



Family Handbook 2019

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1. WELCOME

We warmly welcome you and your child to **St Faith's Child Care and Early Learning Centre**. Your child's welfare and development is our highest priority and it is our aim to provide the best level of care and education possible.

We believe early education is an extension of the family home and that the family is the most important influence in a child's life, as well as the primary source of information about each child. We aim to establish positive, open, honest and trusting partnerships with parents, caregivers and families to ensure that we meet the changing needs of the children, families and the centre's community.

We believe the key to providing high quality early education relies on the provision of high quality early childhood programs, facilities, resources and professionals who recognise the importance of enriching the lives of young children based on sound principles and practices of early childhood education and development.

Our Philosophy

Enhancing Children's Learning and Development

We value the importance of play because we believe children learn best in an environment that allows them to explore and discover. We provide an emergent curriculum that combines children's interests with intentional teaching practices to maximise the learning opportunities for each child. We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected. We respect children as active participants in their learning and work towards empowering them to be confident decision-makers. We strongly advocate learning that is centred within the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) which forms the foundation for ensuring that children receive the best start to a lifetime of learning.

Promoting Health and Safety

Making choices that enable us to lead healthy and safe lives is central to each person's sense of wellbeing. We believe in ensuring our policies and procedures are responsive to the protection of children, staff and families. We value the importance of providing an environment which is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for all children.

Respect for the Environment

We believe the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. The physical environment at St Faith's is designed to be aesthetically pleasing with a focus on sustainability and natural resources. We value both indoor and outdoor spaces equally as places for learning where children can explore, investigate, experiment and participate in shaping the learning

environment. We believe in teaching children about caring for the natural environment by providing them with a range of opportunities for rich, hands-on learning experiences about nature and the environment. We recognise that sustainability is not so much a “lifestyle choice” as it is a way of living.

Valuing People

We believe the people within our service are what make our service unique. We believe the strength of our curriculum lies with the dedication of our professional early childhood educators. Our educators are intentional in their approach to creating meaningful opportunities for learning. Together our educators explore and share diverse pedagogical practices and experiences. We value personal qualities such as integrity, compassion, respect and motivation. We believe having staff with diverse skills, experiences and backgrounds contributes to a rich learning environment for children.

Promoting children’s sense of security and belonging

Children feel they belong because of the relationship they have with family, community, culture and place. We believe in an anti-bias approach to diversity where respecting and celebrating differences is an integral part of our daily program. We acknowledge that the families and communities in which children live are diverse, and children’s learning and development is enhanced when educators respect their cultures and ways of knowing and being. We aim to help children understand what is fair and just, to respect and accept diversity and address social justice. We value Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and are proud to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land.

Partnerships with families and communities

St Faith’s values reciprocal relationships with families and the community. We acknowledge the importance of children, parents and educators as partners in a learning environment that promotes the wellbeing, education and development of all children. We acknowledge that open communication with parents is vital in establishing and maintaining trusting relationships. We support and value parent participation at our centre and respect individual parenting styles and practices. Through our social and charitable activities we encourage the children to see themselves as valued members of the community.

Effective Leadership

We believe in encouraging families to partner us in the centre and share in the decision making. We value openness and trust and encourage staff and families to ask questions, contribute ideas and voice opinions. We value professional learning and development and believe critical reflection leads to on-going improvement. Through collaborative and effective leadership, St Faith’s strives each day to be a high quality provider of children’s services in line with government standards and regulations. St Faith’s is committed to regularly reviewing and revising our Quality Improvement Plan with regard to the National Quality Standards.

(Reviewed Aug, 2018)

2. LICENCE INFORMATION

Approved provider

This service is privately owned by Dynamik Nominees Pty Ltd and Rodleen Enterprises Pty Ltd trading as **St Faith's Child Care and Early Learning Centre**. It is approved by the Department of Education and Early Childhood (DEECD) to provide education and care for 80 children, aged from birth to 6 years.

The Centre Director (Nominated Supervisor) is Kirsty Rudd. Kirsty is also Educational Leader of the Centre and is a qualified Early Childhood (Kindergarten) Teacher. She also has a Bachelor of Business (Accounting). The Centre Coordinator (Nominated Supervisor) is Debra Burman. Debra has a Diploma in Children's Services and many years of experience managing education and care services. Together Kirsty and Debra are responsible for the day to day operation and management of the service.

National Law and Regulations

The service operates under the Education and Care Services National Law Act (2010) and the Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011).

