



Parent Information Handbook



3 Les Shore place, Castle Hill NSW 2154
PO BOX 434, Castle Hill, NSW 1765
Phone: 02 96346564 Fax: 02 9634 3758
Email Address; kotc@bigpond.net.au
ABN 40 269 782 914

WELCOME

Welcome to “Kids of the Castle Occasional Care Centre”. We are a not for profit community based child care centre run by a parent management committee, specifically, “Kids of the Castle Occasional Care Centre Incorporated”. We receive recurrent state funding for operational costs as well as commonwealth funding in the form of The Child Care Benefit and Rebate Subsidy. Funding is minimal and we rely on our families to support us. We are licensed for thirty (30) children per day.

Our philosophy is to provide high quality play and learning environments that are warm, secure, stimulating and aesthetically pleasing.

WHO CAN USE OCCASIONAL CARE?

- We care for children aged six weeks up to school aged and we welcome, with respect, all cultures and religions.
- Those needing flexible short-term care.
- Children requiring Permanent positions on an hourly basis.
- Part-time and casual workers.
- Parents needing time for appointments, hobbies, job interviews, shopping or time for themselves.
- Children needing the benefits of a safe, stimulating learning environment with socialisation opportunities.
- Children needing the benefits of a school readiness program.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The centre is open for care Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 4:30pm. We ask that you respect our closing time of 4:30pm and to be aware that all children must be picked up by this time.

OFFICE HOURS

The office is open Monday to Friday from 7:30am to 11:30am. Payment for casual bookings must be made on arrival. Payment is by CASH, EFTPOS, CREDIT CARD, CHEQUE or DIRECT DEPOSIT via the internet (our account details are Commonwealth Bank 062-347 100-96643). The receipt must be given to the office as proof of payment. To make or Cancel a booking you must speak to a staff member for confirmation, except in the case of leaving a message on the answering machine. Staff welcome your phone calls at any time of the day in regards to your child's day.

FEES

The annual registration fee of \$50.00 will be charged per family per calendar year. Child care fees are charged on an hourly basis of \$10.50 per child, per hour.

All families using the centre may be eligible to claim the Child Care Rebate and Child Care Benefits. This is claimed through Centrelink. Any enquiries regarding the Rebate or Benefits can be directed to the office staff.

Late Fee

Due to the potential risk of jeopardising the Service's license and insurance cover, late collection of your child during normal operating hours will incur a \$20.00 late fee (ie. If a parent/guardian collects a child at 12:05pm instead of 12:00pm - except in extenuating circumstances verified and approved by the Authorised Supervisor). Late collection of a child in the first instance after normal operating hours (ie. After 4:30pm) will incur a fee of \$20.00 per ten (10) minutes or part thereof, to be paid on departure. If a late collection of a child after normal operating hours occurs again, a fee of \$50.00 for every five (5) minutes, or part thereof, to be paid on departure. If a late collection of a child after normal operating hours occurs a third time, your child's enrolment at the centre will be terminated and your child will no longer be able to attend the Centre.

CANCELLATIONS

You may cancel your booking at any time **prior to 7.30 a.m.** the morning of the booking. There is an answering machine that runs 24 hrs a day that you may leave a message on at any time or you may cancel with the front office. Please **do not** cancel a booking with child's carer, as they are very busy looking after your children and may forget to pass along the message, if this happens you will be charged as if you did not cancel. If you fail to cancel your booking by **7.30 a.m. sharp** you will be charged the full fee without child care benefits.

SIGNING IN AND OUT

The sign in and out sheet is a legal document. For licensing, regulatory and insurance reasons, you must sign your child in and out on arrival and departure. Exact times of arrival and departure must be written. When Centrelink audits this service, any child not signed in or out on a particular day will be back billed for the hours of care at the full fee without the normal Child Care Benefit. No child under the age of 18 is allowed to sign a child out of care. Children will not be allowed to be signed out by anybody who is not their parent or legal guardian, unless written consent has been given.

BOOKED HOURS OF CARE

The service operates under strict Department of Community Services licensing standards where child to staff ratios must be adhered to at all times. Therefore, you must arrive and depart as per the time of your booking. This is especially important for the collection of your child. There may be another child arriving at your child's departure time and an overlapping of bookings may put our child to staff ratios out, therefore jeopardising our license and insurance. **If you arrive late to drop your child off, it DOES NOT allow you to arrive late to pick your child up.** A late fee will be charged for the late collection of children.

IMMUNISATION

Centre policy requires all children to be fully immunised and to provide updated immunisation records to be sighted and photocopied upon registration. The only exemption being those with a conscientious objection form, a medical contra-indication form or a letter from a medical practitioner stating the reason why your child is not immunised. Immunisation is linked to the Child Care Benefit and Rebate Scheme and only children immunised will have access to this subsidy.

