



# Olsen Avenue

COMMUNITY CHILDRENS CENTRE

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## **Introduction**

Dear Parent(s) & Guardian(s)

Welcome to Olsen Avenue Community Children's Centre (OACCC) and thank you for choosing our centre to care for and educate your child/ren.

We understand that the selection process and criteria of a child care centre can be a very difficult decision to make that's why the Management and Staff of OACCC endeavour to make every effort to ensure you feel comfortable with the decision you have made. After all, choosing a childcare centre is the first step in your child's education regime and we want to make it both enjoyable and memorable.

At OACCC we have a fundamental belief that in order for us to care for and provide education experiences of the very highest standard for your child/ren we must work closely with you, the parent(s)/guardian(s). The main aim is to include family input as the information you gives us is one of the foundations of our curriculum. We acknowledge that you know more about your child than we ever know but we will strive to combine the information you divulge about your child and our professional knowledge to enhance your child's education and learning outcomes.

Please feel comfortable in the knowledge that you are always welcome in the centre. Our staffs are only too happy to discuss any aspect of your child's day and progress with you. Once again, Welcome! We hope that your family's stay with us will be a long and happy one.

## **Mission Statement**

Olsen Avenue Community Children's Centre is committed to being responsive to community needs and to show respect for the individuality and actively promote child protection for the children and families. We have adopted the Early Years Learning Frame work with BELONGING BEING AND BECOMING and our motto is 'EVERY CHILD MATTERS' (taken from AECMHI). Where a proven positive difference to the lives of Australian children Parents are asked to be as involved as much as they want by participating in the curriculum. The centre is a community centre with a Parent Management Committee that oversees the running of the centre in consultation with the Centre Director (Nominated Supervisor). Family input is valued and the main source of our curriculum this done on a regular basis. It is our intent to provide ongoing support services, for each family's needs within our community. We recognise the professional performance of our staff and are committed to acknowledgement and development of their unique skills. A focus of Olsen Avenue Community Children's Centre is to provide innovative and developmentally appropriate curriculum that nurture children's individuality.

## **Philosophy**

Philosophy is on view in the front foyer and a copy is given with this hand book. The philosophy is reviewed annually by staff, parents and the Parent Management Committee the most resent copy on display on the wall of the foyer. The master copy of the centres Policies and Procedures are situated at the front counter, a copy of any of these can be obtained from staff in the front office.

## Staffing Structure

Our Staff are our most important asset. They are also the most important aspect of our centre. We take enormous pride in the skills and abilities of our staffing base. We believe they are exceptional, and the primary reason that the centre works so well.

|  |              |             |             |
|--|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| Parent Management Committee              |              |             |             |
| Director (nominated Supervisor)          |              |             |             |
| Early Educational Leader                 |              |             |             |
| Administrator                            |              |             |             |
| Assistant Director                       |              |             |             |
| Kindergarten                             | Senior Kindy | Juniors     | BABIES      |
| Teacher                                  | Educator     | Educator    | Educator    |
| Co-Educator                              | Co-Educator  | Co-Educator | Co-Educator |
| Diet & Nutrition (Cook) & FLOATING STAFF |              |             |             |

PRESIDENT: Charmian Holdt  
SECRETARY: Neilan Lesko  
TREASURER: James Yoo  
DIRECTOR: Linda Quilter  
NOMINATED SUPERVISOR: Linda Quilter  
EDUCATIONAL LEADER: Linda Quilter  
Nominated Supervisor: Linda Quilter  
Certified Supervisor: Alana Hayes  
Certified Supervisor: Katrina Keegan  
Certified Supervisor: Melina Rivers

## National Quality Framework

When you place your child in our centre we recognise that you have made an enormous leap of faith to trust us with your child. We know that we will always strive to offer the very best of care and education for your child, but what sort of safeguards are there for you as a parent/guardian, to reassure you that our standards are of the highest quality? Obviously, we must meet a range of statutory requirements which are imposed by the State Government (see Licensing Requirements) for additional information. The Office of Early Childhood and Education, and indeed the child care industry itself does not accept that licensing alone will guarantee a high quality of care for children. Therefore, as a centre in receipt of subsidy from the Commonwealth (that is the child care benefit (CCB) that is paid to families) we are required by law to participate in the Quality Improvement and National Quality Framework for long day care centres.

We are of course, only too happy to comply with any system that ensures that parents/guardians who use our centre will have peace of mind.

Broadly, the system is one of self-assessment. Our staff, management, parents and shareholders are required to complete a self-study on quality improvement plan which is an analysis of how we believe the centre is meeting the needs of its children, parent(s)/guardian(s) and staff. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are also invited to be involved in the process of completing questionnaires in the accreditation process.

The areas that are addressed during the process are:

### **Interactions:**

This is the part of the process which evaluates our communication with children and their families, how staff works together as a team and how we encourage children's positive behaviours. It reflects the importance of our commitment to the development of positive self-esteem in both children and staff and is the largest section of the process. This is an area of service delivery in which we place a great deal of importance.

### **Curriculum:**

The Early Years Learning Framework  
Queensland Kindergarten learning Guidelines.