The National Law and Regulations cover all aspects of the daily operation of the Centre, as well as determining staff to child ratios, staff qualifications, equipment requirements, building requirements and accident and emergency procedures. A copy of the National Law and National Regulations are displayed in the centre's foyer and parents are welcome to view these at any time.

A person responsible for the day to day running of the service is on duty at the centre at all times.

3. NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK

The new *National Quality Framework* came into effect on the 1 January 2012. This has involved the introduction and implementation of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011)* The *Education and Care Services National Law Act (2010)* and the *National Quality Standard (2011)*.

This aim of this reform was to deliver a higher standard of care for children in the critical areas of education, health and safety and to provide clearer and comprehensive information for families so they can choose the best services for their child.

The *National Quality Standard* is linked to the *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)* which has been designed to advance all children's learning and development from birth to 8 years by supporting all early childhood professionals to work together and with families to support all children to achieve the learning and development outcomes.

This framework outlines the fundamental components to inform and guide educators in the delivery of consistent and high quality experiences and programs across all approved services.

For more information on the new National Quality Standard, see: www.acecqa.gov.au.

Assessment and rating

The National Quality Standard is accompanied by a national quality rating and assessment process.

Each service will receive a rating for each quality area and an overall rating. These ratings must be displayed by the service and will be published on the ACECQA (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority) and the My Child websites.

There are five rating levels within the national quality rating and assessment process:

Significant improvement required	Indicates that a service is not meeting the National Quality Standard and the regulator is working closely with the service to immediately improve its quality (otherwise the service's approval to operate will be withdrawn).
Working towards National Quality Standard	Indicates that a service is working towards meeting the National Quality Standard.
Meets National Quality Standard	Indicates that a service is meeting the National Quality Standard.
Exceeds National Quality Standard	Indicates that a service is exceeding the National Quality Standard.
Excellent	Indicates that a service demonstrates excellence and is recognized as a sector leader.

Our service Exceeds National Quality Standard

(Assessment and Rating 12th December 2018)

3. ENROLMENT

Enrolments are offered according to vacancies available, educator/child ratio requirements, the child's age and placement on the waiting list. The centre gives priority to existing children and siblings of children enrolled at the centre while taking into account the Australian Government's "priority of access guidelines".

Priority of Access Guidelines

To ensure the system of allocating child care services is fair, the Australian Government has set out "Priority of Access Guidelines" for allocating places. The guidelines only apply to approve child care. They are used when there is a waiting list for a child care service or when a number of parents are applying for a limited number of vacant places.

Every approved child care service has to abide by the guidelines and tell you about them when you enroll your child into care.

Priorities

- First Priority: a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect;
- Second Priority: a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under Section 14 of the 'A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999' ;
- Third Priority: any other child.

Within these main categories priority should also be given to the following children:

- children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families;
- children in families which include a disabled person;
- children in families which include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold of **\$45,114** for **2017-18**, or who or whose partner is on income support
- children in families from a non-English speaking background;
- children in socially isolated families; and
- Children of single parents.

A child care service may require a Priority 3 child to vacate a place to make room for a child with a higher priority. They can only do so if you:

- are notified when your child first entered care that your service follows this policy
- Are given at least 14 days notice of the need for your child to vacate.

Immunisation and enrolling in childcare: changes to Victorian Law

In an effort to improve childhood immunisation rates, the Victorian Government amended the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008. The amendments came into effect from 1st January 2016 and mean that early childhood education and care services cannot confirm enrolment of a child unless the parent/carer has provided documentation that shows the child:

- Is fully vaccinated for their age, or
- Is on a recognised catch-up schedule if their child has fallen behind with their vaccinations, or
- Has a medical reason not be vaccinated.

‘Conscientious objection’ to vaccination is not an exemption.

Proof of immunisation for the purpose of enrolling in childcare and kindergarten

Families must provide an *Immunisation History Statement* from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) as evidence of immunisation.

Four-year-old Kindergarten program

The Kindergarten at this service is only offered to children attending the Long Day Care Service.

The following children are eligible.

- Children who have been granted approval to receive funding for a second year of kindergarten
- Children who were eligible to attend in the previous year but deferred.
- Children who will have turned four years of age by 30 April in the year she/he will attend kindergarten.
- Children turning six years of age in their year at kindergarten who have been granted an exemption from school-entry age requirements by their regional office of the DEECD

(Refer to DEECD Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria)

Please refer to our Enrolment Policy for further details regarding allocation of Kindergarten places.

