



**Elder Street**  
EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE

*136 Elder Street, Lambton NSW 2299*

*Ph: 02 4953 9300*

*Fax: 02 4953 9782*

*Email: [elderstreet@optusnet.com.au](mailto:elderstreet@optusnet.com.au)*

*CRN 407 148 262C*

*ABN: 724 760 80499*

## **Centre Handbook**

**“Building Partnerships with Families”**

**[www.elderstreetechc.com](http://www.elderstreetechc.com)**

## Table of Content

1. **Section One-** The Centre
  - 1.1. Introduction
  - 1.2. Hours of Operation
  - 1.3. Centre Rooms
  - 1.4. Philosophy
  - 1.5. Goals
  - 1.6. Staffing
  - 1.7. Licensing and Regulation
  - 1.8. Accreditation
2. **Section Two -** Attendance at the Centre
  - 2.1. Enrolment
  - 2.2. Waiting List
  - 2.3. Orientation
  - 2.4. Separation
  - 2.5. Arrival and Departure
  - 2.6. Custody
  - 2.7. Parking
  - 2.8. Allowable Absence
  - 2.9. Communication between Parents and Staff
3. **Section Three -** Children's Daily Requirements
  - 3.1. Meals
  - 3.2. Nappies
  - 3.3. Formula
  - 3.4. Bottles and Pacifiers
  - 3.5. Clothing and Sun Protection
  - 3.6. Security Toys and Comforters
  - 3.7. Toiletries
  - 3.8. Bedding
  - 3.9. Children with Special Needs
4. **Section Four -** Daily Routine
  - 4.1. Confidentiality and Privacy Policy
  - 4.2. Programming
  - 4.3. Preschool
  - 4.4. Sleep and Rest
  - 4.5. Toilet Training

- 4.6. Behaviour Management
- 4.7. Birthdays
- 4.8. Excursions
- 4.9. Christmas
- 4.10. Recycling
- 4.11. Lockers
- 5. **Section Five** - Fees and Assistance
  - 5.1. Payment of Fees
  - 5.2. Conditions of Payment of Fees
  - 5.3. Termination of Placement
  - 5.4. Assistance with Child Care Costs – Child Care Benefit
  - 5.5. Holidays, Occasional Absences, Sick days and Reducing days
- 6. **Section Six** - Health and Hygiene
  - 6.1. Health and Hygiene Issues
  - 6.2. Nutrition
  - 6.3. Food Safety Plan
  - 6.4. Personal Health and Hygiene
  - 6.5. Food Handling, Processing, Preparation and Storage
  - 6.6. Immunisation
  - 6.7. Medication
  - 6.8. Procedure for receiving medication
  - 6.9. Procedure for Preparation, Administering and recording of Medication
  - 6.10. Individual Health Management Plans
  - 6.11. Asthma
  - 6.12. Injuries and Accidents
  - 6.13. Dental Care
  - 6.14. Infection Control
  - 6.15. Hand Washing
  - 6.16. Nappy Changing
  - 6.17. Cleaning
  - 6.18. Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Appendix A - Exclusion guidelines for Infectious conditions

Appendix B - Useful Contacts

Privacy Statement

# The Centre

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

We welcome you and your child to Elder Street Early Childhood Centre (EECC). EECC is a 39 place Long Day Care Centre, catering for children between the ages of 6 weeks and school age. EECC is owned and operated by Melissa Duffy-Fagan. This handbook is designed to provide families with as much information as possible in relation to the policies and operation of the centre. This hand book does not contain all the policies however they are available at the centre for your perusal upon request. Please read this information booklet thoroughly and keep it on hand as it is intended as a reference point for all your future questions.

Elder Street Early Childhood Centre was opened in August 2002 as Blinky Bill Child Care. Melissa and her husband Tony purchased the business in December 2004 and it was from then known as Elder Street Early Childhood Centre. The centre's building although not a purpose built centre has been fully renovated to meet the needs of all children, parents and staff. Some of the many features of the centre are 3 play rooms, 2 playground areas, an extensive selection of toys, books, age appropriate equipment and a fully ducted reverse cycle air conditioning system. All play room floors are practical vinyl or floor boards with mats for comfort and toilet/nappy change facilities are provided. We also have two lovely outdoor play areas with ample shade and space for the children to explore and engage in outdoor fun.

## 1.2 HOURS OF OPERATION

The centre is open for 7.00am until 6.00pm Monday to Friday, for 50 weeks of the year. We are closed on Public Holidays, and for the period between Christmas and the first week of the New Year. We request that parents arrive at the centre no later than 5.50pm to collect their children. (see Late Fee 5.4)

## 1.3 CENTRE ROOMS

All children enrolled at EECC receive the benefit of age specific grouping in small manageable numbers with consistency of carers being of optimum importance. The groups are as follows:

**NURSERY (POSSUMS)** – has a maximum of 10 children between the ages of 6 weeks and approximately \*24 months – the staff ratio is 1:5.

**TODDLERS (JOEYS)** – has a maximum of 10-12 children between the ages of approximately \*18 months and \*3 years the staff ratio is 1:8

**PRESCHOOL (WALLABIES)** – has a maximum of 19-20 children between the ages of \*3 years and school age the staff ratio is 1:10.

\*Please note that the centre's license allows for children to enter the Joeys and Preschool rooms at ages approximate to those mentioned above. The decisions to place children within the centre are dependant upon spaces available and will happen at the discretion of the Licensee/Director.

## 1.4 PHILOSOPHY

The beliefs and values of the staff and families at Elder Street Early Childhood Centre have been consolidated to form our philosophy on the care and education of children whilst attending the centre.

# CENTRE PHILOSOPHY

*The beliefs and values of the staff and families at Elder Street Early Childhood Centre have been consolidated to form our philosophy on the care and education of children whilst attending the centre.*

*Our centre welcomes all families, recognising the diversity of people's beliefs, cultures, values and abilities within our community.*

*We believe that children's development is influenced by the social and cultural context in which they live. We therefore strongly support the development of partnerships with parents based on mutual respect. We value and welcome their input and involvement in the centre.*

*Management are committed to addressing the needs of its families, staff and the community. We aim to consult with these parties involved in the centre on issues of policy and procedure development.*

*Our professional, caring, informed and committed staff work together to meet the goals of our service. Staff have access to resources and training within the community that enhance their abilities to provide for the children's needs. We aim to develop positive and nurturing relationships with each child at the centre. Management of the service holds staff abilities, needs and levels of experience in high regard. They aim to ensure that staff are rewarded both intrinsically and extrinsically often within their workplace.*

*We provide a modern, attractive, secure, hygienic and interactive environment for children to explore whilst stimulating their senses and minds.*

*Our program philosophy is based on understanding that play is the vehicle through which children learn about themselves and their surrounds. It also importantly encompasses the belief that children are people with potential, curiosity and interest in constructing their own learning as they play. We implement this belief within our program by using the Emergent Curriculum.*

*This type of curriculum explores what is "socially relevant, intellectually engaging and personally meaningful to children (Jones & Nemo, 1994, p3) Through the every changing emergent curriculum our staff are engaged in a process of supporting, facilitating, observing, interpreting and evaluating the children's needs interests, ideas and activities, as they play.*

*We aim to assist in developing respectful, confident, happy and capable children, familiar with their local community and secure and content in their environment.*

## **1.5 GOALS**

The care and education of children enrolled at Elder Street Early Childhood Centre is the focal point of the centre's operation. We do not regard ourselves as a child minding centre. Such an approach implies emphasis on the physical safety and well-being of the child above all other concerns. While this is extremely important, it is no more so than the intellectual well being of the child.

We believe that the young child needs interesting and enjoyable activities that will provide a challenge to natural curiosity, excite creativity and instill a love for learning. Although we maintain a flexibility that allows us to take advantage of any spontaneous learning situations, much of the activity is planned in consultation with parents. Programming is not only based on children's needs but also in accordance with the children's own expressed interests, requests and self initiated efforts.

Thorough knowledge of child development and observational skills, facilitates the formulation and evaluation of appropriate goals and objectives designed to promote to its fullest potential each child's development, self esteem and consideration of others.

The high level of training of the centre's staff and the skills they have developed, allow learning to take place without pressure. The children's physical safety is balanced with the need to explore and experiment through play. Their intellectual needs are met through a combination of teaching and self-discovery.

Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's individual programming and staff are available for discussion and consultation either informally or by making an appointment.

## **1.6 STAFFING**

All staff employed at the centre are committed to the well being of the children, providing a stimulating program and possess the knowledge and skills essential for children in their care. We pride ourselves on the quality of the staff at the centre and the low turnover of staff which is vital in offering high quality care. The team at EECC includes a preschool teacher, two year and one year trained child care professionals, a chef and cleaners. We promote staff training and development. Staff are listed on the notice board in the foyer, along with photographs.

## **1.7 LICENSING AND REGISTRATIONS**

Elder Street Early Childhood Centre is licensed the Department of Community Services and must comply with the Children's Services Regulation 2004. The Office of Child Care can be contacted on 02 49039555. EECC is registered with the National Child Care Accreditation Council and received the highest 3 year level of accreditation.

