



Torrensville

CHILD & FAMILY CENTRE



Parent/Guardian Handbook

Torrensville Child and Family Centre
is a social enterprise of



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ABN: 65 440 352 199
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Welcome!

Welcome to the Torrensville Child & Family Centre (the Centre).

Thank you for choosing us to care for your child. We hope your time here will be both happy and rewarding.

The Centre, licensed to cater for 77 children, commenced operation in 1977 as a community based, non-profit organisation, and is run by UnitingCare Wesley Bowden.

Much has changed since 1977 as we strive to improve and develop the Centre in order to provide the best quality care and education to the families using our service.

We welcome your comments and suggestions, and encourage your participation at whatever level in Centre life, as it helps us provide a service which best meets your child's needs, as well as your own as a parent or guardian.

Please take the time to read this handbook thoroughly, as it provides you with a good introduction to Centre life. If you have any questions or concerns, or would simply like more information on any item, please do not hesitate to ask any of our staff.



UnitingCare Wesley Bowden

Torrensville Child & Family Centre is a social enterprise of UnitingCare Wesley Bowden (UCWB). This means that as well as providing individualised, professional and caring childcare, you have the unique opportunity to access their services through direct referral from the Centre.

If you would like to know more about UCWB, please visit www.ucwb.org.au or call 08 8245 7100.

Hours of operation

The Centre is open from 7.00am until 6.00pm from Monday to Friday.

Children must be collected at 5.55pm so educators may conclude their duties and leave the Centre by 6pm.

Our Centre is closed on Public Holidays (standard fees apply).

We have 4 closure days for Professional Development. No fee is charged on these days.

Sections

We provide care in four sections:

- the Kindy Room caters for children from 3 – school age
- the Toddler Room caters for children from 2 to 3 years
- the Babies Room & Tiny Tots Room cater for infants from 6 weeks to 2 years

Each section is supervised by caring and experienced qualified educators. Educator levels meet licensing requirements at all times.

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Your child in our care

Settling your child into care

All parents/caregivers are encouraged to bring their children for an orientation period prior to the commencement of care and you are encouraged to stay with your child during this (Stay & Play) period. Normally parents/caregivers stay for progressively shorter periods of time, until your child is settled. It is important to always say goodbye to your child before you leave them. An educator will assist you during this settling in period.

What to bring for your child

Please provide the following items in a bag clearly labeled with the child's name:

- enough nappies for the day (5-6 is usually sufficient)
- 2-3 changes of clothes, including socks. Please ensure clothing is suitable for messy play
- jacket (if cold) & rubber boots during winter
- bottle - Clearly labeled and enough formula for the day if necessary
- dummy or other comforter as used at home
- water bottle – filled with water only
- appropriate footwear that are non-slip and fit securely to the foot. Thongs, loose scuffs or clogs are not safe for general wear.

NB: All items must be labeled.

Clothing and personal Items

Please ensure all items are clearly labeled with your child's name.

A lost and found box is located in the foyer. All items not claimed within a month will be donated to an appropriate charity.

Suitable Wear for Childcare

SunSmart clothing

It is recommended that for maximum protection from the sun your child wear the following clothing while at the Centre:

- Keep as much of your child's skin covered with clothes made from tight weave fabric e.g. t-shirt material, ensuring that shoulders are fully covered.
- Shirts/blouses with collars and long sleeves and long trousers/skirts offer the best protection. However elbow length sleeves and knee length shorts may be more appropriate and offer an acceptable compromise.
- Hats are to be worn by children during all outdoor times.