SETTLING IN PROCEDURE

Most children who come to occasional care have never been left in formal or informal care before. To minimise psychological and emotional stress, the Centre suggests a one hour booking for the first few visit and extended each visit thereafter according to each individual child's ability to cope. Don't worry if your child seems to be taking a long time to settle into the idea of child care. They will eventually settle and it is only a matter of time before relationships develop with carers and other children.

PREPARING YOUR CHILD

Initially separating for the first time can be a stressful experience for yourself and your child. You can help minimise feelings of anxiety by talking with your child about the fun they will have and what to expect so they can come to view the experience as a positive one. Emphasise things such as making friends, playing games, singing songs, painting and making things. We encourage you to stay for a short time if you wish, but when you do decide to leave, please do it quickly. Say goodbye once and reassure your child that you will be back. **Prolonging goodbyes and returning several times can actually heighten the stress of separation.**

PROGRAM

The centre programs based on The Early Years Learning Framework. When programming we consider all of the learning outcomes, including children have a strong sense of Identity, Children are connected with and contribute to their world, Children have a strong sense of wellbeing, Children are confident and involved learners and Children are effective communicators. Our programs are play based learning and created on children's interest and ideas. Both the indoor and outdoor program change on a fortnightly basis and are displayed in each room.

Example of our Daily Routine.

7.30am – centre opens. Indoor play
9.50am – Nappies/Toileting/hand washing
10.00am – Morning Tea
10.20am – Outdoor play and activities.
11.30am – Group time/stories/songs/dancing
11.55am – Nappies/toileting/hand washing
12.00pm – lunches
12.30pm – Sleep time/free play outside.
1.50pm – small group time/show and tell.
1.55pm – nappies/toileting/wash hands
2.00pm – Afternoon tea
2.20pm – Outdoor play and activities.
4.00pm – Pack away/Nappies/Toileting/Hand washing
4.10pm – Indoor play
4.30pm – Centre Closes.

PROGRESS OF CHILDREN

The Centre also provides transition education for parents and children who will move from our Centre to any other organisation eg Special needs school, preparatory school, another pre-school or interstate or international move.

PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Centre also provides a pre-school program in the Possum Room for children aged three (3) years and up. Children who are preparing for “Big School” the following year are encouraged to participate in our School Readiness program. During school terms these children break away from the main group and move into a separate room and participate in Pre reading, Pre writing and Pre maths activities.

KINDERLOOP

The centre uses digital documentation to observe child and their monthly progress. Once you join this secure program you will be updated each time your child attends care. You will also be able to see photos of your child engaged in play.

The site is completely secure and only the people you nominate will have access to your child's photos and observations.

All documentation is owned by the parent.

WHAT TO BRING

- All items, including food and drink must be individually labelled with your child's name. Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea to be in separate bags or containers and placed in the appropriate shelf on the food trolley
- A change of clothes must be kept in your child's bag at all times, even if your child is fully toilet trained
- Spare nappies - to be labelled and placed in the nappy basket
- Items of security i.e. dummy, cuddly etc (labelled)
- Sun hat - all year round (labelled)

- A fitted cot sheet and top sheet and pillow if required. A blanket in colder weather. All to be labelled and put in a cloth bag and placed in sheet box or locker.

NUTRITION

Our nutrition policy is consistent with Food Act of 2003 and is also consistent with the Dietary Guide as well as MUNCH AND MOVE NSW health.

Only healthy, nutritious and varied food will be offered to the children. Please make sure the food sent along with your child is adequate in quantity and appropriate to the developmental needs of the child. Please ensure the food provided is appropriate to the cultural and religious needs of the child. Please do not bring lollies, chips, chocolates, rollups, and foods with excessive amounts of sugar, salt or fats. No carbonated drinks will be offered to children. Inappropriate food for childcare will be sent home in the bag or container provided.

Suggestions for morning tea and afternoon tea are fruit (already cut and peeled), cheese, savoury biscuits, yoghurt, carrot sticks, plain popcorn, fruit bars etc.

Suggestions for lunch might include sandwiches, fruit (already cut and peeled), pre-cooked foods ready to heat in the microwave, salads etc.

ONLY water will be offered to your child.

PLEASE NO - PEANUT BUTTER, NUTELLA OR NUT PRODUCTS INCLUDING ALL TREE NUTS (REFER ANAPHALAXIS) THESE PRODUCTS ARE BANNED FROM THE CENTRE

All food and drink must be labelled. Any food NOT LABELLED will not be handed out.

ANAPHALAXIS

We have several children enrolled at this Centre who suffer from Anaphylaxis Reaction. This means that they have a life-threatening allergy. In this instance all suffer from an allergy to nuts and nut products. These children only need to touch the item that they are allergic to and they will have a severe reaction. All parents of these children provide an injection when attending in case symptoms of an allergy appear. Therefore nut products are banned from this Centre e.g., peanut butter, Nutella and all other food containing any type of nuts.

