

St Ives Chase Kindergarten



PARENT HANDBOOK

Centre Philosophy

Our aim is to help children grow to their full potential in an environment that is supportive and nurturing.



Learning

Our play based curriculum embraces the concept of “Belonging, Being, and Becoming” (EYLF), a child initiated, adult facilitated program. We support children to learn through active exploration and interactions with their peers, educators, and the environment.



Partnerships

We strive for a culture of mutual trust and open communication with our families. We build strong connections with our wider community, in particular schools within our local area.



Environment

Our centre provides a calm, stable, welcoming environment. We have wide, open spaces that encourage the children to explore and discover on their own terms.



Community

We recognise that our community is a socially diverse and multicultural society. As a centre we recognise and value this diversity.



Sustainability

We take an active role as a community to do our part in caring for our environment and contributing to a sustainable future.



Our Team

We value a team approach, where all educators are respected and encouraged to work together in a supportive environment. We encourage professional development and reflective practices within our centre.

Our centre acknowledges the land that we play and learn on is the traditional land of the Guringai People of the Eora Nation. We pay our respect to the Elders past, present and future as we thank them for sharing and caring for the land we play on.

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Our Practices

We believe our program supports diversity, promotes respect for all people and recognises the importance of similarities and differences between individuals and families. Community support services will be utilised within our diverse program to enhance and support the development and learning of children with diverse abilities and children from non-English speaking backgrounds.

We believe children learn through play; our programs promote a play-based curriculum that provides opportunities for children to learn as they discover, create, improvise and imagine. We will provide a learning environment in which children are able to feel a part of the centre's community.

We will provide an environment that fosters secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships. We believe that children thrive in an environment that is calm, stable, familiar and welcoming, allowing for those strong relationships to be built. We encourage children to play with others to create social groups, test out ideas, challenge each other's thinking and build new understandings.

The program provided will be a balance between exploring the children's interests, strengths and diverse abilities. Our program will be based on the idea of an emergent curriculum, embracing the concepts of "Belonging, Being and Becoming" (EYLF).

We believe that all children are unique individuals and have the right to explore and express their ideas and feelings in a free and safe environment, with the opportunity to explore and revisit their ideas at their own pace. All children should be viewed in an equal way as individuals with many competencies, interest and needs, based on their own diverse experiences, values and beliefs which reflect their family and community environment.

The children will be encouraged to explore their environment, to be inquisitive, to develop problem-solving skills and to be both independent and group learners. They will be empowered to make choices and decisions within their learning environment and will be encouraged to voice these choices through play. Positive self-awareness and self-confidence will be fostered through meaningful interactions with educators, peers and families.

We believe that the family is the most influential teacher in a child's life and therefore family involvement is an integral part of the everyday running of our centre. We welcome the sharing of family experiences, cultures and ideas within our learning environment to enrich the children's development, learning and understandings of the world around them.

We encourage an environment where educators and parents work together to foster mutual respect and support of each other through open and regular communications.

We are dedicated to the highest quality developmental care and education possible for each child which is supported through the hiring of high quality trained and experienced educators. Our educators work together as a team to provide a positive and successful learning environment for the children in their care.

Our main aim is to ensure that our educators show warmth, dedication, compassion, respect understanding and the ability to communicate effectively with each other as a team. Educators provide an environment and program which will be challenging and stimulating to support and extend the current skills and abilities of the children. The educators will always be aware of the safety and needs of the children and ensure that all learning environments are well maintained and comply with building standards and regulations. We believe that continuous professional development is synonymous with providing quality care and education for the children.

Our educators are continually building on their professional knowledge and develop learning communities. As educators we will engage in collaborative learning with the children, families and wider community. Regular staff and parent communication will keep educators and parents well informed of the events happening in the Centre and provide the opportunity to make decisions as a group to ensure the maximum benefits to the families, children and educators at the centre.

We recognise Australia as a socially diverse multicultural society where different groups with different needs strive to live side by side. As a centre we recognise and value this diversity.



History of the Company

St Ives Chase Kindergarten is owned by Eikoh Seminar Australia Pty. Limited. The company also owns West Ryde Long Day Care Centre, Roseville Kindergarten and Normanhurst Child Care Centre. Each of these centres is managed by a Director and all centres are overseen by a Senior Director. All staff in Director roles have Early Childhood qualifications.

Staff at the Centre

The Centre is staffed by a team of qualified and experienced childcare professionals, these qualifications include:

Early Childhood Degree
Diploma of Children's Services
Certificate III in Children's Services

Enrolment Procedure

A \$25 non-refundable application fee must be paid for your child to be placed on the Waiting List. Parents are then offered positions at the centre according to priority of access and date order with:-

1. A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
2. A child of a parent (or both parents if you have a partner) who satisfies the Government's work, training, study test.
3. Any other child.