Play clothes

It is recommended that your child wear the following clothing:

- Comfortable, loose fitting clothing that doesn't restrict your child's movement
- No long flowing outfits, as these can often get caught in play equipment
- Try not to purchase clothes that have ribbons, ties or strings as these can be a choking hazard
- In the winter months we ask that you bring a jacket and beanie for your child to wear outside

Clothes suitable for children who are being toilet trained

To help children who are toileting, it is recommended that they wear the following:

- Pants and underwear that can be easily pulled up and down, e.g. tracksuit pants, elastic waisted pants
- Overalls are not recommended, as they are difficult for children to undo and do up in a hurry

Dressing your child for bed

Your child will be dressed in the following way when they sleep at the Centre:

- Wearing enough clothes that they will be warm when sleeping without overheating
- They will have no headwear on e.g. bonnets or beanies
- They will not have bibs or chains attached for their dummy

The Centre has clothing for use in emergencies only. Please wash and return these to an educator as soon as possible.

We do not encourage children to bring personal items from home (e.g. toys or jewellery) as educators cannot take responsibility for such items brought into the Centre.

Toilet Training

Toilet training is a natural part of development and should be a positive learning experience. Toilet training is usually initiated at the request of the parent/guardian and is carried out with the co-operation of educators, parent/caregivers and child. Please talk to the educators about your child's progress and readiness for toilet training.

If your child is toilet training/trained, please provide the following items in a bag clearly labeled with the child's name:

- 2-3 changes of clothes, including socks (extra if toileting)
- a nappy for sleep time, if needed

Remember: When toilet training, please provide lots of changes of clothes!



Sleep Needs

At the time of enrolment the child's sleep pattern will be discussed by the educators and parent/caregivers.

Where possible, we aim to maintain the child's usual sleep pattern. Babies sleep as required and toddlers usually go to bed after lunch. Children are left to sleep as long as they require, or for the period requested by the parent/caregivers.

Young children's sleep patterns change as they grow older, changes to these sleep patterns will be acknowledged as they occur. Children who no longer sleep are required to rest for a short period after lunch. This encourages some "quiet time" when their bodies can catch up.



Food and Nutrition

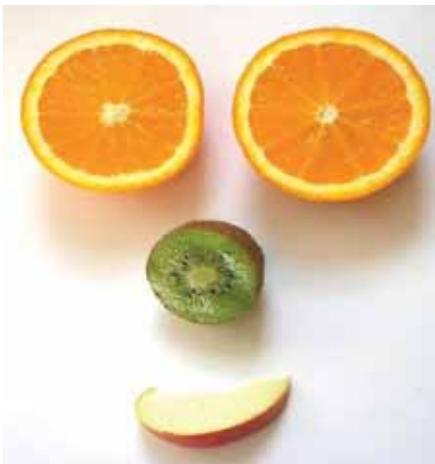
Our Centre will provide healthy food that meets the nutritional requirements of young children.

Meals offered are low in sugar, salt, fat and respect cultural/religious customs.

Whenever possible fresh ingredients are used and additives and preservatives kept to a minimum. It is very important that educators are notified of any allergies so that appropriate measures can be taken to keep children safe.

Meals provided by the Centre include morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and late snack. The times meals are offered may vary between Play Rooms so please ask your educators about meal times for your child.

Simple meals of stewed fruit and steamed vegetables are provided for infants starting on solid foods. New foods are introduced at the Centre only after they have been introduced at home.



Menus are developed on a seasonal basis. Suggestions and recipes from home are always welcome. The daily menu is displayed and records of what children have eaten are kept in each room. Please speak to the educators in the room if you wish to know more about what your child has eaten each day.

Meal times at the Centre are friendly and relaxed, with plenty of opportunities provided for children to develop and extend appropriate self-help skills. All children are encouraged to taste food but never forced to eat. Choices are provided with each meal so children can eat according to their own preferences.

Drinks are also a part of a healthy diet and suitable liquids are provided throughout the day.

Milk is offered at varying times. Water is available at all times. Water bottles are to be provided daily by parents.

Younger children and babies are offered drinks throughout the day. If your child requires formula, we ask that you provide this.