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING

When you dress your child for care, please keep in mind that during the day, your child engages in many activities, such as painting, sand play, and they may get a little dirty. So easy wash and wear clothing is suggested. Please DO NOT send your child to care in any clothing you do not want to risk getting dirty or stained. Thongs are not permitted at KOTC, all shoes must be semi-enclosed and attached to the ankle. Singlet tops of any type are greatly discouraged due to SUN PROTECTION. Also remember your child's skill level, please do not dress them in belts, overalls or tight and restrictive clothing, if they are unable to take them off and on by THEMSELVES.

ILLNESS

This Centre has a duty of care to all children. We do our part to provide a healthy clean environment. We ask that you assist us by keeping sick children at home. Infections and germs spread very quickly in a child care environment and for the protection of other children, their families and our staff, we ask that your child be totally recovered from any illness before attending this Centre. Children with runny noses (especially discoloured mucous), coughs (other than

asthma), conjunctivitis, diarrhoea, vomiting, high temperature, rashes, cold sores or with other symptoms of illness, virus or childhood disease will be isolated from the other children and the parent will be contacted to collect the child. If the parent cannot be contacted, the emergency contact person on the enrolment form will be called to collect your child. If your child is sent home sick from care it is recommended that they are excluded from care for a 24 hour period.

Exclusion periods

- Vomiting - must have stopped vomiting 24 hours before the day of care
- Diarrhoea - must have had a normal bowel movement at least 24 hours before the day of care
- Conjunctivitis - infection must have cleared 24 hours before the day of care
- Thrush - when the infection has cleared
- General infectious diseases - incubation period as set out by the Department of Health. Please check with your doctor
- Fever - normal temperature must have been recorded at least 24 hours before the day of care

ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY TREATMENT

In registering and signing the application form you are giving written authorisation for the service to seek urgent medical, dental or hospital treatment or ambulance service and given consent for the service to carry out appropriate medical, dental or hospital treatment, in the event that such action appears to be necessary because the child has been injured or is ill at the premises.

If any medication or medical, hospital or dental treatment or ambulance services are obtained for a child, a parent of the child will be notified as soon as practically possible of the accident or illness and the treatment or services arranged for the child.

MEDICATION

All children who have been prescribed medicines by a doctor must have been on the course for at least 24 hours before the day of care. If your child needs medication administered during the day, you will need to fill out a medication form. Only asthma, allergy and prescribed medication from a doctor will be administered. All medications must arrive at the centre in their original container, with your child's name, the dosage and the prescribing doctor's name. If your child appears unwell and develops a temperature over 38°C, we will contact you to seek permission to administer paracetamol. The dosage amount given will be as per that stated on the bottle according the child's age. Please do not leave any medication in your child's bag. It must be handed to a staff member. If your child has an allergy and requires an EpiPen, you **MUST** supply the EpiPen at **EVERY** visit to the centre. We also require a copy of a signed, medical Action Plan. If your child has Asthma, you need to supply their medication every time they attend the centre. We also require a signed medical Asthma Action Plan.

SUNSCREEN and SUN PROTECTION.

All children are required to arrive at the centre already wearing sunscreen each visit, as cream takes 20 mins to absorb into your child's skin. We have sunscreen that we reapply throughout the day. We advise that **NO** singlet tops or singlet sleeve dresses be worn to child care. All children who will be participating in outdoor play must bring and wear a sun hat, broad brimmed hats offer the best protection. If your child does not bring a hat, unfortunately they will not be allowed to play outside.

PRIVACY

Private and confidential information received is treated with the strictest confidence. Enrolment forms, childcare benefit information etc is stored in a locked cupboard. Conversations and

discussions regarding your child will remain confidential. Staff will not become involved in revealing information to parents about other children or their families.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

We would like to encourage all parents, if they have the time, to be involved in our Centre. If you have a particular talent or interest eg cooking or playing an instrument, please feel welcome to arrange a time to share your abilities with the children, so that they may have the opportunity to be enriched by the experience. The Management Committee meets once a month at the Centre to discuss any issues, which need to be addressed. These meetings are open to all parents of the Centre and are advertised on the noticeboard. A new Management Committee is elected each year at the Centre's Annual General Meeting. Being on the Committee is a great way to get involved and have a say in the way the Centre operates.

DONATIONS

We are immensely appreciative of any donations of tissues, toilet paper, nappy wipes, A4 photocopying paper and dishwashing detergent. This helps to reduce our expenses.

FINALLY

Thank you for reading the information in this handbook. We trust that in doing so you will feel a little more informed on how our service operates which will in turn assist you and your child during the settling in process. The Centre's Policies and Procedures Manual is on display in the foyer and all parents are welcome to view this document.

We look forward to a happy association with you and your child. We trust that you will find using our service a pleasant experience. If you have any comments, queries or questions, please do not hesitate to talk to a staff member.