Belonging Being and Becoming

:are referenced documents that the centre uses as a frame work for our curriculum.

The centre has adopted the Early Years learning framework called 'Belonging Being and Becoming' with the emphasis on "Every child Matters" "It is a holistic approach referred as pedagogy. Pedagogy means; early childhood educators' professional practice, especially those aspects that involve building and nurturing relations, curriculum decision -making, teaching and learning.

There are five outcomes that cover all aspects of the curriculum that involve building and nurturing relationships. The Kindergarten program is an extension that is used as a base for the children in the Pre-school room. To ensure these children will be armed and ready for Prep at school.

The program is a child initiated based on the Reggio Emilia approach. This program uses family input either written or verbal, spontaneous events and interest levels, which the staffs builds on these by writing a "story of the day". The system also looks at how we use that information to plan a program, which meets the needs of every child. We have a very strong commitment to ensuring that the calibre of education we offer for your child is of the highest standard. We welcome the opportunity to have this commitment, and our work evaluated.

### **Health, Hygiene & Safety.**

In any situation where numbers of children are grouped together these factors are critical to ensuring the wellbeing of your child. We work to maintain very high standards in this area. We are pleased to have the opportunity to have this assessed through the NQF process.

### **Excursions and Escorted Journeys.**

On occasions the Centre offers external excursions as a part of the Centre's program. When this occurs parents will receive a separate excursion form outlining the specific details of the excursion, giving details and including cost, if any and requesting permission for your child's attendance. This is optional for any family. If you choose not to allow your child to attend the excursion alternative arrangements will be made to care for your child in the Centre.

Escorted journeys such as attendance at a pre-school or school will require a separate permission form to be signed by the parent detailing the arrangements and staff.

### **Management Issues**

Areas of management practice which relate specifically to parents, staff and children are evaluated in this final section of the process. It evaluates staffing arrangement we have in place to ensure continuity of care for your child. We give you as parent's opportunities for input into decisions we make which may have an impact of your child. We are dedicated to

ensuring a very high standard of customer service; we again welcome the opportunity to demonstrate our strengths in this area.

Once we have finished our self-evaluation of the four (4) sections of the process, we then complete a range of documentation that is ongoing the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), report to the National Quality Framework (NQF) sets a date for a visit from the Assessor's visit.

The Assessor is a person familiar with early education, who works within the child care industry and therefore has a great deal of knowledge about how early education centres operate. It is the role of the Assessor to confirm that the information we have provided about ourselves in the QIP report is basically correct, and that we have not underestimated the service we provide. The Assessor also writes a report which is then submitted to the NQF. A panel of independent moderators then look at all of the documentation and make a decision about our rating status. When this process has been completed successfully, we will ultimately receive a Certificate of Accreditation. Olsen Avenue Community Children's Centre achieved the maximum Accredited Status of three years in June 2004, and November 2008, and will re-apply under the new system in 2013-4. This process has been renamed the National Quality Framework Quality

### **Cultural Inclusion Policy**

The Centre aims to accept, develop and extend the talents of all children regardless of sex, race, family culture or social origin. Children are born belonging to a culture which is not only influenced by traditional practices, heritage and ancestral knowledge but also by experiences, values and beliefs of individual families and communities. Respecting the diversity means within the curriculum valuing and reflecting these practices, values and beliefs of the families

This is achieved through:

Educators honour the histories cultures languages traditions child rearing practices and lifestyle choices of families.

Educators recognize that diversity contributes to the richness of society.

Promoting a greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander- ways of knowing and belonging.

Educators will foster children's motivation to learn and reinforce their sense of themselves as competent learners.

Books, posters, puzzles and other resource material(s) are used to promote equality and acknowledgement of family culture.

Acknowledge and integrate relevant family practices to daily centre life.

Regular staff professional development is achieved, update their skills and knowledge and encourage thinking critically about own opinions about diversity and one's own judgement and values.

### **Arrival & Departure**

Often when you arrive at the Centre to drop off or collect your child, it is likely to be a busy time of the day, with parents and children appearing to go in all directions.

It is very important to us to know that you feel secure when leaving your child with us, so in order to help make this happen, we ask you to consider:

Please sign your child in and out on the attendance sheet for their respective room and note the time of your arrival and departure. These sheets can be found in each room and you will be shown their location upon induction to the centre. Please let administration know if you are at a different phone number for that day. If your child becomes ill during the day you will want us to contact you as quickly as we can and any changes in contact

numbers will assist us to do this. If anyone different is to be collecting the child at the end of the day, please advise us of this.

Ensuring that your child's bag has been placed in their locker, any prescribed medication has been removed for handover to a staff member, any toys from home are placed in the toy box located in the individual rooms and that fruit has been removed from your child's bag and placed in the bowl provided.

Catching a staff member's eye when you arrive helps staff to greet you and the child personally. The child who feels welcome immediately will settle more quickly when the parent leaves. Sometimes, the needs of other children and parents will mean it won't be possible for staff to be with you for a moment or two, so we ask for your patience while you wait. We would love to spend lengthy periods getting to know you and developing and building relationships with families but sometimes in the morning the first priority is the children so if you feel we cut a conversation short it's the children who will need our attention.