## **1.8 ACCREDITATION**

The Quality Improvement and Accreditation System (QIAS), a Commonwealth government initiative which is administered by the National Childcare Accreditation Council and is linked to the provision of Child Care Benefit aims to provide children in centre based child care throughout Australia with High Quality care that best promotes their learning and development in the vital early years. The broad objective of the QIAS is to ensure that children in long day care have stimulating, positive experiences and interactions that foster all aspects of their development. It does this by defining quality child care and by providing a framework for measuring quality in a child care setting. Anyone who wishes to know more about this process, please ask staff.

# *Attendance at the Centre*

## **2.1 ENROLMENT PROCEDURES**

We ask parents to come and visit the centre before enrolment so that they can see our centre and discuss their childcare requirements. We encourage them to visit a number of centres before making their final decision as to the centre which best suits their needs and the needs of their child. Enrolment into the centre is confirmed by the completion of an enrolment form and a bond being paid (see Fees Section). We also require a copy of birth certificate and immunisation records, as all children enrolled at the centre must be fully immunised for their age (see further information on immunisation in Policy Section).

## **2.2 WAITING LIST**

A waiting list is available for parents interested in a place at the centre. Registering on the waiting list does not guarantee a place at the centre, but once registered on the waiting list, families will be contacted as soon as a position is available. We update the waiting list every 3 months by phoning families who are registered and checking whether they are still interested in care or wish to be taken off the waiting list. If EECC is your preferred choice of childcare for your child, we encourage you to inform us of this decision and it will be noted on your waiting list entry.

## **2.3 ORIENTATION**

Leaving your child in somebody else's care can be an anxious time for children and parents. Orientation is designed not only for children but also for mums and dads. It is extremely important that parents feel comfortable with the centre, staff, policies and established routines. This is why we encourage families to visit the centre before beginning formal care.

On accepting an enrolment position parents are given a copy of the information booklet that contains all relevant policy documents. Parents are asked to read this booklet thoroughly and if necessary discuss with the Director any concerns they may have, before signing the statement on the enrolment form where they agree to abide by these policies.

Once the enrolment documentation has been completed parents are encouraged to bring their children to the centre for a visit in order to become familiar with routines and staff.

During the orientation visits we ask that you stay with your child and bring along the completed questionnaires. Staff then have the opportunity to ask about routines, how the child sleeps, dietary requirements and all the special things about your child that only you can tell us.

## **2.4 SEPARATION**

Children's adjustments into child care may vary, some children take only a day or so to feel at home whilst others may take several weeks. Primary care staff at the centre will consult with you the best way to support your child throughout the settling in period. Please remember child care is a new experience for both of you and one which must be handled both consistently and in accordance with each family's circumstances. Throughout the settling in process feel free to stay with your child as long as you wish, however once you and staff decide it is the appropriate time to leave, please do so quickly and farewell your child in a positive manner. It is important to create a trusting relationship with your child so please do not assume that

your departure will be less painful if you leave without saying goodbye while your child is busy with an activity.

Staff are always available to keep you informed on how your child is settling either at the completion of your child's day in care or if you prefer throughout the day by telephone.

Ongoing monitoring of your child's continued well being is imperative therefore please consult with staff of any variance of family circumstances, important events or changes in your family routine which may impact your child.

## **2.5 ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

No child is to enter or leave the centre without an adult (over 18 years). Please always ensure a staff member is aware of your child's arrival and departure. It is a government requirement that the authorised person sign the child in and out of the attendance records which are located in the main foyer.

If it is intended that a person unfamiliar to the staff is to collect your child, then this information needs to be clearly stated to a staff member verbally or by a note. All unfamiliar people are required to produce proof of identification and must be nominated by the parents in the appropriate section of the enrolment form. Any person who is not nominated is not able to collect the child. These procedures are rigidly adhered to, in order to protect each child during the transfer of legal responsibility. Parental cooperation and support in these matters are essential.

## **2.6 CUSTODY**

Enrolment of any child at this centre should be established by the custodial parent or the parent who has interim custody pending a hearing of the Family Law Court of Australia. Documented evidence of custody and access orders must be presented for the centre's records on enrolment and the collection of the child from the centre must be in accordance with these arrangements. It should be understood that unless copies of such orders are held by the centre we are obliged, if requested by the non-custodial parent to release your child in to their care at any time, provided he/she is able to prove his relationship to your child by means of photo identification, such as a Driver's License.

This centre recognises the entitlement of non-custodial parents to have access to information booklets, newsletters etc. and to arrange discussions with staff regarding their child's progress. However, this centre is not to be used as a means of access or visitation arrangements.

## **2.7 PARKING**

The management of Elder Street Early Childhood Centre supports the neighbours of the centre and acknowledges that these residents may sometimes experience difficulties due to their proximity to the centre. Management will not condone any imposition of the immediate community by family's utilising this service.

The centre is located in a primary residential area and all clients should respect the residents of Elder Street by ensuring that parking is conducted in a safe and responsible manner. Parents may assume that they can remove children from the car, take them into the centre, sign in, place their children's belongings, communicate with staff and return to their cars in a brief period of time. Realistically this process takes a minimum of five minutes which is too great a time to encroach on any resident's entry or departure from their property. It is simply not acceptable to park in, across, or even too close to any designated driveway area near the centre at any time.

### **Please note:**

- ❖ **Clients of Elder Street Early Childhood Centre must enter and leave the building from the Elder Street entrance only, as the car park area in**

**DeVitre Street is strictly for staff parking or special needs access only.**

## **2.8 ALLOWABLE ABSENCES**

If you receive Child Care Benefit (CCB) through the Family Assistance Office (FAO), it is very important that you sign your child in and out consistently as our attendance records are directly linked to your child care benefit eligibility. They are a legal document that the FAO can audit at any time. In one financial year families receiving CCB are allowed 42 days of “allowable absences”. This means that if your child is away from the centre for 42 days in a financial year, then on the 31<sup>st</sup> day away from the centre you will not be entitled to receive CCB for that day and will be responsible for paying full fees. To reduce the number of allowable absences, if your child is away due to sickness you can supply a medical certificate and that particular day will not be counted. There are other allowed absence criteria, if you wish to know more please see the Director.

## **2.9 COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND STAFF**

Communication is the key to a successful partnership with parents. The centre aims to achieve high levels of communication through a variety of methods as follows:

**Room information boards:** All rooms have a Parent Information Board. The type of information on this board ranges from everyday meal and rest records, to the weekly indoor and outdoor program, the weekly menu, activities the group have been enjoying and other information for families of the room. The Meal and Rest Records details what the children had for morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea and also how much was consumed. It also gives an indication of how long your child slept. The Wallabies also have a lovely celebration board and a science and maths board for parents to look over every now and then.

**Family Communication Pockets:** Each family in the centre has their own communication pocket. These are located in the foyer of the centre. The director will point these out when families are being shown through the centre. We encourage you to check this each time you are in the centre as we use these for most written communication i.e., notes, receipts, newsletters, etc.

**Newsletters:** An informative newsletter, The Elder Street Herald will be provided each month. Please take the time to read the newsletter as we feel there is always some very useful information related to children, parenting, childcare and up to date information on what is happening around the centre.

**Suggestion/Fee Box:** In the foyer of the centre located in the sign in desk is our fee/suggestion box – it is a gold mail box slot. Parents can use this to deposit any written communication for the centre. Fee payments of cash or cheque, suggestions, completed forms etc can all be posted in this slot.

**Parent involvement:** Parents can be involved in the centre in many different ways. You are welcome at the centre at all times to observe and/or join in with activities for as long or little as you like. Staff are happy to discuss the program, activities and/or your child’s development. Parents are always welcome to attend our excursions and are greatly appreciated (a small attendance charge may apply). If parents have any special talents or information on offer to our program, staff would be more than happy to include these in the program. Some examples that the children would benefit from are: another language and other cultural information, artefacts etc, performance of a musical instrument, poetry, story telling or puppetry, dance/exercise sessions, bringing in a pet for a visit, bathing a new born baby, art/craft activities with the children or simply a different lap to sit on for a story!

**Parent and Staff meetings:** Parents and/or staff may at times feel the need to make an appointment to discuss at length issues about a child i.e., behaviour, development etc. To be able to communicate freely and effectively it is best for the involved parties to make a time convenient to both. Parents need only phone or speak to staff directly

in order to arrange for this type of communication. We are always more than happy to discuss any issues or concerns and just ask that enough notice is given to allow us to collect any information that may be of use during the discussion.

**Parent Information Nights:** We have an annual Parent Information evening each year where parents come to listen to a guest speaker on many different subjects relating to the early childhood years.

**Policy Manual:** A Centre Policy Manual is available upon request for parents to read. The centre's policies have been developed in consultation with parents and staff. All policies are regularly reviewed in light of our stated goals and philosophy and to ensure that they are in line with current educational theory, and are still meeting the needs of both children and families using the service.

**Concerns and Complaints:** Please feel free to discuss with the Director any problems or concerns you may have. Childcare rooms are not always suitable for these discussions and we would prefer to talk with you in a more appropriate environment. Ideally a parent should make an appointment with the Director so that we can give you our undivided attention. Please refer to the Parent Grievance & Disputes policy for more information.