Information required for enrolment records

Emergency Contacts

It is a legal requirement for the centre to have the names and telephone numbers of **emergency contacts**. Parents need to ensure the people who are listed as emergency contacts are aware of their responsibility. Details of emergency contacts, as well as the name, address and telephone number of the child's doctor must be supplied before care can commence.

Parents must notify the centre immediately if there are any changes to emergency contacts. This information is vital in case of an emergency and parents cannot be contacted. The information is maintained on the child's file.

Medical Information

If your child is at risk of anaphylaxis, or suffers from a medical condition (e.g., asthma, epilepsy, diabetes), you are required to provide details of the condition and any management procedure to be followed with respect to the medical condition.

Custody and Access Orders

Natural parents have access to their child at any time unless court orders relating to the child state otherwise. If there are court orders regarding your child, the Centre must have a copy of the current order. If the Centre does not have a copy of the current order then staff are unable to deny the natural parent access. It is parent's responsibility to notify the Centre and provide copies of any details that are changed as soon as possible.

Families cannot use the Centre as a mutual drop zone for delivery and collection of children under court orders without consultation and approval by the Centre Director.

All issues regarding custody and access orders are maintained as highly confidential.

4. ORIENTATION

When a child is offered a position at the Centre a mutually agreeable time will be arranged for orientation visits. Orientation visits provide an opportunity for parents and educators to meet and spend some time in the children's room to observe the programs and routines. The orientation program is designed to be relaxed and flexible giving the child and parent an opportunity to observe and participate in the new environment.

It is generally accepted that most children will cry at some stage during the separation period. Educators are attentive to the needs of children and parents during this time and will re-assure and assist where necessary. It is recommended that educators and parents work together closely during this period and decide together on the extent of time that a child is left. It is generally recommended that the time a child is left is minimal to begin with and then to build up from an hour or so, to a half and then a full day. Each child responds differently depending on their previous experience, social and emotional skills and temperament.

Educators will aim to establish a special routine such as waving at the window as they say goodbye and then re-direct your child to their favourite activity to assist with the settling process.

We strongly recommend you inform an educator when you are about to leave, wait until an educator is free to comfort your child, always say "goodbye", and then leave without hesitation to avoid prolonging the separation period.

5. PRIVACY POLICY

To fulfill its statutory obligations necessary to operate the service and to provide the highest standard of service, our organisation is required to collect personal information about those children and parents/guardians using our service before and during the course of their child/children's enrolment in our service.

Our organisation and all its educators are committed to protecting children's and parent's / guardian's privacy whilst abiding by the National Privacy Principles, now an integral part of the Privacy Act 1988.

What information do we collect, why and how is it used?

Basic details are usually collected directly from parents/guardians such as names, addresses, phone contacts and it is also necessary for our educators to collect details regarding children's name, date of birth, medical details, health, routines, likes and dislikes, which make up a personal data profile. Some of the information we collect is to satisfy the service's legal obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law Act (2010) and the Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011).

We are also required to collect and hold information regarding families' Child Care Subsidy entitlements and this information is vital to enable us to provide the best possible individual care for children and for processing payments.

Naturally much of the children and parents/guardians information is determined to be of a strictly personal nature and at times it might be regarded as 'sensitive', therefore not the sort of information that would be unnecessarily disclosed.

Parent/guardians are therefore assured that:

- Information collected will only be used by our child care professionals to enable them to deliver care of the highest standards to fulfill its statutory obligations necessary to operate the service.
- Information collected including identifying CRN numbers, will not be disclosed to anyone not associated with the care of your child/children without your express consent, then only used or disclosed for the Centre's primary purpose unless otherwise directed by specified lawful authority.
- Reasonable steps are taken to ensure children and parent's/guardian's information collected is accurate, complete and up to date. Personal information collected is securely held and protected from misuse or loss and from unauthorised access or disclosure.

- You are free to seek access to the information held about you and your child/children, and access is provided without undue delay; it may entail the inspection of your child/children's records or the provision of copies of the information.
- There will be no charges made for requesting this information but there may be a fee levied to cover the cost associated with the processing of this request.
- Should the occasion arise, unless there is a good practical or legal reason to require identification, parents/guardians or other individuals have the option to provide information anonymously.

We are committed to follow up all comments and/or complaints within 14 days and aim to resolve them to enable us to provide a high standard of service.

