



MIDVALE EARLY CHILDHOOD AND PARENTING CENTRE

PARENT HANDBOOK

CONTACT DETAILS

22 - 26 Hooley Road, Midvale, WA, 6056.

P: 08 9290 6888 E: mecpc@mundaring.wa.gov.au

KAYA Welcome

We appreciate that the selection of a childcare service can be a very difficult decision and we are delighted that you are considering our service.

Here at MECPC we believe that the early years are very informative in shaping lifelong outcomes for children. We operate under the National Quality Framework adhering to the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, meeting the National Quality Standard and using the Early Years Learning Framework to guide curriculum planning.

Our dedicated staff are here to provide high quality education and care by focusing on each family and child as an individual. By working in partnership with families we are able to ensure that every child receives the best possible care and educational experience, which in turn supports the best possible outcomes.

Please know that you are welcome in the service at any time and we welcome your family to share your culture, knowledge and skills with us. Our staff are always available to discuss your child's learning and development, parenting preferences or any concerns or needs should they arise.

This Parent Handbook contains information that will help you become more familiar with the services policies and procedures. If you would like more information, please refer to the Policy file, request a copy of a specific policy via email, or come and see the Coordinator or Assistant Coordinator.

We look forward to sharing your child's early year's journey with you.

Kind Regards,

The Team at Midvale Early Childhood & Parenting Centre.

ORGANISATION *structure*

Regulatory Authority:

*Department of Education
Education and Care Regulatory Unit
Boorloo Campus, Level 7
130 Stirling Street, Perth
Email: ecru@communities.wa.gov.au*

Funding Body:

*Department of Education, Skills
and Employment*

Approved Provider:

Shire of Mundaring

Chief Executive Officer:

Jason Whiteaker

Director Strategic & Community

Services: Megan Griffiths

Midvale Early Childhood and Parenting Centre:

(Approval Number: SE-00012911)

Manager Family and Children Services

Hub Coordinator -Childcare and Parenting

MECPC Nominated Supervisor/Coordinator

Assistant Coordinator/Education Leader

MECPC Team members



SERVICE

Philosophy

Vision Statement

We commit to a shared vision of providing a welcoming environment in which every child thrives. This welcoming environment is reflective and respectful of cultural diversity and the unique story within each of us.

Philosophy

Our Philosophy has four key pillars that reflect our shared values and beliefs as an early childhood and parenting service showcasing our collaborative leadership and team intent. Each pillar is strong in its own right however all are interdependent on each other and provide a framework we can lean into and learn from. We acknowledge the need to continue to take time to critically reflect on the unique and changing needs of children, families and communities. Our intention is to ensure that consistent healthy connected relationships of learning and knowing are nurtured and cultivated in this environment which sits on Whadjuk land. We create a culturally safe environment through embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into our daily practices.

Image of the Child

We see every child as strong, capable, creative and curious with an innate desire to explore the world around them. We value each child's inner wisdom, unique strengths and the knowing that they bring into our shared environment. We see the desire to learn in each child, we observe closely to learn more about their cues, desires, likes and dislikes. We view each child as competent and capable and hold high expectations for their learning, sensitively supporting each child's holistic wellbeing. We believe children thrive and do best in an environment rich in culture and diversity. We believe a culture underpinned by having secure, respectful relationships and connection enriches each child's developing consciousness and positive self-belief. We believe each child has a right to be heard and we encourage each child to share their voice and knowing in multiple ways.

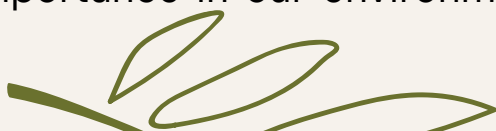


Families and Community

We believe that families are the child's first teacher and play a significant role in the child's developing growing personality and self-identity. Every child's journey is a collaboration with families developing partnerships and respecting the rich diversity and history of generational traditions and learning of families, service and community. Each one provides a beautiful link to a connected living story between the child's home and our service. We thrive on connection and work in close collaboration with each family and continuously explore ways of creating rich learning environments that consistently maintain a connection to culture and community. Family and community connection are evident throughout our environment where families and communities are invited to share history, traditions and culture in meaningful ways. We consistently work as a team to ensure we create an environment that offers a true sense of belonging for every child and their family. We do this with respectful open communication, through welcoming learning environments and through listening deeply to ensure every family and child feels heard and seen.