When a position becomes available the Centre requires a Holding deposit of two weeks full fees in advance plus the annual equipment levy which are non-refundable. The Holding deposit is refunded in the October accounts. This Holding deposit must be paid otherwise the position may not be held open.

Prior to any child being accepted into the Centre, an Enrolment Form must be fully completed by the parents and an interview held with the Director for the parents and the child.

In accordance with the N.S.W. Public Health Act 1901 and Department of Education and Communities, parents are required to show the current Immunisation History Page via Medicare and an original Birth Certificate or Passport for all children prior to enrolment.

Fee Schedule as at 1 January 2021

Pre-school 9:00am-3:00pm \$111.00 per day
Long Day Care 7:00am-6:00pm \$131.00 per day

All children \$110.00 annual equipment fee for one child,
OR \$150.00 annual equipment fee per family of 2 or more children

Payment of Fees

Fees are billed at the beginning of each month and are due by the 1st Friday of the billing cycle. Fees and receipt of payment will be emailed to families via their preferred email address. Our preferred method of payment is via B-pay, but fees may be paid via credit card or cash. A surcharge may apply when paying via credit card. A receipt will be issued and should be retained as a record of payment.

A late fine will be incurred if fees are not paid by the due date.

For security reasons BPAY is our preferred method of payment.

Please remember:

- Full fees are payable even if your child is absent on a particular day or days for reasons of sickness or holidays, if your child is to retain the place upon return.
- Full fees are payable on public holidays even though the Centre is closed.
- The Centre remains open during school holidays and full fees are payable even if your child does not attend.
- One month's notice in writing must be given of your intention to withdraw your child from the Centre or change their days.

Late Fees

Pre-school- Any parent whose child is collected after 3.00 p.m. will incur a LATE FEE of \$1.00 for every minute late, for the first three times late.
Long Day Care- Any parent whose child is collected after 5.30 p.m. will incur a LATE FEE of \$1.00 for every minute late, for the first three times late.

If parents are regularly late a \$5.00 per minute fine will be incurred.

Remember: your lateness can spoil your child's day.

Child Care Subsidy

Child Care Subsidy is available to all families who are Australian Residents if the child meets immunisation requirements and parents meet eligibility requirements. Entitlement is determined by an activity test which determines the number of hours of subsidized care to which families are entitled.

The percentage of subsidy a family receives is based on their estimated combined annual income. All families wishing to access Child Care Subsidy need to complete an online Child Care Subsidy assessment through their myGov account. Assessment asks families to provide information about their expected combined family income, activity level of parents and types of child care service being used.

Families can claim Child Care Subsidy or Additional Child Care Subsidy online by signing into their myGov and completing a Child Care Subsidy claim. If eligible, the Subsidy will be paid directly to the service on families' behalf and we will reduce the fees owed. This can occur after our service enters families' enrolment information online, and families confirm their enrolment information through their myGov account. Until Child Care Subsidy details are available, families will need to pay full fees.

Families are entitled to receive Child Care Subsidy for up to 42 days where their child is absent, for example due to illness, public holidays and parental leave. Evidence to support these absences is not required. Additional absence days may be available if they meet the situations outlined in the Family Assistance Law and there is evidence to support these.

ALL FAMILIES ENROLLED AT THE CENTRE MUST OBTAIN A CRN (Customer Reference Number).

Parent Involvement

Parents are always welcome at the Centre and encouraged to be involved. There are various avenues for this to occur. Parents are welcome to spend a morning at the centre, to be involved in social events such as morning teas or other organised events.

Staff members are always happy to explain the reasons behind any activity, and to assist with any problems you may be having with your child at any time.



Communication

If you have any questions or concerns please raise them with the teacher in your child's class. The Director is always available to discuss any other worries that you may have.

If you feel that it will be a lengthy chat please make an appointment time so that other arrangements can be made for the supervision of the children.

Other channels of communication:

- **Eikoh Child Care Centre App**, our Centre uses a secure mobile-based portfolio platform specifically designed for our Centre and the families that are enrolled. The App was built in-conjunction with OWNA Corp Pty Ltd (CAN: 613 387 474). It aims to ensure your child receives the best support possible and that you are involved and up-to-date with your child's development. It will help educators, children and families:
 - Improve understanding of each child's interests and abilities.
 - Deepen relationships and strengthen communication.
 - Share videos, photos and text capturing children's learning and development.
 - Create a portfolio of your child's learning that travels with your child and can be accessed by you.
 - Reinforce experiences and deepen children's learning.
 - Capture family culture and heritage.
 - Involve the children in the creation of their portfolio.
 - Interact quickly and effectively through iPhone, Android and tablets.
 - Create smooth transitions.