6. FEES AND CHILD CARE SUBSIDY (CCS)

Payment method

Fees must be paid weekly by Direct Debit – A Direct Debit Agreement must be completed at enrolment.

Declined Payment Fee

Should a direct debit payment be declined by your bank, an administration fee of **\$20** will apply.

Overdue Fees

If your fees fall into arrears for 2 weeks or more, your child's place will be suspended until payment is received.

Deposit

When a place is offered, a deposit (holding fee) equal to 50% of the weekly fee for days booked, is required to secure your child's place. This deposit is refundable upon commencement at the centre. *In the event that you do not take the place for whatever reason, the deposit is non-refundable.*

Bond

Upon commencement at the Centre, a **BOND** equal to two week's fees is to be paid. The bond is calculated on the **full fee**, not the reduced fee (gap) after child care subsidy is applied.

Parents must give two weeks' notice of withdrawing from the centre or forfeit the two weeks' bond payment in lieu. If your child is absent in this notice period you will not be entitled to receive Child Care Subsidy for the absences therefore full fees will apply. (See below for further information regarding absent days).

Absences

Normal fees are charged for all absences that fall on your child's booked days **including sick days and gazette Public Holidays.**

Holidays

Normal fees apply when children are on holidays with the exception of a two week period over Xmas/New Year (dates confirmed annually). During this period a reduced rate (50%) is applied for children who take holidays **for one or both weeks**. Parents need to complete a *holiday notice form* for this period to obtain the reduced rate.

Public Holidays

The centre is closed on all public holidays and normal fees apply.

Late Fee

This centre closes at 6.00pm. **A late fee will be charged at \$2.00 per minute after 6.00pm.**

Please note, it is important to ring the centre if you are going to be later than the designated pick up time, so that staff/child ratios can be maintained at all times.

Child Care Subsidy - Eligibility

The Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is the main way the Government assists families with their child care fees. Some basic requirements must be satisfied for an individual to be eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy for a child. These include:

- the age of the child (must be aged 13 or under and not attending secondary school, except in certain circumstances where an individual may be eligible for a child who does not meet this criteria, such as children with a disability or medical condition in certain circumstances)
- the child meeting immunisation requirements
- the individual, or their partner, meeting the residency requirements listed in the legislation.

In addition, to be eligible for Child Care Subsidy the individual must be liable to pay for care provided, the care must be delivered in Australia by an approved child care provider, and not be part of a compulsory education program.

Child Care Subsidy - Level of entitlement

There are three factors that determine a family's *level* of Child Care Subsidy. These are:

- **Combined annual family income**
- **Activity test** – the activity level of both parents
- **Service type** – type of child care service and whether the child attends school

The Child Care Subsidy is generally paid directly to service providers to be passed on to families as a fee reduction. Families make a co-contribution to their child care fees and pay to the provider the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount.

There is also targeted additional fee assistance for vulnerable families through the Child Care Safety Net.

Absences from child care

Under the law, you are still entitled to receive Child Care Subsidy if your child is unable to attend approved child care and you are charged a fee, up to 42 absence days in the financial year. These can be used for any reason and will not require proof and include public holidays. In addition to your 42 days of 'initial absences' the Government may continue to pay Child Care Subsidy on your behalf for additional absence days approved under the additional absence provisions (please ask if you require further information regarding these conditions).

Important note

You cannot claim Child Care Subsidy for absences if your child has not started care or has stopped care. You also cannot claim Child Care Subsidy for absences if you have notified your child care service you are taking your child out of care on a set date and then change your mind and remove your child earlier. **Therefore if your child is absent during the two week notice period you will not be entitled to receive Child Care Subsidy so full fees will apply.**

How can I get more information on the child care package?

Visit the Department of Human Services Child Care Subsidy website humanservices.gov.au/childcaresubsidy

7. DAILY ROUTINES

Delivery and Collection of Children

Always bring your child into the appropriate room and speak to staff to make sure they know your child has arrived. Children must not be left without a staff member in charge.

Please ensure that the front door is securely closed each time you enter or leave the Centre for the protection of all children.

Always sign your child into and out of the centre.

Written advice is to be given to staff if the person to collect your child differs from the enrolment record. Proof of identification may be required and only nominated people can collect children.

All people collecting children must be a minimum of 16 years of age, unless in exceptional circumstances when approval must be sought from the Director.

Personal Belongings

Parents are encouraged to clearly label all of their child's belongings, as the centre takes no responsibility for lost items.