# *Children's Daily Requirements*

## **3.1 MEALS**

Food is freshly prepared on the premises by our resident food manager. Breakfast (for children who arrive between 7.00am – 7.30am, morning tea, lunch (including dessert), afternoon tea and a late afternoon tea (for children at the centre after 5.15pm) are prepared observing any special dietary requirements for your child. We respect different cultures and religions therefore we ask that these be noted on enrolment to ensure that no dietary needs are overlooked. No child is force fed and no child is refused food. On a daily basis we record children's food intake. A list of children's preferences and allergies are kept (and updated as necessary) in each child care room and in the kitchen. Liquids supplied daily are milk and water. Our weekly menu is displayed on each room information board.

## **3.2 NAPPIES**

Elder Street Early Childhood Centre provides good quality disposable nappies for all children that are not yet toilet trained.

## **3.3 FORMULA**

If your child is on formula based milk please supply bottles and formula each day. Both of these need to be clearly labelled and bottles should be placed in the fridge located in the kitchen downstairs. All bottles are rinsed (not sterilised) and put back in your child's bag each day.

## **3.4 BOTTLES AND PACIFIERS**

It is necessary for you to supply bottles and dummies which should be clearly labelled. If your child drinks cows milk, please place their bottle as mentioned above in the fridge. If your child uses a dummy please place them either in your child's cot or if sleeping on a mat, leave in your child's sleep bag. These will be returned to your child's bag each day. For babies still drinking sterilised water (usually under 12 months) water is boiled and cooled for drinking.

## **3.5 CLOTHING AND SUN PROTECTION**

As you are aware children are dressing and undressing throughout the day both at home and in care. We like to focus on dressing in our program and we believe that if some special attention is given, dressing can become a valuable learning experience.

The following simple guidelines will make dressing and undressing easier for your child and staff:

1. Supply at least one labelled extra full set of clothing each day;
2. Ensure your child's bag and all clothing is labelled to alleviate the problem of lost or misplaced belongings;
3. We ask that children wear t-shirts that cover the shoulders and mid-drift (no singlet tops) and that shoes be either sandals or runners (no thongs);
4. Clothing supplied should not interfere with children's enjoyment of activities. Please supply every day clothing that children can "move and do" activities in and keep good clothing for special occasions. The centre provides smocks for messy play
5. Clothing with elastic waists are easier for children than zips and buttons
6. For the cost of \$10.00 the centre provides each child with an Elder Street legionnaire style sun hat. The hat is yours to keep when leaving the centre. The hat remains at the centre during enrolment and it will be laundered and stored by the centre.

7. We ask that you apply sunscreen to your child each morning on arrival. Sunscreen is available in the playground. Staff will apply the sunscreen to all children again at other intervals during the day when needed. Our centre uses 30+ sunscreen. If your child is sensitive to certain sunscreen, please advise the centre as it will be necessary for you to supply your own.

### **3.6 SECURITY TOYS AND COMFORTERS**

Elder Street Early Childhood Centre provides numerous assorted educational and age/stage appropriate toys for all age groups. We ask that you do not bring toys from home as this may interrupt routines and programs, and may cause arguments between children. If your child requires a security toy or comforter, this will be permitted. When not in use, we ask that these toys be kept in your child's bag and brought out when necessary (usually sleep/rest time). Please try to limit comforters to soft toys and not a different one for each day. We also advise that Elder Street cannot be responsible for lost or damaged toys.

### **3.7 TOILETRIES**

The centre provides liquid hand soap and paper towel in all bathrooms and play rooms. We supply flannels and wipes so children can wash their hands and faces after meal times, a separate flannel/wipe is used for each child.

Please do not supply toothbrushes as these may transmit bacteria. We encourage children to have a drink of water after meals to rinse away any left over food.

### **3.8 BEDDING**

The cots used in the nursery are Australian Standards approved with well fitting mattresses. We supply a fitted sheet and top sheet/blanket for each child using a cot. Part time children have their linen changed and the cot is wiped over between children. All cots and linen are washed on a rotating basis.

Children in other rooms sleep on mats and we ask that you supply a bed bag containing cot sized bottom sheet and lightweight blanket or sleeping bag. A good idea for a sleep bag is a simple pillow case. The mats are washed down on a weekly basis. Please feel free to supply a pillow although we do not recommend these for children under the age of 18 months. If your child attends the centre on consecutive days, the sleep bag can remain at the centre until the final day of attendance for the week. We ask that the sleep bag go home for the linen to be washed and return back for the next day's attendance. If your child does not attend consecutive days we ask that you take the sleep bag home at the end of each day to relieve congestion in the room.

### **3.9 CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

We are able to cater for children with special needs. Our staff, along with specialists and support groups, encourage the integration of children with delayed intellectual or physical development.

# Daily Routine

## 4.1 CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY POLICY

Staff at this centre acknowledge the absolute necessity for the maintenance of confidentiality in all aspects of care and record keeping. All enrolment information, personal and family details, medical and health records, incident forms, protective care records, children's individual programming and progress records while being readily available to respective families will be kept in a secure locality in order to ensure families confidentiality. It is our policy that all staff and students will maintain confidentiality with respect to family issues and the individual development of any child enrolled at the centre.

This centre abides by the National Privacy Act 1988. Any information collected is used purely for the purpose of administration, communication, planning, programming and evaluation. Information may be disclosed to NSW Department of Community Services, Family Assistance Office, the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services and if requested by families other professional agencies.

All information obtained will be handled sensitively and securely in accordance with the National Privacy Principles. When no longer required, information will be appropriately filed or disposed of.

## 4.2 PROGRAMMING – THE EMERGENT CURRICULUM

“Young children learn the most important things, not by being told, but by constructing knowledge for themselves in interaction with the physical world and other children – and they way they do this best is by playing” (Jones & Reynolds, 1992).

To support this belief at Elder Street, we use the Emergent Curriculum as a way to extend each child's thinking and learning. The Emergent curriculum is largely based on interest-based learning or the interest of the child or group of children. When a child shows an interest in a topic or activity, the staff will encourage this interest by providing equipment, resources and materials to help further this interest, learning and exploration. The tools used in this process are digital photography, a daily reflective diary and individual child portfolios. The photographs are taken each day as an observation of the children's interests. These are then entered into the daily diary and reflective notes are made. These notes are then used for future planning and entered into each child's individual port folio. Parents are encouraged to become involved in this process by reading the daily diary, looking through their child's port folio (stored on the open shelving between the Possum and Wallaby rooms) add any information from home or share interests that could be included in our emerging daily program. Once a year we hold a Portfolio week.

## 4.3 PRESCHOOL

At Elder Street we have a full time preschool program. Being a long day care centre means that we can offer preschool activities throughout the day when children are ready to learn rather than having set preschool hours. This way, it is not necessary for all children to be taught at the one time. Small groups are encouraged rather than large ones. We also have a School Preparation Program specifically for the children who are going to school the following year. This program runs throughout the whole year. Families with children eligible to attend school the following year will receive further information on the School Preparation Program around mid year.

#### 4.4 SLEEP AND REST

Children are encouraged to sleep or rest and relax after lunch. Children's sleep times will vary according to the children's age and needs. If a sleep is not necessary for your child, then resting and relaxing is the alternative.

#### 4.5 TOILET TRAINING

Staff will consult with families regarding toilet training. If both parties agree that a child is ready, training can commence both at home and at the centre. A child will not be forced to toilet train. Staff will encourage confidence, routine and hygiene. Staff will use whatever training method children feel comfortable with. Your child may wish to start off with a potty or train straight onto our child size toilets. Both methods make toilet training an easier transition. Staff will use peers as role models to encourage children to use the potty or toilet. Staff may also encourage children, whilst still in nappies, to go to the potty during nappy changes. Constant reminders will be given for children to go to the toilet. Your child's progress will be reported to you so you can continue the training at home.

##### **Toileting Training Procedure**

- ❖ Wash hands as per hand washing procedure
- ❖ Encourage the child to use the toilet and to flush toilet
- ❖ Allow child to attempt with self dressing, provide assistance when needed
- ❖ Demonstrate and support the child with hand washing
- ❖ Assist the child in returning to an activity
- ❖ Use disposable gloves and disinfect toilet and cistern if necessary
- ❖ Discard gloves
- ❖ Wash hands as per hand washing procedures

**NB: When deemed necessary use disposable gloves with the entire procedure.**

#### 4.6 BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Our Behaviour Management Policy states our aim is to use a positive, developmentally appropriate approach to behaviour management. We work in partnership with children and families to set clear and consistent guidelines for behaviour, to promote children's self esteem, resilience and self discipline.

##### **GENERAL APPROACH**

We provide consistent, clear messages to children about their behaviour;

- constantly reinforcing and acknowledging appropriate behaviour
- suggesting alternative acceptable behaviour;
- redirecting the child to alternative activities;
- talking with the child about feelings and the consequences of his or her behaviour; and
- focusing on the victim in the case of an incident.

Families:

- are encouraged to provide information to staff on specific child rearing practices or circumstances that may impact on their child's behaviour;
- are encouraged to work cooperatively with staff and management on behaviour management issues.