Our Centre's customized App allows you to see your child's activities at any time. Educators share photos, videos, stories and reflections in real time. Parents can read and respond to posts, upload photos and stay updated on announcements and diary dates. Only families with children enrolled in the Centre will have access. The App can be accessed via an iOS (Apple) or Android enabled device.

The Eikoh Child Care Centre App provides a secure environment that improves communication. Collaboration between parents and educators is at the heart of our service and we understand that we can improve with increased engagement between parents and educators. Learning is visible so when everyone is on the same page, the outcomes for the children can only be positive.

- **Message pockets**, each child has a pocket in which staff place important notices and letters. Please remember to check this weekly. Parents may also use these to pass on information to other parents such as private notes and birthday invitations.
- Reports of your child's developmental progress are sent home mid-year and end of year. You are welcome to follow up these reports with your child's teacher to fully explain your child's development and answer any questions you may have.
- **Medicine forms** are located in each room. Medicines must be in original packaging and fully labelled and the details of when and how much medicine to be given must be written daily on the medication forms. See our Health Policy for further details. Medicines should be given to a staff member to place in the kitchen fridge.
- **Posters** are often placed on the notice board at the front door. These outline matters of urgent attention or upcoming events.
- Daily **programs** are displayed in each classroom. Activities are carefully planned to focus on developing each child's individual needs and extending their interests. These activities include painting, pasting, playdough, puzzles, blocks, construction equipment, music, puppets, books, sand and water play, dramatic play and outside activities.
- Afternoon tea **menus** are displayed in the front foyer.
- A **Policy Book** is located in the each room. Parents can ask staff for copies of individual policies.
- **Portfolios** of each child's learning is available through our Centre App. This highlights their development across the year as well as their interests and skills. Educators use a variety of observational techniques such as projects, learning stories, photos, work samples, art works, long term objectives, special events and children's conversations to show progression in all outcomes based on EYLF. Observations are posted through our Centre's App and families are encouraged to comment on them and provide new goals for learning.

Parent Meetings

Parents are always welcome to have individual meetings with their child's teacher. Please see your child's teacher to arrange an appropriate time. Parent meetings are organised by the centre throughout the year and families are encouraged to be involved and attend when possible.

The Centre - Hours Of Operation

St Ives Chase Kindergarten is a licensed Centre catering for up to 40 children aged between 3- 5 years for 2-5 days per week. The Centre is open 50 weeks per year between 7.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. We are open all year with the exception of Public Holidays and 2 weeks during the Christmas period.

Concerns And Complaints

Procedures and comment/concern forms are located at the front near the sign on/off folder. These forms may be given directly to the staff or put in the suggestion box. The Approved Provider can be contacted at our Head Office on 9487 5174.

NSW Department of Education
 Early Childhood Education Directorate
 Information and Enquiries Team
 Website: www.education.nsw.gov.au
 Phone: 1800 619 113 (toll free)
 Fax: (02) 8633 1810
 Email: ececd@det.nsw.edu.au

Orientation Night

An orientation night is organised at the end of the year for new parents to be provided with information regarding the centre's policies and daily procedures.

Orientation Day

An orientation day is organised towards the end of each year for those children who have been enrolled for the following year. This is an important day for children, parents and staff. It is a chance for parents and children to meet the staff at the Centre, so our faces are familiar on your child's first day. The children will be involved in some of the daily activities of our Kindergarten. The orientation day gives parents the chance to meet other new parents and children that will soon become friends of your child.

First Day

The first day is not always easy. For many it is a new experience separating from parents as well as adjusting to a new environment. As all children are individuals the time it takes to settle into the new environment will be different for each child.

Parents are encouraged to stay for a short period. Sometimes, it is better to leave your child but return early and spend time in the Centre in the afternoon (it all depends on your child).

It is important that before the first day you talk with your child about the Kindergarten and what they can expect, this helps with the transition. Orientation days are also encouraged.

Please remember that children pick up on the feelings of their parents and if you are unsure or anxious about leaving your child, please talk to the Director or Educators.

You are welcome to call the Centre during the day to see how your child is going.

It is most important that you always say Agood bye@ to your child before you leave the Centre, even if you feel this is distressing to your child. If you fail to do this it can lead to mistrust and adds to the distress for your child.

Parking

Parents are requested to use the circular driveway when arriving and collecting their child. When parking, please park at the front end of the circular driveway. We ask that you observe a five minute time limit when parking in the driveway as parents can get parked in.

PLEASE- NO CARS ARE TO PARK BETWEEN THE ENTRY AND EXIT OF OUR DRIVEWAY.