What to Bring:

- A labeled bag containing a full change of clothes. Please provide extra changes of clothes and underpants if your child is toilet training.
- A hat and coat in the colder months and sun hat in warmer months. (See "***Sun Protection Policy***" for further details regarding hats). Your child will be applied with sunscreen before going outside in summer months.
- For children in nappies you will need to provide enough disposable nappies for your child. You can bring in a daily supply or, if you prefer, a large pack that we will store for you. We will let you know when you need to bring in more. Children are changed every two hours or more frequently as required.
- Bottles. These must be labeled with your child's name.
- Anything your child may need to make him/her feel comfortable e.g., dummy, soft toy.

What Not to Bring:

- Any war toys or games as they may lead to violent play.
- Thongs, crocs or “slip on” shoes that are dangerous for outdoor play (i.e. climbing)
- Food from home ***especially*** nuts, peanut butter, fruit bars or any other confectionary. This policy has been developed to minimise the risk of exposure of children with severe anaphylaxis to trigger foods.
- It is preferable that children do not bring toys from home, unless they are a security item. These need to be well labeled as they tend to get mixed in with centre toys. If children do bring toys from home, **parents** have the responsibility of collecting them.

Dangerous items in your child's bag:

Bags are kept in the children's rooms therefore they must not contain dangerous items such as cigarettes, matches, medication and small items that children could choke on. A separate bag should be kept for child care only to prevent this from occurring.

If you are bringing in medication to be administered to your child while they are at the centre, ensure you hand the medication to staff on arrival and complete the appropriate written authorisation.

8. CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Our Centre aims to provide programs that cater for children's physical, intellectual, social and emotional needs, which respects individual differences and offers creative play experiences that are non-discriminatory.

Our Centre encourages cooperative, non-aggressive play. Play materials that enhance and encourage creative problem solving are offered. Toys, which encourage aggressive or violent behaviour, are not used or allowed (e.g., guns, weapons, war toys, etc)

Children are grouped according to age during the day, and are in mixed age grouping at the start and end of the day. All children are placed in a particular room according to age and change rooms at the appropriate age and when a position is available. All programs are specifically designed to meet the needs of individual children within each room.

All staff with the support of the Educational Leader are involved in developing the children's programs based on an ***Emergent Curriculum*** which:

- Encourages children to be responsible for their own learning through choices in experiences, interests and routines.
- Uses conversations, actions and play as the basis for teaching.
- Involves the children as partners in teaching by seeking out ideas, opinions, thoughts and questions.
- Encourages the children to further their independence and self-help skills by assisting within the routine.
- Involves the children in interest projects to further their learning and knowledge. In its practice, the teacher takes on the role of facilitator, taking what is seen and heard, and bringing to children the opportunity to discover more, dig deeper and construct further knowledge.
- Involves the families as partners to gather a comprehensive picture of the whole child.
- Promotes positive relationships with individuals and in group experiences.
- Gives children control of the day within a flexible and consistent routine.

Also refer to our "Programming Policy" a copy of which is contained in our Policies and Procedures handbook. Please ask for a copy if you would like one.

Documentation

Observations and an understanding of children's experiences and learning are reflected in children's individual on line Educa account. Documentation is focused on children's strengths and mastery of developmental achievements within a social context. Documentation may include photographs with anecdotes about the children's interests, abilities, experiences and friendships, work samples and children's dialogue and interpretation of their learning. These may be observed in a group e.g., a small group of children sitting together working on a task, or observations of individual children's learning experiences. Educators actively encourage parents to contribute to their child's Educa account.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is critical in the maintenance of sensitive or personal information recorded in individual records. Therefore sensitive or personal information is excluded from Educa. At enrolment, parent permission is sought for photos of children to be taken, stored and displayed for programming and documenting purposes.

All children's records are **confidential** and will only be released, to outside agencies, with parent's permission and/or by Court order. All records pertaining to the child are securely stored for a period of not less than 3 years. After this time shredding will destroy the records.

Community Visits

The Centre values the involvement with the wider community and exposing children to a range of enjoyable experiences. "In service" visits or programs are organised from time to time e.g., drama workshops. Parents are notified of these visits in advance and are welcome to attend. Children who do not normally attend on the day of the visit are also welcome to come along provided a parent or carer stays at the Centre with their child.

Festivals/Celebrations

Where possible, festivals and celebrations will be included in the program and celebrated at a child orientated level, incorporating appropriate activities for their level of development.