Staff are expected to:

- consistently implement the Centre's Behaviour Management Policy;

- model appropriate behaviour during interactions with colleagues and children;
- reflect on their own attitudes and behaviour and the possible impact of how the Behaviour Management Policy is implemented; and
- work cooperatively and sensitively with parents on behaviour management issues.

#### **4.7 BIRTHDAYS**

We are happy to celebrate your child's birthday. Parents can bring in a cake for the group to share. Please remember that children love any type of celebration, so don't think that the cake needs to be some kind of masterpiece, the simplest of cakes, as long as they have candles on it will do the job! We should advise that the cake will be covered with cling wrap for when the candles are blown out. This is to prevent the spread of germs as you are probably aware that when we blow out candles it can get quite messy! Another alternative is to provide individual cup cakes etc for each child to eat. Please be aware that for us to be able to share the cake etc with all the children we may at times need to know the ingredients of the cake in case of nut products or even traces of nuts.

#### **4.8 EXCURSIONS**

Excursions are a great way to interact and learn about the community and our environment. Elder Street Early Childhood Centre organises several excursions throughout the year for our older children (2-6 years). For all excursions involving the use of transport or crossing of major roads, a permission form must be signed by parents, and the minimum adult/child ratio for these excursions is 1:4. Family members are encouraged and welcome to attend these excursions. A small cost may apply.

#### **4.9 CHRISTMAS**

This centre is currently owned, administered and staffed by people who observe Christian principles and traditions. As is stated in our Multicultural Perspective, this centre displays an awareness, acceptance and respect for other cultures and religions. We ask therefore that any family enrolled at this centre that practices another religion afford us the same courtesies and understanding in the practices of our faith. Elder Street Early Childhood Centre will celebrate Christmas through craft activities, music, stories and our annual Christmas Sausage Sizzle.

#### **4.10 RECYCLING**

We welcome some of your waste materials from home that you may normally throw out. We would appreciate any items such as paper, egg cartons, small boxes, cardboard tubes etc. These can be dropped off at the centre by handing them over to a staff member. The centre does not use toilet rolls for hygiene reasons so please do not bring them in. Thank you, and remember your trash is our treasure!

#### **4.11 LOCKERS**

Each child has his or her own locker for storage of their bag. Children's items must be labeled. Please see that you or your child place their belongings in their locker on each visit and collect them on leaving. If your child attends full time, you are welcome to leave their bag each day, but please ensure that any wet or dirty clothes in plastic bags are taken home and spare clothes are replaced for future use. If your child attends the centre for part of the week, they may share a locker with another child who attends on different days. In this instance, belongings are to be taken home on each visit, so as to not inconvenience the other person's items.

# *Fees and Assistance*

## **5.1 PAYMENT OF FEES**

On enrolment when a place is offered, parents along with completing all the necessary documentation, need to pay a bond. The bond secures your child's place at the centre. The bond payment is \$100.00 per day of attendance. So for example if your child is enrolled for 2 days, the bond due is \$200.00. The bond at the time of enrolment is non-refundable if you change your mind about your choice of child care, so parents need to be sure of their decision at the time of paying the bond. However, on leaving the centre after giving 2 weeks notice and full payment of any fees due, the bond is totally refundable. Parents need also be aware that if you increase your child's attendance at the centre, the bond will also need to be increased.

## **5.2 CONDITIONS OF PAYMENT OF FEES**

Daily fees can be subsidised through Childcare Benefit administered by the Family Assistance Office with income assessments carried out by Centrelink.

Fees are charged for each enrolled day, except for Public Holidays. Since the fee level calculation is based on averages, fees must be paid even if the child is away sick, on holidays, or a child is excluded due to non-immunisation. Only the centre's annual closure period is exempt from fee payment.

Elder Street Early Childhood Centre has a discretionary buy and sell policy (see below for further instructions) which is offered but not guaranteed to families already enrolled at the centre, for family holiday periods and pre advised rostered days for parents. NB. Due to the high incidents of families taking their vacation time during school holidays, it is highly unlikely that these times can be sold. Due to the fact that the buy and sell policy benefits families and creates intricate administrative responsibilities for the centre, both the buying and selling families will be charged \$2.20 per day's transaction.

Please see the enclosed note on Current Fees included in this enrolment package for our current fees.

Fees may be paid by Direct Debit into the centre's working account, (details of which are included in this enrolment package) by cheque or if absolutely necessary by cash. Please note the centre will not be held responsible for any cash payments which do not appear for processing under any circumstances. Fees are payable weekly or fortnightly. Fees are due on the first day of the child's attendance each week or by 10.00 am Thursday morning at the very latest. Receipts for all fee payments will be placed in the communication pocket clearly identified with the child's family name.

If there are any problems with payments, please discuss this matter with the Director. Special Childcare Benefit may be granted to families experiencing hardship. Whilst we try and help whenever possible, we cannot carry debts, if fees become more than two weeks in arrears without prior arrangement, then enrolment may be terminated.

An annual non refundable Equipment Levy will be charged for each child who attends the centre. This Levy will be calculated at the rate of \$20.00 per day G.S.T. inclusive, according to the number of days a child attends during the week. For example, if your child attends 2 days a week, the Annual Equipment Levy will be \$40.00 GST inclusive.

Please remember that this centre's day care hours cease at 6.00pm precisely. If your child is left after this time a fee of \$10.00 for the first 5 minutes and \$1.00 per minute thereafter will be charged. Should you wish to discuss your child's day with staff, please ensure that you arrive at least 10 minutes prior to the end of your child's care. Parents need to arrive at the centre by 5.50pm as mentioned earlier in this handbook. Parents must phone the Centre if you are going to be late, for whatever reason, even if making the call makes you 2 minutes later.

### 5.3 TERMINATION OF PLACEMENT

Elder Street Early Childhood Centre can cancel a child's placement at any time once 2 weeks notice has been given to the parent. This could happen due to the following instances:

- a) Falling behind in fees
- b) Repeatedly failing to comply with our policies and requirements stated in this handbook, including repeatedly arriving late for pick up of children
- c) Giving us false information.
- d) Irresolvable differences in relation to a child's behaviour whilst at the centre (please refer to Behaviour Management Policy).

### 5.4 ASSISTANCE WITH CHILD CARE COSTS

#### **Child Care Benefit**

The amount of Child Care Benefit (CCB) that families receive depends on the number of children in care, the hours of care and the families' income. For more information please contact the Family Assistance Office (FAO) on 13 61 50. When applying for CCB, Elder Street's Customer Reference Number is

**407 148 262C**

Please ask our office staff to give you further advice in this area if necessary.

#### **Buy & Sell**

Elder Street does have a system that has been designed to offer parents a little more flexibility with the use of their child care. If parents have planned holidays away from the centre, there is an option to complete a Buy & Sell Request Form (available from the sign in desk in the foyer). The form asks for the name of the children attending the centre and the dates which they will be away from the centre. Parents need to sign the form and place it in our Fee & Message box. The Director/s will do their best to marry up any requests to sell these days. The system works in reverse if parents wish to pick up extra days for any reason.

We are happy to offer this system to assist parents, but unfortunately there are no guarantees that days will be available to buy or that they will be sold. There are also some conditions that parents need to be aware of:

1. The only way days can be sold or bought is through this system. Parents are not permitted to swap days amongst themselves as we need to be aware of children's enrolled days and numbers in rooms for licensing reasons
2. If you have requested a day be sold but then changed your mind, parents will need to complete another form to action this. This alleviates the problem of more than one child attending the centre for one enrolled position – again effecting licensing conditions.
3. There is an administration fee of \$2.20 for each parent when they utilize both the selling and buying of days.
4. We will not advertise days available for sale. The system will only operate by the use of our Buy and Sell Forms. In the instance that parents are wishing to sell more than 30 days worth of attendance days, we can post a note on our Community Notice Board in the foyer. This is done as being away from the service for more than 30 days will affect family's Child Care Benefit. Selling these days can assist with this issue.
5. We can assure families that all efforts are made to process the buying and selling of days and contact in person or by phone will be made if we need to confirm dates and check on any changes.

## **5.5 HOLIDAYS, OCCASIONAL ABSENCES, SICK DAYS & REDUCING DAYS**

When children are absent from the centre for any reason, families are still required to pay fees. Some of the reasons for children being absent include illness, holidays and exclusion from the centre due to an infectious disease. If your child will be away from the centre due to illness, please advise us of this by that morning at the latest and also the nature of the illness affecting the child.

Please also notify the centre by 9.00 am on any day your child takes an occasional absence. If not attending the centre due to taking holidays please advise us before you go on holidays. In cases where your child has been absent due to an infectious disease, a medical certificate is required stating that your child is healthy and able to return to childcare. This is a government requirement.

To sell a day not required, parents need to complete a Buy & Sell Request form which can be obtained from the sign in desk in the foyer. See Buy & Sell section of this booklet for further instructions and conditions.

If a family chooses to reduce the amount of days their child is attending the centre (eg, reduce to from 3 days to 2 days), we ask that you complete a buy and sell form, noting that you wish to permanently sell chosen day/s, giving the centre 2 weeks notice. It is our policy that children attend a minimum of 2 days, so there is not the opportunity to drop down to a 1 day attendance.