Children do sometimes become distressed when parents are about to leave. You are, after all the most important people in their lives. It is helpful to the child if you say goodbye and let your child know you will be back later. Our staff are very happy to bring your child to wave goodbye at the gate. If you leave and your child is distressed, it may be helpful for you to know that we make every attempt to immediately get your child interested in an activity or story. The staffs reassure your child that you will be back at the time specified. We have a variety of strategies that we use to help your child settle quickly and you're Educator or our Director will be happy to provide additional information about what we do. Please feel free to telephone us at any time to check on your child.

We believe that it is very important that you feel connected to your children's lives while they are at the centre, so we provide a range of strategies to ensure that this happens. It is our experience that parents has more time in the afternoons/evenings when they collect their child to talk than they often do in the morning. We provide a range of avenues for information to be disbursed. There are information boards/books with details of your child's day in every room. Please see a staff member for any information that you require. We are required by law to be able to account for every child in the service at every moment of the day. If a child suddenly "vanishes" from the room or the playground we will immediately activate our emergency procedures to ensure the optimum protection of your child. We therefore request that you let a staff member know when you are collecting your child.

If there are other things that you think we could do to enhance drop off and pick up times or make them easier for you and your child, please let us know and we will give them the consideration they deserve.

The Centre has advised Department of Early Childhood Education that OACCC opening hours are from 6.30am-6.30pm and staff have been rostered to cover that time frame. Therefore the centre cannot provide care after our nominated closing hours due to staff finishing their shift. Parents are to be considerate of our long days at the centre and collect their children before 6.30pm. We use the beginning of the day to set up our outdoor areas as we take pride of the acreage we have to build interesting challenging learning areas. The end of the day from 6pm we use the time left to secure the building, do cleaning duties and prepare activities for the next day. If you feel you have had a really long day spare some thought for your child day. Playing and being in a noisy active environment all day can be stressful as well.

### **Assistance with Payment of Fees - Child Care Benefit (CCB)**

The Federal Government has a scheme in place which provides financial assistance to eligible families for the cost of their child care. This scheme which is known as Child Care Benefit now referred as the CCMS is available for eligible families (please refer to the information in the parent folder about current assistance and entitlements) through Centrelink. These forms must be lodged with Centrelink before enrolment.

It is your responsibility to make sure that these forms remain current. Eligibility is decided by the Department on the basis of your combined family incomes. We can supply you with the relevant forms to take to Centrelink. Information about the other documentation that you will need to provide will be contained within these forms.

Once the Department has assessed your income, they will provide you that you must present to the Centre so an estimate of your fees can be calculated. This simply means the percentage of your total fees that they will pay on your behalf. The Department will currently pay Child Care Assistance up to a limit of 50 hours usage per week. We will bill you for the remainder of your fees. If you require up to 60 hours of care you need to contact Centrelink. We request that you ensure that your fee payments are up to date. Your fees are the backbone to our financial support to pay the staff wages and bills and food for the children's lunches'. The budget has been formulated on the incoming fees so you understand the importance of keeping fees up to date.

### **Baby Sitting**

We regret that we cannot provide baby-sitting or childcare services other than those provided at the Centre during its standard hours of operation.

The only exception to this policy is those occasions when, in order to encourage your valuable participation, we will offer care so that you can attend meetings or other functions at the centre.

The Centre of course complies with all legal requirements with regard to staff qualifications for the work they are employed to do, but makes no representation as to competence and/or suitability of persons employed by the Centre other than their suitability and competence to undertake their work at the Centre. We encourage staff and parents not to enter into private arrangements with regard to the baby-sitting of the children enrolled at the Centre outside of our operating hours. If such arrangements are made between individual staff members and parents, they are not authorised or endorsed by the Centre, and the Centre takes no responsibility or accepts any liability in relation to such arrangements.

We pride ourselves on our professional ability to treat every child and their family with equality.

### **Behavioural Guidance**

The guidance of children's behaviour (or discipline) is often a real concern for parents. Those of us, who have children, are very aware of how difficult it sometimes is to get information about how to handle particular situations with children. We therefore make every effort to respond to any queries you have to the best of our ability.

We see our roles as one of support as you try to establish acceptable standards and tackled behavioural issues with your child. We have a parent reference library from which you are most welcome to borrow. Please see our Administrator for more information about these materials. In addition, we run parent seminars or put up information about workshops that can assist parents with stages of development. From time to time we provide parents with information on various topics.

Our centre believes that sometimes children exhibit challenging behaviours as a method of communication. Our staff endeavours to guide children's behaviour through a supportive positive guidance model which includes:

- **Good supervision.**
- **Providing effective role models.**
- **Diverting or redirecting the child to other activities.**
- **Allowing children to be involved in the establishment of limits and consequences.**
- **Ensuring that children are reminded of limits and consequences.**
- **Establishing environments that allow children independence.**
- **Encouraging and acknowledging children's efforts.**
- **Providing opportunities for the positive reinforcement of children's self-esteem.**

**The Centre under no circumstances promotes the following methods of intervention:**

- Smacking - there are more appropriate methods of discipline (and hitting a child is unlawful).
- Negative physical contact with children (e.g. pinching, shaking or grabbing).
- Criticising or ridiculing - this destroys a child's self esteem
- Yelling or screaming - children respond to positive interaction.
- Swearing - children model these behaviours.
- We also believe that you, the parent, know your child best. Your opinions and insights are valued, and we will only ever make decisions about your child's behavioural guidance without prior consultation with, your input.