Environment

Our environment is a fluid and engaging environment where children are agents of their own learning making choices in their play. We believe every child has a boundless capacity for creativity, imagination and innovation which is enhanced with a flow of outdoor and indoor play. We believe the natural world is one of the most powerful resources for learning and engage children in sustainable practices. We believe children thrive in our environments which stimulate and engage their natural curiosity. Having access to nature and the natural world provides a unique environment for learning and development. The environment provides spaces and places for individual and group exploration and investigation of both manufactured experiences and the natural world. We recognise and respect the developing social skills of each child to connect with others in their own unique way with gentle guidance and support. We believe in the value of open ended loose part play experiences to enable every child to explore through their senses and stimulate their natural creativity, imagination and strengths. We provide an environment rich in diversity where experiences are designed so that every child feels a sense of importance in our environment, our community and in our world.



Educational Programme

Our educational programme is influenced and guided by the National Quality Standards–Principles and Practices, Early Years Learning Framework, theoretical understanding, critical reflection and our collective knowledge and experiences incorporating the values of each child, family and community. We believe that through the provision of flexibility, freedom of choice, stimulating and engaging sensory experiences are fundamental to our educational programme. Nature based play and controlled risky play is a core element of our educational programme as we believe they are both vital to each child’s growing resilience in their physical, emotional, cognitive and spiritual development. We believe children need a level of challenge in their play to stimulate their thinking and problem solving skills. We provide opportunities for practiced skills to be used as well as new skills to be developed. We implement diverse approaches to teach the art of mindfulness to all children. With empathy and gentle guidance we practice co regulation alongside children as needed. This allows them to learn the art of self–regulation in a safe and supported environment taking the time they need. . We recognise that there are multiple ways of being, of doing, of learning and exploring and provide an educational programme rich in its diversity and experiences to meet the developmental needs of each child.



ORIENTATION AND FIRST DAY

We strongly encourage families to schedule a minimum of two orientation visits (generally 1-2 hours) with their child. This will provide an opportunity for your child to spend some time in their new environment with the security of having a parent/guardian present for reassurance. Educators will support your child to explore their environment, engage with other children and participate in experiences and routines. If your child is feeling confident, we welcome you to leave the room and sit in the parenting room with a cup of tea or coffee. **Please note you cannot leave the service whilst your child is orientating.**

Orientations provide a great opportunity for you to discuss your child's routine and needs. We strongly believe that building strong trusting relationships with your child's educators, assists children to also create strong bonds with educators and enables smooth transitions into the service each day.

First days are exciting! Although they can also be a little bit overwhelming for children and families. Some top tips are to arrive early and take some time to read a book, play together with other children or simply be available for your child whilst they explore. When the time comes to leave please say good bye to your child and reassure them you will return after work/study etc. Your child's educator will support a smooth separation and assist your child to settle if they become upset. Please do not hesitate to call during the day to check on your child, we are always happy to provide an update and answer any questions. Should your child become distressed due to separation we will keep you updated and if necessary, request for you to collect your child. In these circumstances your child's educator will work with you to plan settling in strategies to meet the needs of your child.



WHAT TO BRING ON YOUR FIRST DAY

For babies & younger children:

Bottles/ Formula/ Breast Milk

(please see educators for labelling and receival requirements)

Water bottle

Any comforters (dummy, blanket, teddy etc...)

Nappies & wet wipes

Spare clothing (appropriate for season)

Hat (broad brimmed or legionnaire style)

For older children:

Blanket for rest (if required)

Spare clothing (if toilet training please bring multiple sets)

Water bottle

Hat (broad brimmed or legionnaire style)

REST AND SLEEP TIMES

The service acknowledges each individual child's need for sleep and rest. We actively attempt to meet these needs to the best of our ability. We understand that effective rest and sleep strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and safe in a childcare environment. The service follows the Australian Safe Sleep guidelines and recommendations for safe sleep practices.