# *Health and Hygiene*

## **6.1 HEALTH AND HYGIENE ISSUES**

The centre's health and hygiene policies aim to provide a healthy and safe working and playing environment for children and staff. They also aim to protect the general health and well being of children and staff by minimising the risk of infection and the spread of infection within the centre.

When children spend time in child care centre or other facilities, where they are exposed to a large number of children for long periods, the risk of illness is higher and infections spread easily. It is only by removing sick or unwell children from the centre that we can reduce the risk of infecting other children. Children should not be brought to the centre unless they are able to adequately cope with the normal daily routines and activities. If the Director or Senior Staff member feels that one child is unfairly exposing other children to illness, or is too unwell to cope with the centre's program, they will notify a parent and ask for the child to be taken home. The Director's decision is final. Parents are requested to collect their child as soon as possible after being notified of possible illness, or make alternative arrangements. If parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact numbers on the enrolment form will be used.

## **6.2 NUTRITION**

The N.S.W. Health Department guidelines state that childcare centres must provide children with at least 50% of their daily recommended dietary intake of nutrients in the form of safe and appetising foods. The Cook at this centre ensures these nutritional requirements are met. The emphasis is on whole foods, plenty of raw and cooked fresh fruit and vegetables. We encourage and promote a low salt and sugar reduced diet. The menu also incorporates foods from a variety of cultures.

Breakfast for early starters, morning tea, a 2 course lunch, afternoon tea and late afternoon tea for late leavers, are all provided. Milk and water are offered at morning and afternoon tea, with water being available with lunch. Water is also readily available to all children at any time throughout the day. The current week's menu and the following week's menu are displayed for your perusal.

Provision is made for alternative meals or snacks to be served to any child who is unable to partake of the routine menu due to

- 1 Cultural or religious reasons.
2. Medical reasons (Medical Certificate to be issued by Medical Practitioner)
3. Should staff in consultation with parents agree that a genuine dislike for food exists.

Special Diets: Any request by parents to provide or delete specific foods for children on special diets must be submitted to the Director on a form provided by the centre. The cook then keeps the form on file. Under no circumstances will any item of food or drink be deliberately given to any child in contradiction of written instructions or requirements made by that parent.

Formulas: All formulas must be provided by the parents, made up in individual bottles and labeled with the child's name. The parents are asked to put them in the nursery refrigerator on arrival.

Breast Milk: Whether bought in bottles or frozen cubes must be clearly labeled with child's name, date expressed, and or date frozen. Staff will then mark milk with expiry dates for discarding.

### 6.3 FOOD SAFETY PLAN

This centre is committed to the employment of kitchen staff that has appropriate qualifications and or a Statement of Attainment in Food Safety and Handling. All staff will adhere to standard 3.22 in the Food Safety Practices and General Requirement of the Australian New Zealand Food Standards Code. To ensure that all staff possess the skills and knowledge required in Food Safety Practices and General Requirements, components of the following will occur:

- ❖ In-service training within the centre for all staff in the skills and knowledge of Food Safety Practices and General Requirements commensurate with their work activities will be conducted by appropriately trained centre staff that has completed a recognized course.
- ❖ Attainment of Food Career Advancement course in Safe Food Handling and /or other recognised health authority
- ❖ Attendance at courses conducted by Newcastle City Council Food Surveillance Unit
- ❖ Food Safety and Food Hygiene information will be readily available and discussed at staff meetings
- ❖ All staff will adhere to specified policy and procedures which will be monitored for compliance through use of a checklist

### 6.4 PERSONAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE

#### Practices and Procedures

All staff will take all practicable measures to minimise the risk of food becoming contaminated by following strict compliance with food safety procedures and practices.

- ❖ Wash hands in accordance with hand washing requirements / procedure and under any circumstances whenever hands are likely to be a source of contamination of food
- ❖ Disposable gloves to be used when handling food and for one task only, change gloves if you touch your hair, face or if coughing / sneezing is deflected by hand
- ❖ If direct contact is necessary hands to be thoroughly washed and dried as per hand washing procedure
- ❖ Use tongs, spoons, forks or other utensils as a barrier between the food whenever necessary
- ❖ Fingernails short and with no nail polish
- ❖ Hair to be tied back and wearing of a protective cap
- ❖ Limit amount of jewellery to be worn.
- ❖ Clean protective clothing is to be worn over regular clean clothes and washed daily
- ❖ Protective clothing should only be worn in food handling areas, remove for toilet and other breaks
- ❖ Apron to be change throughout the day when soiled
- ❖ Personal items to be stored away from the food handling area.
- ❖ Any wound, infection or cracks on the hand or arm is to be completely covered with a waterproof bandaid. Where the wound is on the hand disposable gloves are to be worn at all times, changing after each task
- ❖ If a cut occurs discard food that may have been contaminated by blood, follow blood spill procedure
- ❖ If an employee involved in handling food is unwell and or suffering from a condition report to the Director
- ❖ Do not eat, sneeze or cough over unprotected food or surfaces that are likely to come into contact with food.

## 6.5 FOOD HANDLING, PROCESSING, PREPERATION AND STORAGE

To ensure efficient and effective safe food handling practices when working with potentially hazardous (high risk) foods the following procedures are to be strictly maintained:

### **PURCHASING OF FOOD**

- ❖ Purchases will be from reputable suppliers
- ❖ Check that packaging is clean, suitable for the product and provides protection from contamination and physical damage
- ❖ The standard and cleanliness of delivery vehicle is appropriate

### **RECEIVING FOOD – When receiving food it is important to inspect:**

- ❖ Foods at point of delivery
- ❖ The quality and quantity ordered is correct
- ❖ Signs of contamination, damaged packaging, bruising, mould, swelling or damaged cans, odours, pest and dirt
- ❖ Use best before or use by dates for expiry
- ❖ Temperature at or below 5C for chilled food, - 18C for frozen food
- ❖ Meat delivered is covered and vacuum – packed meat is sealed

### **After the food has been received and checked**

- ❖ Refrigerate foods promptly
- ❖ Rotate stock
- ❖ Store food away carefully in the most appropriate place: dry store, refrigerator, freezer or vegetable storage area
- ❖ Dispose of delivery boxes, bags promptly
- ❖ Receiving area to be clean at the time of delivery and cleaned after receiving
- ❖ Observe personal hygiene rules

## **FOOD STORAGE**

### **Dry Storage**

- ❖ Transfer open packaged foods to clean, dry storage containers with tight lids (food grade), place on shelves / cupboards
- ❖ Label and date foods removed from their original packaging
- ❖ Dispose of any packaging that is not required

### **Refrigerator**

- ❖ Keep cooked foods separate and not touching raw food
- ❖ Cooked foods must be covered and stored above raw foods
- ❖ Store raw meats covered and beneath other foods
- ❖ Milk is not to be stored in the door of the fridge
- ❖ Do not overload refrigerator at any one time
- ❖ Breast milk to be stored for no longer than 48 hours in refrigerator
- ❖ The operating temperatures of the refrigerator, freezer and the thermometer are monitored and recorded daily

### **Freezer**

- ❖ Wrap food, label with product name, child's name if applicable, date packed and use by date
- ❖ Check daily freezer temperature is at minus 18C
- ❖ Clean and defrost each fortnight
- ❖ Don't overload
- ❖ Breast milk to be frozen only to 3 months

## **FOOD PROCESSING**

### **Thawing food**

- ❖ Thaw food overnight in the bottom part of refrigerator or defrost in microwave, cook immediately after thawing
- ❖ Only thaw required amount
- ❖ Never refreeze food

- ❖ Frozen foods, vegetables, individual fish portions to be cooked from frozen state
- ❖ In the case where food is cooked from a frozen state, ensure food is cooked thoroughly

### **Preparing foods**

Food is to be prepared quickly and as close to serving time as possible. Any food prepared in advance must be refrigerated until cooked or served. If food is cooked in advance then it is to be held hot until service, or chilled to refrigeration temperature as quickly as possible, then held at 5C or less until it is reheated.

### **Important notes:**

- ❖ Clean, sanitised colour coded chopping boards will be used for raw fruit and vegetable, (green), raw meat (red), cooked meat, (brown) poultry (yellow) and dairy (white).
- ❖ Knives must be thoroughly washed and sanitised after being used in the preparation of each the above mentioned food types.
- ❖ Fruit and vegetables are to be washed thoroughly before being used even if the skin is to be removed.
- ❖ Clean and sanitise work surfaces before and after use
- ❖ Clean up spills as you go
- ❖ Formula, breast milk and other milk for bottles is heated on one occasion only, any milk not used is discarded

### **Cooking foods**

- ❖ Keep cooking utensils and equipment clean and wash as you go
- ❖ Using a meat thermometer check that the temperature of the meat is more than 75C when taken from the oven and thoroughly cooked
- ❖ Poultry is cooked thoroughly (there are no pink juices)
- ❖ Do not use utensils which have been in contact with raw foods
- ❖ Temperature controlled hot and cold food is kept at appropriate temperatures: cold food below 5C, hot food above 60C.