### **Care for Sick Children**

We appreciate the enormous difficulties facing working parents when your child becomes ill. As working parents ourselves, we understand that although your heart wants to be at home with your child, financial constraints and work commitments often make this difficult.

We regret that we are currently not in a position to assist you with care when your child is unwell (please refer to Exclusion of Unwell Children).

### **Children's Room Groupings**

In our centre, children are grouped according to their age levels. It is our belief that the developmental and education needs of children are best met within this framework.

Children at different developmental levels have very different needs. Each of the rooms has their own philosophy as to how it will work with your child and the other children in the group.

Our aim, right across the centre, is to offer the very best in care and education for your child, whilst ensuring that you feel connected with your child's life while he/she attends the Centre.

**The room groupings and their aims are as follows:**

6 weeks - 2 years (maximum 8 children with two staff) - Babies

In this group we aim to be highly supportive of parents whilst providing a program which incorporates warmth, interest, stimulation and security to each baby. The needs of you and your child will be our highest priority as we work together with you to ensure your child's happiness and security, and your peace of mind.

2-3 years (maximum 12 children with two staff) - Juniors

Our aim in this age group is to provide a safe, but stimulating environment to enable your child to explore and learn. We believe that by offering children choices, and encouraging them to express their needs, we are providing them with the opportunity to further develop their skills on an individual basis. Our respect for you as the primary educator of your child is apparent in the way we continue to work with you as a family.

3 years of age (maximum 15 children with 2 staff) - Senior Kindy

By the time your child moves into this group at our centre, he/she will be developing a whole range of new skills. Our aim in this age group is primarily to encourage children's independence and self-help skills. We base all our learning experiences on children's needs and interests and work with you to exchange information about your child's development. We do not establish "criteria for success" but rather encourage every child to learn and progress as their individual development dictates.

3.5-5 years of age (maximum 24 children with 2 staff) - Pre-school room

Queensland Kindergarten Guidelines and (EYLF) were developed to support the child's development and their learning outcomes during their Pre-prep year. The main focus was on Identity, Connectedness, Wellbeing, Active learning and communicating. These areas are monitored to assist the pre-schooler to have learning opportunities that are rich in lifelong learning experiences. It ensures that your child is ready for the next exciting step in his/her, schooling.

Please feel free to see our Director/ Pre-school Teacher, Linda if you have special needs or information about the school your child will attend. If there is anything else we can do to ensure that the transition will be a happy one. We are more than happy for you to take your child's Transition statement (report) with you when your child takes that "next step" off to school.

Within our room groupings, there is always a lot of room for your input, and we organise special events so that you may have the opportunity to discuss your child's progress with the staff. However, do not feel shy about approaching us at any other time if you have concerns or news that you wish to share with us.

### Clothing

On each day that your child comes to the Centre we request that you pack their bag with clearly labelled clothing for the day. In the case of babies, we ask that you supply two (2) sets of clothing, whilst one (1) additional set is usually enough for the older children. Sometimes, things happen during the day and it is often distressing for a child if they do not their own have clothes or at least ones to change into. If your child is still in nappies, we require parent to provide disposable / cloth nappies for their children's use, while at the Centre. Lots of buttons and zips can be a problem for toddlers and kindergarten children who are trying very hard to toilet independently. For this reason we ask that you consider a range of clothing for your child that is mainly of the "pull on" variety.

Childcare is a very busy place and we know that you, like us, want your child to have the opportunity to participate in all of the excitement that we have to offer. Sometimes, these activities are very messy indeed! It is for this reason that we ask for your child to come to the Centre in play clothes that will either wash easily or can be soiled as play dough, paint and the like, can stain.

We are very "sun safe" at our Centre and know that you appreciate our diligence in making sure that children are wearing hats for all outdoor play and activities. We provide a hat, which is clearly labelled with your child's name; parents refer to bring in their own hat for their child hats with cord are not permitted. Centre policy is No Hat No Play. The children are very active for much of the day, therefore we also require that they wear

shoes/sandals. We do not encourage children to wear “thongs” or slip on style shoes because they increase the risk of accidents for children when they are engaged in daily activities such as climbing on equipment and running.

We appreciate how expensive children’s clothes and shoes are. To help us keep track of these items for you, we ask that every item of your child’s clothing be clearly labelled with his/her name. Staffs have a much greater chance of finding owners of lost property this way. You may find that there will be rare occasions when belongings seem to have gone astray. Please alert the Educators in your child’s room if this is the case. It may not always be possible for them to immediately leave what they are doing to assist you, but they will try to locate the item as soon as they possibly can.