- We have a *"No food from home"* protocol -

Fees

Fees Payable

The fee paid by each family will vary according to the percentage of Child Care Subsidy the family is entitled to. An application and approval for Child Care Subsidy must be lodged before commencing care.

Child Care Subsidy



The Child Care Subsidy is provided by the Department of Human Services to help families with the cost of childcare. The level of assistance available depends on a family's total income. It is administered by Centrelink, and paid directly to the Centre..

In order to be eligible for the Child Care Benefit, families must also provide information regarding the immunisation status of children requiring care. Centrelink may request this information if a child's immunisation register is incomplete. Centrelink will notify the Centre if your eligibility expires, then full fees will be charged.

You must notify Centrelink of any changes in relation to your income or family situation.

Restrictions also apply to the total amount of Child Care Subsidy available to families each week.

Payment of Fees

All accounts are charged one week in arrears. We ask that accounts be kept up to date and paid within seven (7) days. If you are unable to pay within seven days please see the Director and negotiate alternative arrangements.

Failure to do so may result in care being cancelled.

Accounts will be emailed each week or placed in your pigeon hole upon request. Payments may be made by direct debit (preferred), internet banking or credit card.

Enrolments and Attendance

Attendance Records

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations conducts regular audits of Centres to ensure Child Care Subsidy claims are genuine. We need to provide proof of bookings therefore we must maintain accurate attendance records.

Parents are required to sign each child in and out at the beginning and end of each day they attend.

The attendance records are located in a designated area in each section. These records inform our administration officer of your weekly attendance and also serve as our Fire Register.

For this reason, it is very important to have all the attending children's names on the register. If a parent/guardian forgets to sign, the Centre will complete the time and provide reminders for a signature.

Permanent Bookings

When booking childcare all families are assigned a priority rating according to need. This is to ensure care is available to those who most need it.

Priority One – a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect.

Priority Two - 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*.

Priority Three – any other child.

Within these 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 on low incomes
- Children in families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Children in socially isolated families
- Children of single parents.

Families with a lesser rating may be asked to change a booking if space is required for a family with a higher priority rating, this would only occur if the Centre was fully booked for that particular session.

If you are unsure as to your priority rating, please see the Director.

Absences

Fees are payable for all permanent bookings including days absent due to sickness or holidays. Please notify the Centre two weeks in advance if your child/ren will be absent for any length of time. Your normal fee applies to the following:

- Public holidays
- Sickness
- Holidays



Changes to Enrolment

When circumstances change, please contact the Centre to discuss changes to the following or fill out a 'Notification of Changes' form located in the Admin area:

- child's hours or child's days of attendance
- holidays
- change of address or phone number
- change of your or your child's name
- change of emergency contact numbers in case of emergency or illness
- persons authorised to collect your child
- place of employment
- custody arrangements
- notice of cancellation of care
- immunisation updates

It is advisable to provide as much notice as possible for the change of booking so your needs may be accommodated. Any cancellation of any part of a booking requires 2 weeks' notice or payment in lieu of notice.

Casual Bookings

Casual bookings provide families with increased flexibility of care as childcare is used and paid for, only as required.

Unfortunately casual bookings are only available when there is space at the Centre. Therefore it is prudent to book casual care in advance. If this is not possible casual bookings may often be made by ringing the Centre on the day, educators may need to check current numbers prior to accepting such bookings. It is not advisable to turn up at the Centre without a prior booking.

Regular casual bookings are limited to 5 consecutive weeks, after which time the booking will be considered to be permanent; all the obligations of a permanent booking will apply and two weeks' notice of cancellation will be required.

Once booked, a casual session will be charged. Casual bookings must be paid for on the day.



Notification of Children's Attendance

On a daily basis, it is important that parents inform educators if their child/ren will not be attending that day. This allows the Centre to accommodate emergency or casual care for other children.

Also, if you require an extra day, please enquire with the educators at any time to see if there are any vacancies.