For children older than 24 months, pacifiers are not recommended during sleep time and children will be encouraged to put their pacifiers in their bags upon arrival. Children at the service are encouraged to rest or sleep where required. Please discuss your child's needs for rest and sleep with their educators.



ABSENCES AND HOLIDAYS

Please contact the service by 9am, where possible, to advise if your child will be absent from care. Families receiving CCS are allocated 42 allowable absence days per financial year. These absences may be used for any reason; however, once the 42 days have been exhausted, CCS will no longer be applied to fees. Families are encouraged to monitor their Statement of Fees to remain aware of their current absence balance.

EDUCATORS, STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS

The service employs highly experienced and qualified educators and staff, exceeding minimum qualification requirements. All educators participate in ongoing health and safety training, including First Aid, CPR, Asthma and Anaphylaxis management, Child Protection, Food Safety and Sunsmart practices. Educators, students and volunteers must hold a current Working with Children Check and complete a comprehensive orientation before commencing at the service.

We support student practicum placements from universities, TAFE, registered training organisations and secondary schools. Photos of educators, students and volunteers are displayed near the entrance of each room so families can see who will be working with their child each day. From time to time, staff may be moved between rooms to ensure continuity of care for children.



PAYMENT OF FEES

Childcare fees are paid one week in advance. You can pay your fees by direct debit, Centrepay or EFTPOS.

If you choose to pay by EFTPOS, you'll receive a dated receipt at the time of payment. Payments made by direct debit or Centrepay will be shown on your regular fee statements.

We ask that the enrolling parent helps us by making sure fees are paid on time each week.

To secure your child's place, a \$100 non-refundable deposit is required. This amount will be put towards your childcare fees.

There are two simple ways to set up weekly childcare payments:

- Complete the Direct Debit form in the Parent Pack, or
- Set up a Centrepay deduction through your myGov account.

The Parent Pack also includes clear information about how to raise any questions, concerns or complaints about childcare payments.

LATE COLLECTION CHARGES

Child Care Subsidy does not cover late collection fees. This means any late fees are an extra cost for families.

Our service closes at 6.00pm. A child is considered late if they are collected after closing time. Families may be charged a late collection fee if:

- A child is not collected by 6.00pm, and no prior arrangement has been made, or
- Unexpected circumstances occur, such as a traffic accident or vehicle breakdown. These situations will be considered with care and understanding.

If a late fee applies, it will be added to the parent or guardian's account. The fee is:

- \$25 for the first late collection, plus
- \$5 per minute for each additional minute after 6.00pm.

Late fees are added automatically to your account.



CENTREPAY COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Families using Centrepay are advised that they have the right to make a complaint or raise concerns about their Centrepay deductions at any time. Information about our Centrepay complaints procedures, including how to lodge a concern and how it will be managed, can be found in our Parent Pack, [our website](#) and by request.

OVERDUE FEES

Parents/Guardians with overdue fees will be encouraged by the Service Coordinator to contact the administration staff to discuss any difficulties they may have in meeting payments and make suitable arrangements to pay. If this is not done, or the agreed arrangements are not kept, the following procedure will apply:

- After one week overdue – a polite email reminder will be forwarded to the parent/guardian.
- After two weeks overdue – an email advising that the child's place may be cancelled if the account should become three weeks overdue. The email will include a reminder that parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss payment difficulties and make suitable arrangements to pay with the Service administration team.
- After three weeks overdue – if no arrangements to pay have been made or kept, the child's booking will be cancelled and a debt collection agency may be engaged to recover the outstanding fees.

It is important to note that if you are experiencing financial hardship please speak with our administration team so that we can look at ways to offer assistance in ensuring you are able to meet your usual fee payment requirements.



DELIVERY AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

It is the shared responsibility of the service and families to ensure the safe arrival and departure of children through the completion of required documentation and adherence to service policies and procedures. Only parents/guardians and authorised persons (authorised nominees) listed on the enrolment record may collect children from the service. Individuals collecting a child may be asked to provide photographic identification to confirm their identity.

It is a legal requirement that all parents/guardians and authorised persons sign children in on arrival and out at departure using the QikKids kiosk. At closing time, staff will verify that all children have been signed out. If a child has not been signed out, educators will check all areas of the service as part of the closing procedure to ensure no child remains onsite.