### **Cooling cooked food**

- ❖ Cool food quickly before it is placed directly into the refrigerator. Hot food should not be cooled on the bench for longer than 20-30 minutes before refrigerating
- ❖ Place food into shallow containers to cool quickly
- ❖ Divide food into smaller lots
- ❖ Use cold water to cool larger amounts eg. casseroles, stocks and soups
- ❖ Transfer from one container to another to assist with reducing the temperature quickly

### **Reheating cooked food**

Reheated food is at a high risk of being a source of food poisoning, ensure the following:

- ❖ Reheat quickly so it is in the danger zone for as little time as possible
- ❖ Reheat to at least 70C on the inside for at least 2minutes to destroy regular bacteria
- ❖ Bring reheated food eg. casseroles, soups to the boil and keep there for 10 minutes and serve immediately
- ❖ Follow manufacturer's instructions on cooked packaged food
- ❖ Discard any reheated food which is not used

### **Serving food**

- ❖ Food timing to occur so that food can be immediately served after preparation for all centre meals
- ❖ Salads and sandwiches covered and stored in refrigerator until required
- ❖ High risk foods not to be out of the refrigerator for more than 2 hours in total (this includes preparation, serving and eating time)
- ❖ Food is covered with a lid, plastic wrap or foil prior to serving
- ❖ Staff to wear gloves and use utensils to serve foods

### **Food disposal – keeping leftovers**

- ❖ Accurate menu planning and preparation so left overs are not occurring
- ❖ Use the 24 hour rule for any left overs kept, refrigerate and discard if not used within 24 hours
- ❖ Food remaining that has been placed into serving dishes from the kitchen to each room is not to be classed as leftovers and must be discarded
- ❖ Left overs from the kitchen serving is to be covered, clearly labelled with product name, date prepared and use by time
- ❖ If extra portions of a dish have been prepared for the freezer, cover, clearly label with product name, child's name if applicable, date prepared and use by date which is within 1 week preparation. Freeze only in small portions.
- ❖ Any food remaining in a can after it has been opened is transferred to a food grade container and used within 24 hours.
- ❖ Food is before being stored marked with – type of food, date prepared, expiry date and name of child (if applicable). No food is stored longer than the manufacturer's instructions, recommendations – the US Food Code and or use by date.

### **Relevant Information**

- ❖ Unused cups are stored covered and disposable cups are used only once
- ❖ Drinking and eating utensils must be cleaned, sanitised and protected from contamination between being used
- ❖ As far as is reasonably practical, only those persons involved in food preparation and serving are allowed in the kitchen
- ❖ Equipment failures are reported promptly.
- ❖ Do not use chipped, broken or cracked eating or drinking utensils.
- ❖ The food preparation area is used only for that purpose

Through program discussions and daily monitoring staff reiterate with children appropriate food safety issues such as:

- ❖ Hands will be washed thoroughly before sitting down to meals.
- ❖ Not sharing your own food with other children
- ❖ Ensure the child drinks from cup, plate and utensils not previously used or handled by another child.
- ❖ No utensil or food that has been dropped on the floor will be used or eaten by children.
- ❖ Children to turn away from food and drink, cover their mouth when they cough or sneeze and wash their hands

## **6.6 IMMUNISATION**

Elder Street Early Childhood Centre's Health Policy has been developed from NSW Health Department Guidelines and these policies will be strictly adhered at all times.

Even though immunisation is not compulsory, it is recommended that children are immunised against the nine preventable diseases. The Australian Standard Vaccination Schedule now requires Parents/Guardians to provide documented evidence of immunisation status of all children enrolling in childcare centres.

Appropriate documentation includes a signed record of immunisation contained in "The Blue Book " or details of the child's immunisations given by General Practitioner, Local Council, and/or Community Health centre using their letterheads.

The recommended immunisation schedule may be accessed at [www.immunise.health.gov.au](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au) or by calling the immunisation info line on 1800 671 811.

Please note: Children's immunisation must be kept up to date by parents according to the national immunisation register in order to be or remain eligible for the payment of Child Care Benefit.

It is the responsibility of parents to provide the centre with documented evidence of updated immunisation in order to maintain accurate records of immunisation status for each child.

The centre will not be held responsible in the event of a non-immunised child being infected with a vaccine preventable infectious illness whilst at the centre. In the event of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, the Director will notify the local Public Health Unit. Upon the direction of the Medical Officer of Health, non-immunised children or those children whose proof of immunisation has not been issued to the centre by parents must be excluded for the incubation period of the disease (see table for exclusion periods)

## **6.7 MEDICATION**

### **IMPORTANT NOTES**

- ❖ Under no circumstances is medication to be left in a child's locker or bag.
- ❖ No medication will be administered unless it is supplied in the container it was dispensed by a pharmacist or medical practitioner showing clearly the child's name, name of medication, administration instructions, expiry date of product and the name of Doctor or issuing Pharmacist.
- ❖ Long-term medication must have a letter from a Medical practitioner stating reasons for the medication. An updated letter is required every four months if centre staff are to continue giving the medication.
- ❖ On enrolment parents will be asked to indicate their consent or otherwise to the administration of liquid Paracetamol or equivalent to their child in accordance with labeled directions, should it be considered necessary by the Director and staff member on medical duty, on any given day.
- ❖ On enrolment, parents will be asked to indicate if their child suffers from any allergies or reactions and to give instructions for treatment should a problem occur.
- ❖ Proprietary "over the counter" medication will be administered strictly in accordance with manufacturers directions unless specific written instructions are received from a medical practitioner. The Director reserves the right to ask parents to obtain advice from a medical practitioner about the use of non-prescribed medication if, in her professional judgment, doubt exists about the necessity for and/or suitability of the medication.

## **6.8 PROCEDURE FOR RECEIVING MEDICATION**

All medication must be personally handed to a staff member who will then ensure that parents have fully and accurately completed and signed the medication form.

Before a staff member signs the completed medication form verify the following:

- ❖ Child's name, medication name, dosage and time all correspondence with the medication form and the information written on medication to be administered.
- ❖ The last dosage given, commencement date and days attending have been completed on the form
- ❖ Parent has signed the form
- ❖ After checking all of the above is correct sign the completed medication form.
- ❖ Staff member will place medication in locked cabinet.
- ❖ Medication form to be placed into the Medication Folder
- ❖ Write medication in communication book

- ❖ Child's name and time medication required will them be written on the whiteboard and the staff member responsible will communicate medication requirements to all other staff in the room.

## **6.9 PROCEDURE FOR PREPARATION, ADMINISTERING AND RECORDING OF MEDICATION**

To ensure safe administration of medications at the centre a strict procedure must be followed. For ALL medications that are administered, a medication chart must be completed correctly.

- ❖ The designated member of staff to administer the days medication will thoroughly wash hands prior to administering each dosage of medication.
- ❖ The designated administrator of medication (D.A.M.) will take the bottle of medication and the medication form filled in by parents to the witness who will check that the label on child's medication corresponds with that on medication form. Note: Only one child's medication is to be removed from the locked medication box at one time.
- ❖ Both D.A.M. and witness will identify the child and check that it corresponds with the name on the medication form and the measured dosage corresponds to the medication form.
- ❖ D.A.M. will decide on most appropriate way to administer medication (i.e. While nursing, sitting on lap or sitting in high chair) whilst at the same time informing child of what is to be done and expected.
- ❖ D.A.M. and witness will ensure that full compliment of medicine is taken.
- ❖ Offer drink afterwards if applicable
- ❖ Wipe mouth with tissue
- ❖ Wash hands.
- ❖ Return child to normal routine.
- ❖ All unsuccessful attempts to be recorded and reported to parent and if necessary reported to Director.
- ❖ Any mistakes to be reported to Director immediately
- ❖ D.A.M. and witness to sign medication form only after administration of medicine
- ❖ Medication measures used are to be rinsed and placed in sterilizer or dishwasher as per room procedures

## **6.10 INDIVIDUAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT PLANS**

Staff at this centre acknowledge the great diversity in childhood medical conditions. In the event of a child with such a condition being enrolled at this centre we undertake to:

- ❖ Research the condition through reading
- ❖ Request family, in consultation with their medical practitioner to formulate a health management plan
- ❖ Arrange a conference between families, medical practitioner if agreeable and all relevant staff to discuss and ensure a better understanding of the condition and medical plan.

## 6.11 ASTHMA

All staff at Elder Street Early Childhood Centre have an essential role, “a duty of care” in ensuring children with asthma lead a healthy, happy life. Staff at Elder Street will:

- ❖ Train in asthma education and keep abreast of any relevant information updates.
- ❖ Maintain asthma record cards which will be kept for each child that has been diagnosed with asthma. This card will be completed by the parent in consultation with their family doctor and submitted on enrolment.
- ❖ Collate information, listing names of children diagnosed with Asthma, their triggers, allergies and side effects from asthma medication
- ❖ Display 4 step - action plan in a prominent position for referral in the event of an emergency.
- ❖ A member of staff will attend a district asthma workshop after any new relevant information is obtained and present a report for the following of all staff at the next staff meeting
- ❖ Administer medication, provided such medication is in accordance with the child's individual asthma action plan.
- ❖ Maintain Asthma First Aid Kit kept at centre.
- ❖ It is the parents responsibility to notify staff immediately if any changes occur to the child's individual asthma plan

## 6.12 INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS

Our staff are committed to providing the best care available, but it is important to remember that whilst all necessary precautions are taken, accidents and incidents will sometimes occur. Children develop at different rates and explore constantly, this invariably means bumps and scratches. If your child has an accident it will be documented on an accident/incident report. This report details how the accident occurred and any treatment that was undertaken.