The Centre does not provide sheets for your child to use whilst at the centre. All sheets are to be supplied in a named pillowcase for Babies, Juniors Kindy and Pre School room and to be taken home weekly to be washed.

### **Complaints Mechanism**

There may be times whilst your child is in our care, that you feel unhappy with the service that we have provided. You have every right to voice your concerns to us. If there are practices that we need to change then we will look at them. It may also be that we could, from time to time, improve our communication process. We need to know how you feel about issues. **Without feedback we will never be aware.**

### **Grievance procedure**

Your child is very precious to you, and any concern that you have is valid. We train our staff to listen to you with empathy, and to ensure that you feel that you have been heard. We work very hard to ensure that your needs are met wherever possible. If you have any concerns we request that you follow the guidelines laid down below. In the first instance, we request that you voice your concerns with the Teacher in your child’s respective room. If you do not feel that the matter has been satisfactorily resolved, please contact our Director to arrange time to discuss the issues. If you still feel that the matter has not been resolved, we request that you contact the President of our Management Committee and meet with him/her to further discuss the issues. Contact details for our Management Committee can be easily obtained on view at the front door.

We would hope that by following this process anxieties can be allayed, and procedures changed where necessary and as quickly as possible. If however, you feel that this has not been achieved, we then encourage you to contact the Office of Early Childhood Education and Care (the licensing body which oversees child care regulations in Queensland). They can be contacted on **(07) 55957100**.

Please know that our door is always open to you, and that you can approach us about anything, no matter how small it may seem at the time. We know and appreciate the extraordinary gift of trust you have made to us by allowing us to care for your child. Your input is always valued.

### **Custody Orders**

If at any time your child is under the jurisdiction of custody, restraining or other court order, it is imperative that we know about it if we are to ensure the safety of your child. Please provide our Director with a copy of the order, which we will maintain on file. All staff that needs to be made aware of the order will be informed of its existence. Please be assured of confidentiality in such matters. Our staff members have documented policies and procedures under which they are required to operate in custody cases. The Department of Child Safety believes in the rights of the child, which is the right to have contact with both parents. A copy of the Policy and Procedure can be obtained from the Director.

## Curriculum

- Early Years Learning Framework. The principles of early education.
- Adopting a holistic approaches.
- Being responsive to children.
- Planning and implementing learning through play.
- Intentional teaching.
- Creating physical and social learning environments that have a positive impact on children's learning.
- Valuing the culture and social contents of children and their families.
- Providing for continuity in experience and enabling children to have successful transition.
- Assessing and monitoring children's learning to inform provision and support children in achieving learning outcomes.

OACCC we believe that the education of a child is multi-faceted. You, as parents, are the primary educators of your child. Your encouragement influences your child and helps them to develop their skills. The other influencing experiences in your child's life relate to other family members, family friends and pets. Whoever they are, all add to the curriculum and the "educational picture" of your child. The centre bases its curriculum on theory of the Reggio Emilia Approach. (Is to expand on the Childs interest and parent input).

Given that every child we have in our Centre is at a different stage of learning and skill level, we cannot offer simply one curriculum and hope that it covers every child. What we actually do is develop a story of your child over a period of time that him /her are at the centre. We do this by using a range of observation methods called "stories of the day", which tell us what your child can do. From there, we develop an outline called "the recipe of the day" for the whole group based on their needs and interests, and make sure that these include special activities that will support, extend and encourage each individual child. These records are freely available for you to view. They are located in your child's room; you are free to have a look only at your own child's folder. In addition, we compose learning outcome summaries", which we believe are very useful when discussing your child's progress. All records are kept in a folder in your child's room or we have access to portfolios that are digital on request. Parents have access to these and are encouraged to look through, read and discuss with the room teacher.

In our Centre we build a curriculum which is appropriate for the level of development of your child. Each section of the centre builds on the work of the section from which your child has "graduated" to the next room. In this way your child's progress will be easily recognised, and you can be assured that the education programs will always offer new and stimulating activities. Information about the day is set in the form of a 'story of the day' and is always available on display in the rooms and staffs are only too happy to discuss the things that have excited your child throughout the day.

By the time your child is of preschool age, you may need reassurance that your child will "cope" and "fit in" when he/she starts "Prep at school". We work very hard to ensure that your child be "school ready". We have positive relationships with all of the schools in the immediate area, and are only too pleased to establish contact with other schools as requested by you. We work to help your child become independent and develop the range of skills that schools expect of beginners. If you require further information about our preschool program please feel free to see our Director or the Kindergarten Teacher.

## **Emergency Contacts**

On your enrolment form you will already have provided us with the names and contact details of people to call in the event of an emergency (assuming that you the parent/guardian are unobtainable). It is very important that we are kept up to date with any changes that may occur. We do send home forms to update these details on a regular basis, but if circumstances change between these updates, we urge you to let us know immediately.

If you have difficulty nominating anyone who could be available to collect your child in the event of an emergency please see our Director and we will endeavour to provide what support we can.