Late fees apply to families who collect their child after the service closes at 6pm, in accordance with the Fees Policy.

CANCELLATION OF CARE

A minimum of 2 weeks written notice must be given to end a child's booking at the service. Full payment of account must be made when giving notice. Failure to give the required notice will result in full fees being charged for 2 weeks in lieu of notice. Children **must** attend their last day in order to receive CCS. Failure to attend on the last day will result in CCS being revoked and full fees applying. If a family is experiencing exceptional circumstances this can be discussed with the Coordinator.

If at any time a family is in breach of the MECPC's policies or are deemed to be a threat or concern to any children, staff or the service in general they may be asked to leave the service immediately and care terminated. If this occurs the Manager of Family and Children's Services will contact the family to inform them of this decision. Any outstanding fees will be forwarded onto the family for payment.

FAMILY COMMUNICATION/PARTICIPATION

Family and community participation is integral to creating an authentic, welcoming and inclusive environment that supports a strong sense of belonging for all children and families. The service encourages open communication and invites families to engage regularly with their child's educators through a variety of communication methods.

Families are welcome to contribute to experiences, assist with projects and attend social events. Opportunities are also provided for families to participate in continuous improvement activities, including policy reviews, curriculum input, project consultation and topical surveys or feedback.

GRIEVANCE AND CONCERNS

For parents and guardians to feel confident in the quality of education and care provided, it is important that you are aware of your ability to influence practices and decision-making at the service. We encourage families to raise concerns or provide feedback as they arise so that any issues or opportunities for improvement can be addressed in a timely manner.

Families are encouraged to speak with their child's educators in the first instance. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may speak with the Coordinator or Assistant Coordinator. If concerns remain unresolved or you wish to escalate the matter further, you may contact the Manager of Family and Children's Services on 9290 6888 or the Education and Care Regulatory Unit on 6277 3889.



NUTRITION

Children in their first five years require a nutritious and balanced diet to support their growth and development. The service provides food prepared fresh on the premises each day by our Food Coordinator, in line with national dietary guidelines. Individual dietary needs, allergies and preferences are accommodated through appropriate meal variations.

Fresh filtered water is available to children throughout the day. The service supports breastfeeding and welcomes mothers to use the parent room to feed at any time.

A copy of the weekly menu is displayed on the kitchen bench. Families may request a copy from the Food Coordinator if needed. The service supports breast feeding and welcomes Mother's to drop in and use the parent room to feed at any time.

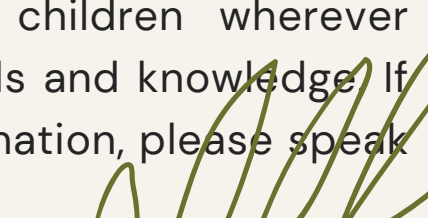
A copy of the weekly menu is displayed on the kitchen bench. If you would like a copy please speak with the Food Coordinator.

ALLERGIES, MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Please list any allergies, medical conditions or additional needs on your enrolment form so staff can provide the appropriate documentation. If a medical condition is identified, you will need to schedule a time to complete a Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan with the Coordinator prior to commencement.

Medical Management Plans completed by a Medical Practitioner are required for all asthma, allergies and anaphylaxis. All medication listed on the plan must be provided to the service each day your child attends, or may be stored at the service if preferred.

The service works closely with inclusion specialists and Allied Health professionals to support the inclusion of all children wherever possible, within the scope of our capabilities, skills and knowledge. If you have any concerns or would like further information, please speak with the Coordinator or Assistant Coordinator.



SUN PROTECTION

Please ensure your child has a sun-safe hat (legionnaire or broad-brimmed style) and is dressed in suitable clothing during the warmer months. Clothing must cover the shoulders. Families are asked to apply sunscreen before arriving at the service.

Our program provides a balanced indoor–outdoor routine, with children spending time outdoors in shaded or protected areas throughout the day. Children will not be permitted to access unprotected areas during periods when UV ratings exceed recommended levels for sun protection.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The service is committed to providing clean, safe and healthy environments for all children, families, educators, contractors and volunteers. Infection control practices are followed in line with the Control of Communicable Diseases Manual 2023.