Emergency Evacuation And Lockdown

Parents are to be aware that we are required by our licence to regularly engage in fire drills and emergency situation lockdowns. These practice fire drills teach the children what to do in an emergency. This includes ringing of alarm bells and evacuating the children out of the building, into the front garden and along the footpath into Toolang Oval. During emergency lockdowns the staff assemble the children in the safest location and contact the relevant emergency services if possible.



Sick Children And Emergencies

The Centre cannot provide adequate care for sick or contagious children. Doctor's certificates are necessary for re-admission to the Centre after an infectious illness. Only authorised medicines can be administered to the children. These must be fully labelled and the details of the dose and when the medicine is to be given must be written daily on a medication form. Please show consideration for others if your child has a cough or cold as these spread quickly in the Centre's environment. Children with the following conditions must be excluded from the Centre:

- coloured discharge from the eyes
- vomiting
- fever, lethargic, irritable or tired
- diarrhoea.

Children must have a full 24 hours without these symptoms before returning to the Centre.

All parents are required to give permission at the time of enrolment for their child to be given treatment in the event of an emergency where medical, dental, hospital treatment or ambulance service is required. The cost of any medical treatment must be met by the family.

A copy of the Infectious Diseases brochure distributed by the N.S.W. Health Department is included with our Health Policy.

Nut Aware Centre

Due to the increased number of children with an anaphylaxis reaction to nuts, and professional medical advice that children under 5 not be given nuts, all our Centres have become nut aware centres. To assist us with this we ask that your child does not bring nuts or food with nuts as a main ingredient into the Centre.

General Daily Information

On arrival at the Centre EVERY DAY your child MUST be Signed In with the time of arrival and parent's signature. This is an official record of attendance and failure to do this may be a hazard to your child's safety in an emergency. Likewise your child must be signed out in the afternoon.

On arrival at the Centre each day, the child should be encouraged to say "Good Morning" to a staff member and must be left in the care of a staff member or at an activity. At no time must a child be permitted to enter the Centre on their own without being accompanied by an adult.

If your child will be absent on any day please ring the Centre in the morning. It is important for the staff to be aware of any illnesses in the Centre. All absences need to be signed for on return.

Your child's name must be on everything that comes to the Centre.

Birthdays can be celebrated at the Centre with individual cup cakes, enough for 20 children. No other sweets, chips or drinks are necessary and the children will celebrate during the day.

What Can Be Left At Home

- Toys- Please discourage your child from bringing toys to the Centre as they frequently get lost or broken and can distract the children from becoming involved in the other planned activities.
- Thongs, Ugg boots and heeled shoes have proven to be dangerous. We recommend closed-in shoes with a tread so children can run and climb with ease and to minimise slips and falls which could result in injury.
- Dummies, baby's bottles and nappies. If your child is still toilet training or needs a nappy at rest time we ask you to provide pull-ups.

What We Will Supply

- Afternoon Tea is provided by the centre to children that are attending extended hours care.
- Sun screen- staff will apply Cancer Council's 30+ sun screen to the children every day. Children are to arrive with their first layer applied

What You Will Need To Bring To Kindergarten Each Day

- A kindergarten bag- This should be easy for the child to open and close themselves without adult assistance. Please ensure that it is large enough to accommodate your child's lunch box, drink bottle, morning tea and spare clothes.
- Spare Clothes- Every child needs to bring a complete set of spare clothes appropriate to the day's weather conditions. Children get distressed when they have to wear clothes that don't belong to them. Accidents occur and are not always caused by wet pants. They are often caused by the spilling of paint, water or other craft activities.
- Morning Tea- This should be clearly named and placed in the appropriate containers. Fruit, cheese, dried fruit, water crackers and vegetables are all great for morning tea. Please remember this is a Nut and Egg Free Centre.

- Lunch and drink- This should be clearly named and in small appropriate containers, and placed in the lunch basket. In the effort to encourage healthy eating habits amongst the children, we ask you to kindly refrain from including sweet biscuits, cakes, chips, lollies, chocolate and any other highly processed foods in your child's morning tea or lunch. Also when making lunches please remember this is a Nut and Egg Free Centre.
- Drink Bottles – All children need to bring a labelled bottle of water each day that can be placed in the drink bottle box located in each room.
- Sun hat (labelled please)- It is important that children bring a wide brimmed sun hat regardless of the weather conditions in the morning. It is recommended that parents apply sunscreen to their child every day before they bring them to the Kindergarten. This encourages good habits from an early age.
- Each child will need to bring a drawstring bag (40cm x 40cm would be most suitable), and a small blanket. Please do not provide pillows. One small sheet must be brought on the first day and taken home if not attending the centre the following day. The sheet must be washed weekly.

All items belonging to the child must be labelled with their name.



St Ives Chase Kindergarten

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