Families will be requested to sign the report when they collect their child to confirm that they have been informed of the accident. In an accident which a child receives a bump to the head, the staff will inform families via a phone call. The call will detail the nature of the accident and the child's current state of well being. If a child is seriously injured or ill, you will be notified immediately. The child will be separated from the other children and taken care of in a quiet area. We will apply first aid where possible. Any medical costs incurred in caring for your child whilst at the centre (i.e., ambulance or hospital costs) will be at the expense of families.

## 6.13 DENTAL CARE

In order to encourage oral / dental hygiene amongst children and families this centre will plan and implement an educational program on dental care by:

- ❖ Establishing the mealtime routine of “swish, swish, swallow” before leaving the table.
- ❖ Actively discourage babies being put to bed with bottles of milk, fruit juice or sweetened liquids.
- ❖ Providing small and spontaneous group activities which reinforce the importance of good dental care procedures.
- ❖ Invite health professionals to speak to children and families about maintaining a healthy diet, brushing and flossing your teeth daily and having regular dental checkups.
- ❖ To make available up to date dental information to families through the parent library, newsletters, pamphlets, information books and posters displayed throughout the centre.

- ❖ Menu planning will incorporate and encourage healthy eating through the use of a variety of raw and cooked fruits and vegetables.

#### 6.14 INFECTION CONTROL

Elder Street Early Childhood Centre is committed to establishing and maintaining the highest possible standard of hygiene and infection control through:

- ❖ The implementation of procedures to ensure personal hygiene for staff and children
- ❖ Cleaning regimes for staff and after hours contract cleaners
- ❖ Implementation of thorough Medical and Isolation procedures which minimise the risk of cross infection.

#### 6.15 HAND WASHING

Hand washing should take 10-15 seconds using liquid soap and warm running water. All surfaces of the hands should be cleaned, lathering vigorously the front, back and sides of the hands, wrists, between fingers and under nails. Rinse hands with fingers pointing down for another ten seconds. Count to ten as you wash and rinse.

Dry hands with a single use paper towel. If hand washing is not possible “wet wipes” containing antiseptic may be used. When practicable use a moisturising hand lotion to prevent cracked skin developing.

Children will be taught to wash their hands in this way as part of the daily program. Activity sessions should include songs and stories with hand washing as a topic. Teach children that washing their hands will prevent the spreads of germs and illness. Supervise children to ensure they develop good hand washing habits.

##### **Staff will strictly adhere to procedures and wash their hands:**

- ❖ On arrival at the centre, before commencing work and at the end of each day.
- ❖ Before and after administration of medication and first aid
- ❖ After visiting the toilet
- ❖ After each nappy change and changing children’s soiled clothes.
- ❖ After toileting children
- ❖ After using a handkerchief or tissue
- ❖ After touching eyes, ears, nose, hair or mouth
- ❖ After handling body fluids
- ❖ Before handling raw food
- ❖ After garbage disposal
- ❖ Before serving and preparing food
- ❖ Before eating
- ❖ After every break
- ❖ After removing gloves
- ❖ After handling animals
- ❖ After any other unhygienic practice
- ❖ Any staff members with cuts or abrasions should ensure that they are covered with an occlusive dressing.

##### **Children will wash their hands:**

- ❖ Before setting tables and serving food
- ❖ Before eating
- ❖ After going to the toilet
- ❖ After touching nose secretions and using a tissue or handkerchief
- ❖ Before participating in cooking activities
- ❖ After nappy changing
- ❖ After handling animals
- ❖ Any other unhygienic practices

Babies’ hands will be washed after each nappy change and frequently throughout the day.

## 6.16 NAPPY CHANGING

Nappy changing is a critical link in the hygiene management of Elder Street Early Childhood Centre.

- ❖ Ensure all items needed for change are within easy reach
- ❖ Use washable change tables and mats
- ❖ Put on disposable gloves
- ❖ If nappy is soiled or leaking, hold child away from you. Wear plastic apron for protection if necessary.
- ❖ Walking child to use steps
- ❖ Lay child on change surface keeping a restraining hand on child to prevent falling.
- ❖ Clean child's bottom with disposable wipes or if washer is used place in covered bucket. Wipe from front to back.
- ❖ Fold and dispose of nappy and gloves in plastic lined nappy receptacle, taking care not to contaminate hands.
- ❖ If hands are contaminated wipe with disposable wipes before proceeding.
- ❖ Place clean nappy on child
- ❖ Wash child's hands
- ❖ Assist child back to normal routines.
- ❖ Wipe change pad and bench with soapy water then wipe over with disinfectant.
- ❖ Wash hands thoroughly.
- ❖ Toys used during nappy changing to be placed in Milton solution

## 6.17 CLEANING POLICY

Elder Street Early Childhood Centre prides itself on the degree of cleanliness of the centre, equipment and grounds, while staff and children's personal hygiene is of paramount importance.

Cleaning procedures and schedules are strictly adhered to for:

- ❖ Staff and children's hand washing
- ❖ Staff duty maintenance cleaning for each room
- ❖ Cooks duty maintenance cleaning
- ❖ Contract cleaners
- ❖ Ground maintenance

### Cleaning the nappy change area

- ❖ After nappy change wash the mat with warm soapy water and disinfect the area
- ❖ Use a paper towel. If cleaning cloth is used place in covered container for laundering separately
- ❖ If faeces spills onto the change mat clean wash with warm soapy water, wipe with bleach and leave to dry
- ❖ Disinfect the surface at the end of the day with diluted bleach and leave to dry
- ❖ Wash hands

### Cleaning and Disposing of Blood and other Body Fluids

- ❖ Wear disposable gloves before attending to a child who is bleeding.
- ❖ If there is a spill of blood or body fluids onto a child or adult, wash the affected area with soap and warm water
- ❖ If blood or body fluid is splashed in the eyes rinse with running water for several minutes
- ❖ If blood or body fluid contacts an open wound or broken skin, wash the area thoroughly with soap and water

### **Cleaning after a spill**

- ❖ Wear disposable gloves
- ❖ Soak any implements used from the first aid box in a fresh solution of 1 to 10 bleach solution for one hour.
- ❖ Clean up any spilt blood, faeces, vomit or urine by first removing the bulk of the spill with paper towels.
- ❖ Dispose of the towels and gloves – into a plastic bag into garbage
- ❖ Clean the surface with warm soapy water
- ❖ Disinfect the area by wiping with bleach, use 1 part bleach to 9 parts water – Dilute bleach on the day of use
- ❖ Wash hand thoroughly with soap and warm water

### **6.18 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

Elder Street Early Childhood Centre has a very detailed fire and emergency evacuation procedure with details located in every room. On a random basis we conduct evacuation drills (fire and bomb threat) with staff and children. Staff have strict instructions regarding emergency evacuations and receive training in the use of fire extinguishers and the fire blanket. The children enjoy this activity which is conducted in a safe and happy manner. If the centre has been evacuated and the children are going to be outside for prolonged time, parents will be notified and asked to come and collect their child. You will be advised of the evacuation location at the time of notification.

# *Policies and Procedures*

## **7.1 PARENT LIBRARY**

Parents are able to borrow from our library, which is located in the foyer. If you wish to borrow a book or item, please take it to a staff member who will record your name and the date it was borrowed and ask you to sign the book/item out on our chart. Please return all books/items to a staff member so the return process can be completed. Books can be loaned for 3 weeks.

## **7.2 CENTRE POLICY MANUAL**

Our Centre Policy Manual contains information regarding our policies, procedures and goals. The Parent Library has a copy, which we suggest you take your time to read at some stage.

The following Policies and Procedures are documented in our Centre Policy Manual. The office, Parent Library and each room have a Centre Policy Manual.

We thank you for taking the time to read our Parent Handbook and suggest you keep it at home so you will be familiar with the way our centre operates.

We welcome you and your child/ren to Elder Street Early Childhood Centre

We take pride in providing a professional child care service for you and your child. Your child's welfare is of the utmost importance to us. Feel free to approach us at any time or contact us by:

Phone: (02) 49539300

Email: [elderstreet@optusnet.com.au](mailto:elderstreet@optusnet.com.au) or

Fax: (02) 49539782

From all of us at Elder Street Early Childhood Centre.