Collection of children

Security of children is a matter of great importance to all of us. Each enrolled child entering the Centre must be brought to an educator. Children may only be collected from the Centre by an authorised adult identified on the enrolment form.

If educators have not previously met a person collecting a child they will ask for photo identification before releasing the child. The person collecting your child must be 18 years of age or over. If someone different is going to collect your child it is essential to notify educators of this change in writing/by phone/email and provide details of the person which may be verified easily by educators.

Please ensure that you clearly understand the procedures and follow them carefully when you are delivering or collecting your child/ren, or if you arrange for someone else to do so.

Late Collection of Children

All children must be collected by 5:55pm on any given day. This enables the smooth running of the Centre and ensures that correct number of educators can be allocated and Licensing Requirements maintained.

For any children remaining at the Centre after 6.00pm there will be a **late fee** charge of \$15.00 for the first 15 minutes and \$2.00 per minute thereafter. If you are unable to collect your child/ren by 6.00pm, due to an emergency, please ring the Centre as soon as possible so appropriate arrangements can be made for the care of your child.



In the case of an unexplained lateness, educators at the Centre will attempt to contact your nominated emergency contacts and arrange for someone else to collect your child.

If, 30 minutes after the Centre closure time, educators are unable to contact anyone on your emergency contact list, educators will contact Crisis Care.

Innovative programs, at the highest standards

Accreditation Standards

Our Centre is assessed for quality and compliance through the Education & Early Childhood Services Registration & Standards Board of SA.



Australian Children's
Education & Care
Quality Authority™

We welcome your feedback and assistance in providing quality care, and maintaining these excellent standards. The amount of time you are able to invest is totally up to you, but no matter how small, your time is always appreciated.

Please help us to achieve our goal of 'the highest quality care' by giving us feedback and filling in the questionnaires that you will occasionally find in your pigeon holes.

Our Educational Programs

All programs are developed to reflect the Centre's Philosophy and provide the best quality care and education to all children in relation to the Early Years Learning Framework curriculum.

Long term programs are developed by management, educators and parents to meet the changing needs of the Centre.

Our educators are responsible for developing programs for the children.

Our Educational Leader oversees the educational programs and provides support to all educators. Educators use developmental records and 'noticings' to determine each child's strengths and needs. These programs are based on careful observation and designed to meet the ever changing developmental needs of each child. The daily program is always on display in each room and educators encourage comments and feedback.

If you would like more information on how the program is developed or how your child's needs are to be met, please speak with any of the educators in your child's room and access your child's Profile Book.

Transition from One Room to the Next

In the weeks before your child is due to move up to a new room the educators will ensure that your child has short visits to the new room so that they become familiar with the new educators, routines and their new friends. These visits will become progressively longer until the child is settled in the new room.

Transition packs will be issued to families prior to the commencement of any transition process.

If you have any questions or concerns about this transition process please feel free to discuss them with the educators. A meeting time can be arranged for you to meet the educators in your child's new room should you request it.

Special Needs

Our Centre welcomes all children, irrespective of their needs. Additional resources and support agencies will be engaged when required to support children with special needs and their families.

Excursions

Excursions and small outings are an important part of our program. Regular local walking excursions provide us with an opportunity to promote children's development; especially language, large muscles and social concepts.

Parents are encouraged to sign a general consent form when enrolling their child/ren at our Centre. This covers walks around our community.

Other excursions are organised from time to time to compliment the program and extend children's interests and skills, for example: Adelaide Zoo, museums, botanical gardens and children's shows. Parents will always be informed prior to these excursions and a signed consent form must be returned to the Centre before the child can participate in that particular excursion.

Any costs for the excursion are to be paid in advance and are separate from normal child care fees.

Behaviour Guidance

Our Centre's behaviour guidance policy is based on the belief that children should respect themselves, each other and the environment. Educators take a positive approach to all behaviour guidance. Limits and expectations are based on sound knowledge of child development and are appropriate to each child's individual needs.

