy and safe environment in which children can play and explore their world free from harm. All people in the Community will follow preventative measures at all times.

## **BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT**

Our basic approach to behaviour management is one of respect for the child. Positive encouragement, redirection and reasoning are used to help develop appropriate behaviours. Discipline will always be appropriate to the developmental level of the child.

## **CHILD PROTECTION/ MANDATORY REPORTING.**

The Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School Early Learning Centre has an obligation to all children attending the service to defend their right to care and protection. To support this right, the service will follow the procedures set down by the Northern Territory Government and the Catholic Education Manual when dealing with any allegations of abuse or neglect of children, to ensure the child's and other children's protection. The Service also has a responsibility to its employees to defend their right to confidentiality unless allegations against them of abuse are proven.

## **POLICY STATEMENT ON GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

The Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School Early Learning Centre fosters positive and harmonious relationships. Solutions are sought to all disputes, issues or concerns that affect the operation of the service in a fair and prompt manner.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Every employee, management committee member and member of the operating body is provided with clear written guidelines detailing what information is to be kept confidential, what confidential information they may have in order to fulfil their responsibilities, how this information may be accessed and who has a legal right to know particular information

Confidential conversations that educators have with parents, or the Director/Coordinator has with educators, will be conducted quietly away from others.

## **POLICY STATEMENT ON CHILDREN'S PROGRAM**

Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School Early Learning Centre program is focused on the development of each child's social, spiritual, physical, emotional and intellectual potential, including language skills and creativity and is designed to cater for each child's individual needs.

The National Early Years Learning Framework is used as the basis for the teaching and learning experiences provided at Early Learning Centre. There is a specific emphasis on play-based learning, communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development. We work in partnership with families, acknowledging them as children's first and most influential educators.

Children's input is actively sought for planning, implementation and evaluation of the program.  
Program and Curriculum

All children attending Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School Early Learning Centre are given first hand experiences to actively explore and learn from. The routines and activities are based on each individual child's interests, abilities and needs. Mother Teresa Primary School Early Learning Centre provides a safe and stimulating environment. Children are actively involved in program planning, implementation and evaluation processes.

Staff work collaboratively to develop the program which reflects the philosophy and goals of the service. Our aim is to create an atmosphere and environment responsive to the needs of each individual child and to the group as a whole.

Staff are provided with opportunities to further their knowledge of child development theories and practice.

All staff are encouraged to explore and use good quality resources and training to offer fresh experiences for children and to further their own professional development and skills.

The program is balanced, providing a range of indoor/outdoor experiences, quiet/active times and settings, structured/unstructured activities and opportunities to learn and practice life and social skills.

### **What is Documentation?**

- Records that are interpreted
- Include: photographs, transcripts, video tape, sound files
- Public displays that explain something subtle
- Take the form of: panels, websites, CDs, sheets, videos
- Documents that are created to explain
- Documents that elicit comments and reflection
- Graphically designed to present the process of learning

### **Why Document?**

- To help parents be aware of their children's experiences
- To maintain parental involvement
- To help teachers understand better their own work
- To promote professional growth of the teaching staff
- To facilitate a wider exchange of ideas among educators
- To help children be aware that their effort is valued
- To create an archive that traces the history of the school
- To reveal the process of learning together

(adapted from Lella Gandini, 1993)

### **Immediate Uses of Documentation**

- Making children's ideas visible
- Revisiting with the children
- Providing continuity for discussions
- Planning possibilities for other activities
- Going public with your good work

## EMERGENCY DISASTER PLAN

Emergency evacuation procedures are clearly displayed near the main entrance and exit of each room and are followed in the event of fire, natural disaster or other emergency.

Safety and evacuation drills involving educators and children are held every three months when most children are present. **All alarms must be treated as real and responded to immediately**

## CYCLONE PROCEDURE

In the event of an official announcement of school closure due to imminent cyclone threat, children must be collected by parents. Children are marked off when picked up. Children not collected within 60 mins will be supervised in the staff room for a further period of time. In the event parents are not contactable children will be taken to the nearest cyclone shelter.

## PRIORITY OF ACCESS GUIDELINES

It is important for services to allocate places to those families with the greatest need for child care support. The Australian Government has Priority Access Guidelines for allocating places in these circumstances.

- Priority 1 – a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- Priority 2 – a child 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)
- Priority 3 – any other child

Within these main categories, priority should also be given to the following children:

- children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- children in families which include a disabled person
- children in families on low incomes
- children in families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children in socially isolated families
- children of single parents.

There are some circumstances in which a child who is already in a child care service may be required to leave the service:

- Where a service has no vacant places and is providing child care for a child who is a Priority 3 under the Priority of Access Guidelines, the service may require that child to leave the child care service in order for the service to provide a place for a higher priority child, but only if:
- the person who is liable to pay child care fees in respect of the child was notified when the child first occupied the child care place that the service followed this policy, and
- the service gives that person at least 14 days' notice of the requirement for the child to leave the child care service.