9. NUTRITION

We understand the important role we play in meeting the nutritional needs of children while in care. Children who attend a full day of long day care will be offered at least 50% of their recommended daily dietary intake while in care. Guidelines lines around healthy eating and our Nutrition Policy can be found in the foyer or by asking a friendly team member.

Special Diets

Parents are requested to provide details of any special diets. The children's needs are catered for within the Centre's resources and budget. If necessary, parents are requested to supply a list of foods that their child is allergic to or should avoid. This information will be displayed in the kitchen and children's rooms.

Parents wishing to celebrate their child's birthday may do so by providing a birthday cake for their child's group. In accordance with our registered Food Safety Program, the cake must be **purchased from a registered food premise** e.g., Coles Supermarket, Fergusson's Bakery etc.,) and be labeled with a list of ingredients. The cake must be given to the Kitchen and details of where and when the cake was purchased will be recorded by the Cook. Home baked cakes are not permitted under our Food Safety Program. No other food, treats or snacks are permitted. (Please also refer to our ***Anaphylaxis Policy***).

Bottle Feeding Guidelines

Parents are requested to supply formula if their child is on formula otherwise milk will be supplied.

Bottles will be offered to the children according to their individual needs and routines taking into account their age and stage of development and in consultation with parents.

Cleaning of Bottles and Dummies

Bottles from home are not sterilized at the Centre. They are rinsed after each feed and sent home at the end of the day for washing/sterilizing.

The Centre has some reserve supply of bottles (labeled) however parents are required to supply their own.

Children's dummies will be washed and stored in separate containers while at the Centre.

10. PARENT CONTACT/INVOLVEMENT

Ways of Being Involved

Our Centre aims to encourage positive relationships between staff, parents, children and the community. The interrelationships between the people connected with each service should be facilitated through mutual respect, warmth, support and co-operation. Since the child's earliest experiences occur in the home and parental interest and involvement in these experiences is significant to the child's development, a co-operative effort by parents and child care workers is essential in providing continuity of experiences from the home to the Centre.

Through positive and open communication between parents and the centres we can ensure that there is expression and acknowledgment of individual needs, and facilitation of shared decision making in regard to these needs. It is important that parents feel comfortable in taking an active role in the service, to the degree that they are able. Busy parents may prefer to limit their involvement to simply reading the centre's monthly newsletter.

PARENTS CAN BECOME INVOLVED IN THE CENTRE BY:

- Participating in daily events such as art & craft, reading stories, singing songs or sharing a skill with a group of children.
- Attending the centre's social events.
- Contributing their ideas during discussions with staff regarding their child's individual program and developmental progress.

Parental involvement is genuinely encouraged, however to ensure that the program is suitable for visitors on a particular day, prior arrangements should be made with the Room Leader. If a difficulty arises as a result of parent participation and the Coordinator determines that this form of parental involvement is unsettling for the children a decision will be made to discontinue such arrangements.

PARENTS CAN MAKE SUGGESTIONS TO ENHANCE THE CENTRE'S PROGRAM BY:

- Putting their ideas in writing into the Centre's 'Suggestion Box'.
- Communicating with the Centre via phone or email
- Completing questionnaires and surveys
- Speaking to educators and management about their views

Communicating with parents

The Centre keeps parents informed of news and events via email and Educa and also places hard copies of information on display throughout the centre. Regular newsletters from management and individual rooms are produced and circulated and published on Educa

Important notices e.g., notification of an outbreak of a contagious illness, are placed in prominent locations throughout the Centre and on Educa. Reminder notices are given regarding special events being held at the Centre.

Notice boards

The notice boards throughout the Centre display information about current events/programs in the community, information about child health and safety as well as specific centre information.

Concerns/Complaints

Parents are welcome to discuss all aspects of their child's development, or the operation of the Centre with the staff. If parents at any time have a concern or complaint they are encouraged to follow the centre's Compliment and Complaint Management Policy and procedure.

Complaint Procedure

Compliments, complaints and other forms of feedback provide valuable information on levels of client satisfaction and provide us with an opportunity to improve upon all aspects of service. Feedback will be taken seriously and will be seen as an opportunity for improvement.