Great care is taken to ensure the Centre is a safe place for all.

Children are encouraged to deal with conflict openly, to assert their needs and listen to the needs of others. Educators model appropriate interactions at all times.

Centre programs are developed to foster independence and children are encouraged to be responsible for their own actions and environment. Children are guided as to acceptable behaviour. In cases of inappropriate behaviour, it is the behaviour that is rejected, **never** the child.



Keeping everyone healthy, happy and safe



Illness and Infection

Unfortunately, no matter how careful we are, children will, from time to time, become ill. The challenge for us is to ensure infections are contained and sick children are cared for appropriately.

The Centre has developed a series of protocols to ensure that we are able to protect all children. They are located in the Policy Folder in the foyer. Please take the time to read them.

Sick children will be excluded from the Centre until they are no longer infectious or deemed well enough to return. The reason for this is two-fold: we must minimise the risk of infection for all children and we do not have the facilities to adequately care for children who are unwell.

Should a child become unwell whilst at the Centre you, or a nominated contact person, will be informed as soon as possible and requested to collect the child.

Children considered by educators in need of urgent medical attention will be taken to the nearest hospital by ambulance and the parent/caregiver contacted immediately. If parents are not contactable, then the persons authorised to collect the child as per the enrolment form will be contacted.

Note: A child with a temperature of 38 degrees or higher is deemed to be sick.

Children may return to the Centre:

- 24 hours after vomiting and diarrhoea have ceased, and
- 24 hours after the commencement of antibiotics (depending on the infection) and
- 24 hours after a high temperature has returned to normal.

Please observe the following exclusion periods for illness as listed in the following table, which is taken from the *Staying Healthy in Child Care Handbook*¹.

If unsure whether your child is well enough, please consult with your Doctor. In the case of many contagious illnesses, Parents/Caregivers must contact the Centre to discuss the date of return.

Note:

- Some illnesses require a medical clearance before the child can return to the Centre.
- If a child returns to the Centre and they are sent home again a medical clearance will ALWAYS be required.



¹ http://www.abc.net.au/mediawatch/transcripts/1302_healthy2.pdf

ILLNESS/CONDITION	INCUBATION PERIOD	EXCLUSION PERIOD
Bronchiolitis	8 days	Until child feels well.
Bronchitis	1-3 days	Until child feels well.
Chickenpox	10-21 days	Until all blisters have crusted.
Cold sores	2-12 days	Exclude while lesion is weeping.
Conjunctivitis	1 – 3 days	Exclude while there is discharge from the eyes
Diarrhoea and vomiting	1-15 days	24 hours after diarrhoea and vomiting have ceased.
Ear Infection	A few days	Until child feels well, and no discharge from ear is present.
Fever		Exclude until temperature has been normal for 24 hours
Hand, foot and mouth	3-5 days	Exclude until all blisters have dried
Hepatitis A	15-50 days	Exclude until medical clearance received
Measles	7 -18 days	Exclude for at least 4 days after the onset of rash.
Mumps	12-25 days	Exclude for 9 days after the onset of swelling.
Ringworm	varies	Exclude until day after appropriate treatment has commenced.
Rubella	14-21 days	Exclude for at least 4 days after the onset of rash, and child feels well.
School sores (Impetigo)	1-10 days	Exclude until treatment has commenced. Cover exposed sores with water tight dressing.
Whooping Cough	9 -10 days and not more than 21 days	Exclude all family members until 5 days after commencing appropriate antibiotic treatment.

If you have any queries contact the Centre Director.

Administration of Medication

If your child requires medication while at the Centre, educators will ensure it is administered according to Centre protocols.

Educators are bound by considerable legal obligations when they accept the responsibility to administer medication to someone else's child.