## **Exclusion of Unwell Children**

(From "Staying Healthy in Child Care" Ed 5)

We appreciate that it is sometimes very difficult for working families to make adequate arrangements when their child is unwell. We will do whatever we can to accommodate you but we are required to abide by health regulations. Children who are unwell cannot attend the Centre. There is a range of childhood illnesses which children in group situations may, from time to time contract. We are sure that you appreciate that in order to safeguard the health of all children; your child must be excluded for a period of time if he or she unfortunately contracts such an illness. If your child becomes unwell whilst at the centre, we will telephone you, or your nominated emergency contact to let you know how they are. We will not request that you pick up the child, unless they have diarrhoea, visible symptoms such as the blisters of chicken pox or a high fever or vomiting.

## **Fee Structure**

We are sure that you understand that as costs of operating our centre increase, so must our fees from time to time. We endeavour at all times to keep fees as low as we can, without jeopardising the quality of the program that we offer your child. We will provide you with plenty of warning if any changes are about to occur. We will also keep you informed of any changes to Government funding policy which may have an impact on what you actually pay us.

Our current fee structure is:

\$ 69.00 per day \$ 69.00 per day for 5 days

Additional fees are applicable by way of:

Late Pick up Fees: \$1.00 per minute after 6.30pm

Absences: Normal daily charge applied

Withdrawal from Centre: 2 weeks' notice or equivalent fee

Health/Hygiene Policy (guide: Qld Dept of Health)

The adoption of the highest standards of hygiene possible and the assurance that all persons adhere to these standards is the best possible way to protect everyone from infectious diseases which are common to Centres. In particular, careful hand washing is important especially for children and they can be taught to observe a simple procedure. Attention is also given to cleaning and disinfecting of equipment, all surfaces, toilets, floors and toys. Universal precautions are used as the Centre's guide "performing all tasks as if all recipients of the service are infected, even in the absence of signs or symptoms of illness" (Taylor & Taylor cited Kendall and Moukaddem, Young Children, 1992).

### **Hours of Operations**

Our Centre is currently licensed to cater for children from 6.30 am to 6.30 pm, five days per week (Monday to Friday).

We endeavour to offer care for 51 weeks of the year, however, closure on public holidays. Should the centre be closed for any reason, sufficient notice will be provided to all families of the imminent closure to allow for alternative arrangements to be made?

If you feel that our current operating hours do not meet your needs we will be happy to discuss this with you. We are always anxious to ensure that the needs of families are met to the best of our ability.

### **Immunisation of Children (Guide: Qld Dept of Health)**

Many parents believe that whether to immunise their child or not, should be a personal choice.

The Federal Government however stipulates that children receiving child care benefit and attending a child care centre must be immunised (except under special circumstances) to help prevent communicable diseases.

To this end, we ask that all parents provide details of their child current immunisation status and continue to update us when appropriate immunisations fall due. Please provide documentation exempting your child from immunisation to our Director. Your right to object will be respected.

#### **Injuries to Children**

All efforts will be made to avoid injury to your child whilst in the Centre. However, if an accident does occur, staff will treat the injury and reassure the child, notify the Director and record the injury incident forms located in each room. Parents will be advised when the child is collected and asked to view and sign the incident report.

In cases of serious injury staff will apply immediate first aid, then notify the Director. The parents will then be contacted for collection of the child or an ambulance called. A staff member will remain with the child until the parents arrive.

#### **Licensing Requirements (Guide: Qld Dept of Health)**

Every childcare centre in Queensland is required to be licensed under the terms of the Child Care Act (2003). Licensing is a responsibility of the State Government, and we are required to abide by the Child Care Centres Regulations (2003). A copy of the regulations is available in Reception at all times.

#### **Licensing governs:**

**Group Sizes:** Dependent upon the age of the children in the group, there are restrictions on the numbers of children who may be in a room.

24 - Kindergarten 3 - 5.5

15 - Senior Kindy 2.5 - 3.5

12 - Juniors 2 - 3

8 - Babies 0 - 2

**Staff:** This area of the regulation ensures that our staffs is of an appropriate age, that they have the required qualifications and that the necessary number of staff are on duty at all times to cover the numbers of children we have in the Centre. All staff is required to have current First Aid certificates.

### **Health & Safety:**

These areas are most strictly monitored, and all of the information contained in your parent handbook has been designed around the need to ensure we comply with regulatory requirements. For additional information about our processes, you are most welcome to look at our Employee Guidelines or to speak with our Director.

## Meals

The Centre employs a part-time Cook who plans and prepares a nutritionally balanced menu for the children in our care each day. The Centre offers morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. We ask you to provide a piece of fruit for each day your child is in care, which will be shared. Parents input into our menu are always encouraged. We try to offer meals with a cultural influence. Any favourite family recipes are welcomed. If you have any suggestions please feel free to pass them on to our chef.

## Medication

Medication is another health issue which is covered very clearly under the terms of licensing requirements. We cannot administer any medication to your child without either a doctor's or pharmacist's approval. This approval is by way of the label for prescription medicines. The label must detail the recipient's name and required interval dosage.