The exclusion of unwell children is managed in accordance with the Exclusion Guidelines outlined in the Control of Communicable Diseases Manual 2023. Families will be notified of any occurrence of a communicable disease within the service. A medical certificate confirming a child is fit to return is required following any period of exclusion.

All persons entering the service—including contractors and volunteers—must comply with current Work Health and Safety legislation, service policies and any Federal or State directives in place at the time. The health and safety of children and staff will remain paramount to operational requirements and legislative obligations.



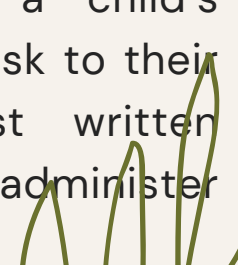
ACCIDENTS

If your child has a minor accident whilst at the service an educator will complete the required record for you to review and sign when you collect your child. If the accident/incident involves any part of the body above the shoulders the parent/guardian will be contacted by telephone no matter how minor the accident/injury may be. Photos may be emailed to families in cases of concern. Educators may also contact the parent in circumstances where they would like to discuss an incident in more detail or if a specific educator will not be on roster at the time of collection. In the event of more serious accidents, incidents or traumas parents will be contacted immediately and emergency services will be contacted if deemed necessary. If you have any specific requests around being notified of any incidents, accidents, illnesses or traumas please discuss this with your child's educator.

MEDICATION

Prescription medication can be administered to a child while in care upon request. Parents/guardians are required to complete the Medication Permission Form on arrival. The form must be completed in full and correctly. Medication must be handed directly to a staff member so the form can be checked and the medication stored appropriately. All medication must have been administered by a parent at least once before being brought to the service.

Paracetamol (such as Panadol or Nurofen) will not be administered as a preventative measure or to relieve symptoms. If a child requires paracetamol, they are considered unfit to attend the service. In the event that a child presents with a high temperature (above 38°C), exclusion will be required. In circumstances where a child's temperature is considered excessively high and poses a risk to their safety and wellbeing, the Coordinator may request written authorisation (via email or text) from a parent/guardian to administer paracetamol.



IMMUNISATIONS

Parents are required to provide an Australian Immunisation Record (AIR), obtained within the last 2 months prior to the commencement of enrolment. Regular updates of your child's immunisation status will be required in accordance with the Australian immunisation schedule. Please note: the purple book is not sufficient to meet the legal requirements relating to immunisation and attendance at an education and care service. Federal/State directed immunisation mandates will be managed in accordance with directives. This information will be filtered through to all families as required. Regular communication regarding status of notification of illness/disease will be sent from the centre via email and/or through social media platforms.

GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR

An important aspect of children's belonging, being and becoming involves children learning how their emotions, behaviours and actions affect themselves and others, and developing skills to regulate these independently." Educators support children to understand and manage their feelings and to take responsibility for their actions. Children are guided to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts. The dignity and rights of every child are upheld, and each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive, respectful and responsive relationships. Older children are provided with guidance to help them make responsible choices and develop increasing independence in regulating their behaviour. Children are encouraged to consider alternative ways of responding and to recognise behaviours that may be inappropriate within a group setting.

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require the service to have a written Interactions with Children Policy that reflects current practice. The use of physical punishment or restraint, and any physical, verbal or emotional practices that demean, humiliate, frighten or threaten a child, are strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

ENVIRONMENT AWARENESS

As children explore their environment and natural materials we aim to encourage and increase an awareness of environmental responsibilities and implement practices that contribute to a sustainable future. Children are supported to become environmentally responsible and show respect for the environment. Environmentally sustainable practices are embedded into our operations and curriculum and we encourage you to become involved in supporting these.

BIRTHDAYS

Children are welcome to celebrate their birthdays with their friends at the service. A simple cake is preferred for these occasions. Parents are asked to provide a shop-bought, sealed cake with a full ingredient list, in line with our food safety requirements.

If you would like to bring in small party bags for your child's peers, please check with educators to confirm how many children are attending. These bags will be handed out to children as they leave at the end of the day.

TOYS FROM HOME

We ask that children do not bring toys from home unless they are part of the planned educational program in your child's room. If toys are brought in, each room has a toy basket where they will be placed for safekeeping until the end of the day.