## Appendix A: Exclusion guidelines for Infectious conditions

Condition	Exclusion Period	Exclusion of contacts
Chicken Pox (varicella and hepes zoster)	Exclude for at least 5 days after the rash appears AND until all blisters are dry and child feels well	Not excluded Immune deficient children should be excluded to protect them from illness
Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes ceases	Not excluded
Diarrhea *Amoebiasis *Campylobacteriosis *Cryptosporidiosis *Giardiasis *Rotavirus *Salmonellosis *Shigellosis	For all cases, exclude until diarrhea ceases and 24 hours after last episode	In all cases, contacts not excluded
Vomitting	For all cases, exclude until vomiting ceases and 24 hours after last episode	In all cases, contacts not excluded
Diphtheria	Exclude until 2 negative throat swabs 24 hours and 48 hours immediately after completion of antibiotic therapy. Need certificate from GP recommending re-inclusion	Exclude family and close family contacts until approval for re-inclusion from Chief Health Officer
Haemophilus influenza type B (Hib)	Exclusion until a certificate from GP is provided approving reinclusion	Not excluded
Hand Foot and Mouth disease	Exclude if child is unwell, drooling and until all blisters have dried	Not excluded
Hepatitis A	Exclude for 7 days after the onset of jaundice and until a certificate from GP is provided approving reinclusion	Not excluded
Herpes Simplex (cold sores)	Exclude young children with weeping blisters who are unable to comply with good hygiene practices, cover lesions with dressing when possible	Not excluded
Impetigo (school sores)	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Exposed sores should be covered with watertight dressing	Not excluded
Influenza	Exclude until well and mucus is clear	Not excluded
Lice (Pediculosis)	Exclude until effective treatment has commenced and all lice have died	Not excluded
Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash until full recovered	Immunised contacts not excluded. Non-immunised contacts excluded until 14 days after onset of rash. Non immunized contacts receiving measles vaccine

		within 72 hours of first contact are not excluded after being immunized. Non immunized contacts receiving normal human immunoglobulin (NHIG) within 7 days of first contact are not excluded after being immunized
Meningitis	Exclude until well	Not excluded
Meningococcal Infection	Exclude until well and until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been commenced	Not excluded if receiving antibiotic treatment. Excluded for 10 days after last contact with infected person if not receiving antibiotic treatment
Mumps	Exclude for 9 days after onset of symptoms or until parotid swelling has subsided (whichever is sooner)	Not excluded
Poliomyelitis	Exclude for 14 days from onset of symptoms and until a certificate of clearance from a GP is provided	Not excluded
Ringworm	Exclude until the day after effective treatment has commenced	Not excluded
Rubella	Exclude for 4 days from appearance of rash and until fully recovered	Not excluded. Females of child-bearing age should ensure adequate immune status. Exclude non immune women
Scabies	Exclude until treatment has commenced	Not excluded
Streptococcal Infection	Exclude until recovered or has commenced 24 hours of antibiotics	Not excluded
Tuberculosis	Exclude until clearance certificate from Chief Medical Officer is provided	Not excluded
Typhoid Fever	Exclude until clearance certificate by GP is provided	Generally not excluded unless notice is given from Chief Medical Officer
Whooping Cough (Pertussis)	Exclude for 21 days from onset of cough or until antibiotic coverage for 5 days as recommended by Chief Health Officer	Exclude non immunized family members and close contacts under 7 years for 14 days after the last exposure to the infection or until antibiotic coverage for 5 days
Worms	Exclude until diarrhea ceases	Not excluded

Exclusion Guidelines for Children, adapted from NHMRC (2001)  
Exclusion Guidelines by Caron Eagle, Director, Impact Learning and Development

## Appendix B: Useful Contacts

### Telephone Contacts

#### Department of Community Services – Children’s Services

**Ph: 49 039555**

#### Autism Association of NSW

**Ph: 49556266**

#### Early Intervention Information and Service Co-ordination Agency

Kaleidoscope, Hunter Children’s Health Network

**Ph: 49 24 6180**

#### Ethnic Communities Council of Newcastle and the Hunter Region Inc

Supporting early childhood services to provide services with have children with disabilities, non English speaking background and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or South Seas Islander

**Ph: 49 29 5880**

#### Special Education Centre, University of Newcastle

Assisting services with children who present with developmental concerns such as behaviour, feeding, speech/language, communication, learning, motor skills, social, sensory.

**Ph: 49 21 6265**

#### Child and Family Health Team

Kaleidoscope – services provided to families with children 0-12 years of age who are experiencing difficulties in several areas of their lives, including behaviour, physical health, school performance, peer and family relationships, emotional well being.

**Ph: 49 24 6400**

#### Child Psychiatry Service

Kaleidoscope – services are provided to children and their families where a child is exhibiting, is suspected of having, or is at risk of developing emotional behavioural problems. Examples of the type of problems are: Adjustment disorders; Tourette’s Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Separation Anxiety, Conduct Problems, Anorexia or Bulimia Nervosa, Personality problems, Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Depression, Phobias, School refusal, sleep problems, bereavement etc.

**Ph: 49 24 6200**

#### Child and Family Health Nursing

Kaleidoscope – services offered to families and children 0-18 years.

**Ph: 49 24 6300**

#### First Steps Parenting Program

Kaleidoscope – a parenting service for parents with children aged 0-5 years.

**Ph: 49 855150**

#### Paediatric Speech Pathology Department – John Hunter

Kaleidoscope – services provided for children aged 0-18 years that are experiencing any type of communication delays or difficulties.

**Ph: 49 21 3727**

#### Speech Pathology Clinic – University of Newcastle

Services provided to children and adults in the Hunter region who have communication and/or swallowing difficulties

**Ph: 49 21 7386**

#### Home Start Program

Services provided to families with children under 5 years who may be isolated financially, geographically or socially e.g., sole parents, mothers new to the area, teenage mothers, and multiple births.

**Ph: 49 21 6842**

### Useful Websites

<http://www.mja.com.au/public/nutrition/contents.html>

Articles on topics including healthy levels of exercise for children, the importance of healthy snacking, child obesity, bone development, and healthy eating styles.

Poisons Information – Women’s and Children’s Hospital – Adelaide

<http://www.wch.sa.gov.au/aid/poisons.html>

Information on safe storage of poisons, the prevention of poisoning, and safe treatment of poisoning by inhalation, swallowing, or via the skin or eye.

Kid safe fact sheets

<http://www.kidsafe.comn.au/factsheets.html>

A wide range of fact sheets, including safety practices according to age, safe selection, installation and maintenance of toys and nursery equipment, water safety, hot cars and poisoning.

NSW Health: How safe are children’s playgrounds?

<http://www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au/health-public-affairs/mhcs/publications/3065.html>

Guidelines for assessing the safety of play equipment. Also has links to translations of this article in twelve other languages.

US Consumer Product Safety Commission home playground safety checklist

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/pg1.pdf>

10 steps to keep your back yard play equipment safe for your children.

Victorian Government Better Health Channel – Dental Health

[http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/hbcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/hc\\_mouthteeth\\_dental?OpenDocument](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/hbcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/hc_mouthteeth_dental?OpenDocument)

19 articles, with topics including babies’ teeth, preventing caries, common oral conditions to age five, and what to do if your child’s teeth are knocked out.

The Dental Zone Parents’ Centre

<http://www.saveyoursmile.com/parents/>

Articles on topics including the importance of baby teeth, when to worry about thumb sucking and “pacifiers” (this is an American site) preventing baby bottle tooth decay, and encouraging your child to brush.

Children’s Hospital at Westmead Fact sheet – Language Development in the Early Years

<http://www.chw.edu.au/parents/factsheets/language/htm>

Miles to age three, and ideas as to what you can do to help your child learn to listen and talk.

SA Govt. Child and Youth Health – How Children Learn

[http://www.cyh.com/cyh/parenttopics/usr\\_index0.stm?topic\\_id=330](http://www.cyh.com/cyh/parenttopics/usr_index0.stm?topic_id=330)

An overview of learning from birth to age five, and tips for encouraging your children’s learning and development.

Parenting to Make a Difference – Language Development

<http://www.parentingme.com/language.htm>

Receptive and expressive language milestones, and activities on children and bilingualism and age-appropriate activities for encouraging language development.

The Stepfamily Association of South Australia

<http://www.stepfamily.asn.au/cgi-bin/index.cgi>

This site can be accessed without becoming a member. Includes masses of articles (many from members sharing their experiences) forums and links to useful websites sorted by topics.

# *Privacy Statement*

In order to provide you with the highest standard of service, Elder Street Early Childhood Centre is required to collect personal information from you about your child/ren and your family before and during the course of your child's enrolment at our Centre. We are committed to protecting your privacy and we abide by the National Privacy Principles contained within the Privacy Act. Privacy of your personal information is important to us and we conduct our business with respect and integrity.

## **INFORMATION COLLECTED**

Basic details are usually collected directly from parents, such as your names, address/es, phone contacts, your child's name, date of birth, medical details, health, routines, likes and dislikes, etc. In addition, we are required to hold information regarding your child's Child Care Benefit entitlements.

All this information is vital in assisting us to provide the best possible individual care for your child and for processing payments. Some of the information we collect is to satisfy the centre's legal obligations under the relevant child care legislation.

Naturally much of this information is of a personal nature and some of it might be regarded as "sensitive", and not the sort of information that you would wish to have unnecessarily disclosed to others.

## **PRIVACY COMMITMENTS**

We assure you that:

- this information will only be used by our child care professionals in order to deliver your child's care to the highest standards;
- it will not be disclosed to those not associated with the care of your child without your express consent'
- you may ask to seek access to the information held about you and your child and we will provide access without undue delay;
- this access might comprise inspection of your child's records or the provision of copies of information by the Centre;
- we will take reasonable steps to ensure at all times that the details we keep about your family are accurate, complete and up to date;
- we will take reasonable steps to protect this information from misuse or less and from unauthorized access or disclosure; and,
- our staff are committed to respect these principles at all times.