Dealing with Parent/Staff Conflict

- Parents are encouraged to discuss the problem/concern/complaint with the relevant staff member concerned
- If parents feels further action is necessary after discussion with the relevant staff member, they should take the matter up with the Room Leader in their child's group.
- If parents are still unhappy, or the complaint is with the Room Leader, the Room Leader can offer to take the matter to the Centre Coordinator, or
- Parents can make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Centre Coordinator, or

- Parents can complete a *Compliment and Complaint Form* and lodge this with the Coordinator.
- The Coordinator will discuss possible outcomes with parents and staff
- The Coordinator will advise the Director of the discussions and outcomes.

Dealing with Parent/Management Conflict

- Parents can make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Coordinator, or
- Parents can complete a *Compliment and Complaint Form* and lodge this with the Coordinator.

For notification by phone, contact (03) 9354 6132

For notification by mail, address to:

The Director
St Faiths Child Centre
56 Mountain view Rd,
Montmorency VIC 3094
Email: stfaithschildcare@bigpond.com

Parents may also take concerns or complaints to an **Authorised Officer** at:

Northern Metropolitan QARD Area Team
900/1 McNab Avenue, (PO Box 2141)
FOOTSCRAY VIC 3011
Contact Number: (03) 8397 0372
Email: nmr.qar@edumail.vic.gov.au
Area Manager: Karen Cullen

11. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy

A list of common infectious illnesses, their exclusion periods and policies and procedures related to illness and minimising the spread of infectious diseases are available in the foyer.

If your child presents at the Centre with signs of illness, the Nominated Supervisor may advise they are not well enough to participate in the service's daily activities and you will be asked to make alternative arrangements until they are well or the exclusion period has ended (you may be asked to provide a medical clearance letter before your child can return).

Should your child become ill at the service; observation, documentation and first aid will commence and you may be contacted to collect your child from the service and seek further medical advice. Please note that paracetamol (Panadol) is not regarded as first response and can only be administered in emergency situations and with prior written parental consent. It is important that you read the service's medication policy carefully to know the guidelines for educators to administer medication to your child including Panadol, prescription and non-prescription medication.

How Sick is Too Sick For Child Care?

When making your decision about whether you should send your child to child care, ask yourself these questions:

- Will my child be well enough to comfortably and happily participate in the activities of the day?
- Will my child's care provider be able to care for my child without it affecting their ability to look after the other children?
- Will my child pass the illness on to their playmates if I send them in today?

Often the first sign of illness is a raised temperature. If a child develops a temperature of 38C or more while at the centre, his/her parent (or emergency contact) will be notified. If the temperature does not reduce and the child is unwell and/or not coping, the parent will be asked to collect the child.

Accident and Emergency Procedures

If a child injures him/herself at the Centre and the Responsible Person considers immediate medical attention is necessary; parents will be contacted and requested to take the child to a doctor. If parents cannot be contacted then the emergency contact will be notified. Parents are required to pick up their child as soon as possible.

If it is considered that there is a medical emergency and that immediate hospital treatment is required, an ambulance will be called. Staff will endeavour to contact parents. If this is not possible, the emergency contact or Doctor nominated by the parents will be called. Any ambulance or medical expenses will be the responsibility of the parent.

All information relating to injury is recorded in using our Accident/Injury/Illness form which must be signed by the parent. Please inform staff, when you arrive, if your child has had an accident whilst absent from the centre, e.g., overnight, weekend etc.

Serious, critical or recurring issues will be reported in writing to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours on a ***Notification of Serious Incident*** form in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.

A First Aid Kit containing emergency instructions is maintained at the Centre. A First Aid trained staff member is on duty all hours. No drugs are kept on the premises.

Medication

If a child requires medication during the day, all details are to be recorded on our Medication Form and signed by the parent. Medication will not be given to children without a parent's permission. All medication must be in the original bottle and have been prescribed for that particular child.

All staff are to check with parents when signing for medication that the dosage authorised by parents is the same as that on the child's named medication. If the medication dosage does not indicate dosage for appropriate age i.e., no prescribed dose for under 2's (e.g., some cough mixtures) the staff are not to administer without a medical certificate from the child's doctor.

If the dosage authorised by parents exceeds that on the medication staff **must** administer that prescribed on the medication.

Also refer to our "Medication Policy" a copy of which is contained in our Policies and Procedures handbook. Please ask for a copy if you would like one.

Emergency Evacuation and Lockdowns

A copy of our Fire and Emergency Procedures is displayed in each room and in the foyer. Staff are required to be familiar with emergency procedures. Evacuation drills and lockdown drills are practiced regularly (once per term).