The following procedures are observed to protect children and educators:

- The Centre will provide the parent with a blank medication authority, which must be completed by a medical practitioner, specialist, pharmacist or nurse practitioner before educators can administer any medication
- All medication, both prescribed and non-prescribed will only be administered if accompanied by a valid medication authority. This includes barrier creams (e.g. nappy cream) and teething gels.
- Upon arrival at the Centre all medication must be handed to the educator on duty who will confirm the instructions and when the last dose was given before storing the medication safely
- All medication, both prescription and non-prescription, must have chemists label with the child's name clearly listed
- The required dosage and name of the medication must be clearly visible on the container
- The medicine must be in its ready form (educators will not mix medicines into other solutions)
- The date must be clearly visible (recent medicine and not expired)
- Educators will record when and how much was administered and by whom

Where the appropriate procedure has not been followed medication will not be administered.

Accidents and Emergencies

While the safety of all children is our utmost priority and children are never left alone or unsupervised, accidents can still happen.

Whilst all precautions are taken at the Centre to ensure the safety of the children, if any accident should occur, educators will carry out necessary first aid immediately and parent/caregivers will be informed. An Incident Report will be completed by educators and is to be signed by the parent/caregiver when they attend to collect their child.



Children considered by educators in need of urgent medical attention will be taken to the nearest hospital by ambulance and the parent/caregiver contacted immediately. If parents are not contactable then the persons authorised as emergency contacts, as per the enrolment form will be contacted.

The Centre will not be liable for any medical fees.

Sun Protection

Every child is required to wear a hat and sunscreen when outside. We request that parents apply the first application of sunscreen at home in the morning, and record the application time on the sign in sheet. Educators will re-apply throughout the day. If your child has allergies to specific sunscreen we ask that you supply a suitable cream for the sole use of your child correctly labelled and accompanied by a valid Medication Form signed by a doctor or pharmacist.

No Smoking, Alcohol or Illicit Drugs Policy

Please note, the Centre and grounds are smoke free zones and smokers are expected to be responsible in this matter and dispose of cigarette butts before entry onto the grounds.

The use of illicit drugs or alcohol is not permitted within the Centre or grounds at any time.



Safety in Cars

Our families have access to some time limited street parking spaces on either side of the Centre.

REMINDER

Please use the correct vehicle child restraints at all times.

Please lock your car and do not leave handbags, purses or valuable objects visible when collecting your child/children.

PUSHERS

When necessary, pushers and car seats may be left at the Centre during the child's on-site attendance. The shed located in the front yard is available to store these on a short term basis; however the Centre is not responsible for any items stored there.

Special Occasions

At our Centre we acknowledge our culturally diverse community and celebrate many festivals with the children throughout the year. Family involvement is vital, and we encourage family members to become involved in our celebrations.

How to Stay Informed

Educators use a variety of methods to pass on information to families:

- On enrolment each family is allocated a "pigeon hole" in the foyer, it is recommended to check it regularly. Pigeon holes are used for the distribution of newsletters notes, accounts and other information that comes into the Centre.
- Pamphlets on Centrelink and parent information brochures on other organisations can be found in the foyer.
- Visit our website: www.tcfc.org.au for further information about our Centre.
- Enrolled families are invited to join our closed Facebook page.

How to Have Your Say...

At this Centre we recognise the wealth of knowledge that is held by families and are keen to encourage open communication and sharing relationships. We welcome comments, criticism, suggestions and ideas that will improve the quality of care at the Centre and help us better care for your child. Your ideas can be expressed in a variety of ways:

- Written comments on the Comment Form, located in the front foyer
- Speaking directly to the educators (remember you can phone during the day)
- Parent-Educator interviews
- Filling out surveys
- Policy reviews
- Join the Parent Advisory Committee

A copy of all the Centre's Protocols is available in the policy folder in the foyer for your reference.

If you would like a copy to keep at home, educators are able to provide you with a full copy upon request.

For more lengthy queries we are happy to make appointments so you are guaranteed time with the appropriate staff member.