## **IMPORTANT!**

### **PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS RESTRICTION ALSO APPLIES TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF, CHILDREN'S COUGH, COLD AND FLU MEDICATIONS AND NATURAL ALTERNATIVES**

Should your child require the administration of a non-prescription medication we advise that you request the pharmacist attach a label which details the recipient's name and required interval dosage. We apologise for any inconvenience. Parents are required to complete the medication form for their child's respective room. This form must clearly state the child's name, the medication type, dosage and the time(s) that the medication is to be administered during Centre hours. The medication must then be handed directly to the appropriate Group Leader. All medication is stored in the fridge in the kitchen where the children are unable to access it. The Director/Assistant Director will sign the medication form when the appropriate dosage is administered at the requested time(s). Long term medication such as that used for the treatment of Asthma or Anaphylactic or Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) will require you to: Provide the centre with a medication plan that will cover all incidents for medication that is needed on a continued basis (please speak to the Director)

Provide an initial letter to the centre from the child's Doctor that states the medication, dosage and current treatment plan.

Provide a letter to the Centre from the child's Doctor that informs us of an action plan to put in place in case of an Asthma attack or the medication dosages we should try with behavioural issues for a child who suffers from ADD or ADHD.

If your child has recently been diagnosed with ADD or ADHD please see our Director. If the child is to gain any benefit from the medication it is important that we work out a behavioural modification and learning program for the child together.

**MOST IMPORTANTLY NEVER** leave medication of any kind in your child's bag where any child may access it and inadvertently swallow or overdose.

### **Nutrition (Guide-Australian Nutrition Association)**

We have a very strong focus on the development of the whole child and as part of our commitment to this, we have developed, and ask you to adhere to, our nutritional policy. It has been developed with the support of a nutritionist and is also incorporated into our program for children.

We do not serve children with foods that contain added sugar or salt and wherever possible serve, or encourage children to eat whole foods. We also endeavour to ensure that any food served to children does not contain food additives and colourings as there is a very significant body of research to indicate that many childhood behavioural and learning disorders can be triggered or intensified by such additives and colourings. Our centre does not allow peanut butter or other peanut products on the premises

## **OUR CENTRE says NO to Nuts**

We talk with children about the food groups and encourage children to recognise the importance of fresh fruit and vegetables in our diets. We also encourage the children to drink milk and water.

## **Birthdays**

Birthdays are a very special event in the lives of young children and we love to help your child celebrate his/her special day. We do ask, however, that you observe our nutrition policy on this occasion. If you are unsure of this, please see the Director. We also offer the service of providing a Birthday cake for your child at minimal cost.

Allergies and Special Dietary Needs:

Please advise us if your child is allergic to anything or if he/she has special dietary needs. We will endeavour to ensure that your wishes in the matter of diet are met, provided that they do not contravene our nutrition policy. We ask that you provide the necessary food alternatives for children with special dietary requirements.

**THIS CENTRE AIMS FOR NUT FREE- NO NUTS OF ANY KIND OR PEANUT BUTTER ARE TO BE BROUGHT TO OR EATEN AT THE CENTRE.**

Parent/Guardian Access /Participation

We believe that if we are to be a truly successful child care centre then you, the parent/guardian, provides the staff with regular input from the family input sheets, the staff can reinforce the interest with learning opportunities that have positive outcomes where the children can make sense of their world.

It would be wonderful if you could find time to come in the Centre and share some of your special skills and talents with the children; however, it is much more important that you feel you are an active participant in your child's day.

We will regularly schedule meetings, information nights, seminars and social events. Our staffs are always willing to discuss your child's progress with you and will listen carefully to your suggestions for your child and implement them wherever possible.

Without you, we do not have a centre, so we will make every effort possible to accommodate your needs.

## **Payment of Accounts**

Accounts are charged on a weekly basis being for the days your child is booked in to attend the centre. An account envelope will be placed in your child's information pocket each week which also provides a balance of monies owing and a breakdown of the weekly fees.

We request that you place your payment in the envelope and either post in the fees box situated in Reception or hand it directly to either the Director or Administrator. In doing so, we will be able to maintain an accurate record of your payment history. Eftpos, credit card, Internet banking, cash, cheque and direct debit facilities are available.

We appreciate prompt payment of accounts. We are a non-profit organisation, (fees are our main source of income), and we understand that accounts can sometimes be overlooked... Should you be experiencing financial difficulties, please speak directly with our Director to arrange alternative payment options.

Philosophy Extract Full Philosophy on display in the foyer copies available on request for all policies as well.

- We provide a caring environment in which we encourage each and every child to reach their full potential in a safe, positive and stimulating atmosphere.
- We aim to achieve this through opening ourselves to the wider community by:
- Respecting the diversity and individuality of all children and their families.

- Providing challenges and opportunities for the children to develop at his/her own pace.
- Offering children opportunities to participate in making effective choices and decisions in relation to their life.
- Developing his/her self-esteem and confidence with achievable child centred activities.
- Encouraging children to learn the expectations of their social group in a respectful and courteous manner.
- Offering a variety of experiences and opportunities that will enable the children to develop his/her intellectual, physical, language, social and emotional skills.
- Providing support and assistance to the families whose children are in the Centre's care. Parents are encouraged to participate and become involved in the program.
- We will endeavour to ensure that each child in our care is a happy, healthy and confident individual who will be successful in meeting all his/her own challenges and expectations. Annually we review our centre philosophy and your input to this philosophy would be greatly appreciated.

### **Priority of Access Guidelines**

The Commonwealth Government has determined Priority of Access guidelines for day care services. These guidelines embody the principles and philosophy underlying the Commonwealth's involvement in childcare. By adhering to these guidelines the service provider is directly responsible for the implementation of the Government's objectives. It is therefore necessary to allocate available places to families whose children have the highest priority. The guidelines rank as follows:

**1st priority:** Children of parents who are working, seeking employment and/or studying, training

**2nd priority:** Children whose parents have a continuing disability and children with a disability.

**3rd priority:** Children at risk of serious abuse or neglect.

**4th priority:** Children of parents who are at home with more than one child or a single parent at home.

Children in the 1st priority will be limited to 50 hours of child care assistance from 1st July 1997 unless able to prove care is required for longer than 50 hours per week due to work commitments and travel from workplace to the Centre.

### **Safety Policy - Child Safety - accident Prevention Division**

The policy of the Centre states:

Responsible supervision of the children is the most important way of ensuring safety. Children must never be left alone. They must be in sight and hearing range of staff at all times so that staff can intervene immediately to protect the health and safety of the children.

Staff must constantly be aware of potential safety hazards and remove/report them before an accident occurs.

Rules for safety within the understanding of each group of children must be established and reinforced with the children.

For further details of the rules, please refer to the Centre's Policy and Procedure Manual, obtainable from the Director.

**(COPIES CAN BE OBTAINED ON REQUEST A LIST IS ATTACHED TO THIS HAND BOOK.)**

## **Settling into the Centre**

The only thing that we can say with any certainty about settling your child into the centre is that we have never encountered two families who have the same experiences as each other. Therefore we have no prescribed routine for you to settle and leave your child. Most of us who are parents will have similar concerns and feelings regarding separation from our child. We will do whatever we can to ensure a smooth transition for both you and your child.

First of all, before the big day arrives, we encourage you and your child to come and spend as much time in the centre as you like. You don't need to make an appointment, just let our Director know who you are and which room your child will be in when you arrive (as a matter of safety, it is important for us to keep track of visitors within the centre - a visitors register is located in the reception area). Please feel free to allow your child to explore the environment at his/her own pace. Our staff will try to involve him/her in activities, but will respect the child's wish to go slowly if that is what he/she indicates. On a subsequent visit, you may wish to bring your child at lunch time so that he/she gets used to the idea of eating with the other children and without a parent.

When you feel ready, you might like to try leaving your child for short periods if this is what you think is best, or alternatively, you may try a half or even short day approach if you feel comfortable with that. It is helpful to your child if you let him/her know you are leaving and say goodbye. It sometimes helps to tell the child that you will be back and specify the time you intend to come. Please let a staff member know that you are going so that they may assist your child.

It may also be helpful if your child brings a favourite toy or comforter to help them settle in during this time. Many children do display distress when they see their parents leave, but we work with the child to involve them in play as soon as we can.

If you do not feel confident, then your child will not feel confident.

## **Staff Arrangements**

The Centre believes that staff should have opportunities to continually increase their professional knowledge and expertise and be aware of current ideas and changes in the early childhood field. To achieve this, staff will have regular opportunities to attend in-service seminars and workshops paid for by the Centre. It is expected that staff will attend at least two (2) workshops per year.

Each Educator is given one (2) hours per week non-contact preparation time in which to update their children's developmental records and plan their program for their room days. Students and volunteers are welcome in the Centre from time to time. They may contribute to children's activities and the operation of the centre. Students and volunteers are not employed by the Centre and as such cannot take any formal responsibility. They are not qualified and are accountable to the Director.

## **The Office of Early Education and Childcare**

If you have any concerns about the operation and service of this Centre's policies and procedures, please feel welcome to contact the Department Community are the regulatory body for child care centres.

Postal Address: P O Box 4387 Robina Town Centre, 4230

Phone: (07) 55834400 or 1800637711

Fax: (07) 55834429

Olsen Avenue Community Children's Centre

## **EMERGENCY EVACUATION**

Olsen Avenue Community Children's Centre has regular emergency evacuation procedures. This practise is to educate children on Fire Safety.

The Children at the Centre take an active part in our fire drill. At times the allocated time of the fire drill may fall when parents are still dropping off or picking up children.

We ask that parents be present at the time and participate in our drills. Parents can have firsthand view of our drill and the children feel proud to have you in attendance.

### **OLSEN AVENUE COMMUNITY CHILDREN'S CENTRE**

#### **Acknowledgement of Procedures**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Child/ren: \_\_\_\_\_

Child/run's Names: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Date of Commencement:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of parent or guardian) do hereby acknowledge that I have received, read and understood a copy of the Parent's Handbook for Olsen Avenue Community Children's Centre. I have noted all of the procedures and guidelines within the document and acknowledge that any failure on my part to comply with those procedures and guidelines may result in the termination of my child/'s care at the Centre.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dated:** \_\_\_\_\_