Children's attendances are recorded through our Qikkids Kiosk program. Parents and persons authorised to deliver/collect children are required to log in and record their child/ren's arrival and departure using ipads designated for this purpose. These are located in each of 5 children's rooms at the centre. Should the Centre need to be evacuated the assembly points are listed on the emergency evacuation procedure.

Smoking, Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

Smoking is not permitted on the premises including outside areas and car park. Alcohol is not to be consumed on the premises during the hours of operation. The presence and consumption of illegal drugs is not permitted on the premises.

12. SUN PROTECTION AND APPROPRIATE CLOTHING

Sun Protection

Our Centre takes care to protect children and staff from direct exposure to the sun. This is extremely important as children are very vulnerable to sunburn, which can increase their chances of skin cancer by almost 50%. This is one of the most common forms prevalent in Australia and skin damage from sunburn can never be repaired.

Our Centre abides by all state regulations and the child care building code in regards to the amount of manufactured and natural shade available in the playground.

We recommend that parents pack clothing for children that will protect them from the sun, including longer sleeved t-shirts instead of singlets and loose clothing which covers all of their body (no midriffs or bare backs). On enrolment, parents are asked to purchase a Sunsmart approved hat for their child from the Centre. This will be labelled with your child's name and remain at the Centre.

Appropriate clothing policy

In addition to the Sun Protection Policy, when at the centre, staff and children are requested to:

- Wear shoes that support and protect the feet
- Tie back hair that is past shoulder length
- Limit jewellery to simple, non-scratch pieces
- Keep nails blunt and sensibly short

Staff will ensure that:

- Children are dressed in lighter weight clothing for sleep and rest time.
- Parents are encouraged to dress children in clothing suitable for the season.
- Parents are encouraged to dress children in clothes that the child can manage for toileting, dressing etc.
- Parents are encouraged to provide spare clothing to cater for changing weather conditions or accidents
- Children are monitored for heat and cold weather changes
- Children wear protective aprons when participating in painting or messy activities

13. SLEEP AND REST

The Centre aims to provide sleep and rest periods for children which meet the individual needs of the children and their families.

The Centre provides a safe and risk free sleep environment for children in the rooms by following guidelines set out by the National S.I.D.S. Council of Australia.

Time to rest is extremely important to young children who are exposed to a very full busy day. Sleep and rest times should be pleasant occasions for children during which they are encouraged to take a rest appropriate to their individual and developmental needs.

Children are to be comfortably dressed for sleep and covered appropriately for room temperatures. Educators are sensitive to cultural differences in attitudes to dressing for sleep.

14. BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE

At our service we recognise the importance of promoting acceptable behaviour within the childcare setting. We believe that all children have the right to expect positive approaches to discipline, which foster self-esteem, respect, tolerance and self-control. Behaviours which injure people either emotionally or physically or damage property are not acceptable. Educators and staff need to ensure that through their positive guidance of behaviour, they promote an environment that is safe, fair and considerate to all. **Positive guidance of behaviour** is the teaching in relation to what is a good thing to do and what is not, what is safe, what pleases other people and what angers and hurts other people.

IN THE CASE OF PERSISTENT INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

Educators will consult with the child's parents/ guardians. The room leader will discuss the situation with the parents/guardians in an attempt to find the possible cause/s of the behaviour. The room leader and the parents/guardians will, together, develop strategies for dealing with the unwanted behaviour, which could be implemented at home and at the Centre.

Should it be necessary, and with the consent of the parent/guardian, advice and assistance will be sought from relevant external specialists to address the matter. In extreme cases, to protect other children and staff, the centre reserves the right to exclude the child from the group; this may be a temporary or permanent measure.



56 Mountain View Road, Montmorency Vic 3094
Tel: (03) 9435 8496
stfaithschildcare@bigpond.com

FEE SCHEDULE AS AT 2/7/2018

Daily rate: \$120.00

Hours: 7:00am to 6:00pm

Days: Mon – Fri

Note: The centre is closed on all Public Holidays and normal fees are charged.

Late Fees

Late fees are charged at \$2.00 per minute for any child collected after 6:00pm.

Parent Acknowledgement

I have read and agree to comply with the requirements set out in this handbook and in the Service's policies.

Name:

Signature: Date: / /

Thank you for taking the time to read our Handbook. We would appreciate any feedback that will help us with quality improvement.

Parent Handbook Feedback

Comments regarding Handbook and Format:

Suggestions for Improvement:

Suggestions for additional information to be included: