



Queensland
Lutheran

Early Childhood and
School-Aged Care Services

Inspired
learning
for life
starts early



St Paul's Lutheran Kindergarten

Family Handbook

2023

Address: 55 Smiths Road Caboolture

Phone: 07 5432 4318

Email: stpauls.kgt@qlecs.org.au

6.30am - 6.00pm
Monday to Friday

In the spirit of reconciliation, St Paul's Lutheran Kindergarten acknowledges the Gubbi Gubbi people, Traditional Custodians of this country, and their connections to land, waters and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

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WELCOME

We are delighted that you have chosen St Paul's Lutheran Kindergarten as your child's Early Learning environment. We hope that your family will have a positive experience at our Service.

At St Paul's Lutheran Kindergarten, we provide your child with a safe, secure and supportive learning environment. Our program stimulates young minds to think independently and promote their own learning. It fosters creativity, challenges thought processes and supports co-operative learning. We support the needs, interests and abilities of each child and recognise them as the unique individuals that they are.

This Handbook has been designed as a guide to help you and your child settle into our Service. It contains useful information about our Service, the way it is managed, your responsibilities as a parent/guardian and what to expect during your time here.

St Paul's Lutheran Kindergarten is a 48 place, not-for-profit Service that consists of the following educational rooms:

Kindy A: 1:11

Kindy B: 1:11

The Service is open from 6.30am-6.00pm, Monday to Friday, 50 weeks per year, closing on Public Holidays and 2 weeks over Christmas and the New Year

Please retain this Handbook so that you can use it as a reference for general information and policies. Some policies are only summarised in this Handbook. The full details of policies are available at the Service upon request. Any comments you may wish to make regarding policies are also welcomed. Policies are developed through consultation with QLECS (Queensland Lutheran Early Childhood Services), Service staff, families and the community.

We look forward to sharing the coming year with you and your child, and the partnerships the year may bring.

NB

Where you see the term 'Reg' in the handbook, the reference is to the Education and National Laws and Regulations that govern Early Childhood and School-Aged Care Services.

[Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010](#)

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)

Any information related to the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) can be found at the following link:

<https://www.dese.gov.au/child-care-package/ccp-resources-providers/child-care-provider-handbook>

History of St Paul's Lutheran Kindergarten

St Paul's Lutheran Kindergarten is co-located on the grounds of St Paul's Lutheran Primary School and commenced operation on 29th January 2013.

Philosophy

At St Paul's Lutheran Kindergarten, we are a Christian centred community that acknowledges that children are a gift from God and should be encouraged, supported and nurtured to be successful in their own learning.

We believe:

- Educational Program and Practice:**
Learning is fun. It is all about discovery and investigation. A learning program should scaffold and extend children's ideas, their development and support a positive attitude to a lifetime of learning. Most of all, learning should be flexible and inclusive for all.
- Children's Health and Safety:**
Our role is to create a safe, challenging, and a welcoming environment where all children are supported to build their independence, can grow, explore and investigate, where they feel important and protected and where children and staff can learn from each other.
- Physical Environment:**
Our learning environments are fun, safe, and attractive to children. They offer a range of flexible experiences that allow for growth and learning. The learning environment provides creative, open-ended opportunities to engage and sustain a wide variety of investigative learning and play experiences. They promote children's voice, development and learning.
- Staffing Arrangements:**
Our team of professionals are caring and bring their own unique experiences to enrich our service. Through team collaboration and consultation we work together to achieve professional and personal goals.
- Relationships with Children:**
Building rapport by engaging with children is vital. Listening to their ideas and feelings ensures respect for the individual and builds meaningful, lasting relationships. We value each child's individual voice and establish equitable opportunities for learning. We are at the service of the children within our care.
- Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities:**
Partnerships with families and the community strengthen learning, broaden awareness of different cultures, and promote strong values. We build this connection by providing open opportunities for consultation and feedback, using parent input in planning and by participating in honest dialogue.
- Governance and Leadership:**
Building a culture where the community feels connected to the service, where opportunities for consultation and feedback, through governance committees, parent teacher conversations and ministry are encouraged and explored, where the service enhances and strengthens their community connections through open honest dialogue.

Dates

Our Service opens for children on Tuesday 10th January 2023 and closes on Friday 15th December 2023

No fees are charged to families during the end of year closure period.

St Paul's Lutheran Kindergarten is also closed on the following occasions:

- All Public Holidays
- Australia Day
- Labour Day
- Good Friday & Easter Monday
- Anzac Day
- Queen's Birthday
- Show Day (Ekka)

Fees will be charged for all public holidays unless indicated. In fairness to all families, public holidays, sick days or holidays cannot be swapped for other days. If you require an extra day, relevant charges will apply.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICE

Children's Learning

Our Program is based on *Being, Belonging and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)* and the *Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline*. We focus on children learning through play, enjoyment, freedom and friendship. We believe it is important for children to have opportunities to foster the development of self-esteem, creativity and growth at their own individual pace.

The program provided contributes to the following learning outcomes:

- children have a strong sense of identity
- children are connected with and contribute to his or her world
- children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- children are confident and involved learners
- children are effective communicators

Play is a context for learning that:

- allows for the expression of personality and uniqueness
- enhances dispositions such as curiosity and creativity
- enables children to make connections between prior experiences and new learning
- assists children to develop relationships and concepts
- stimulates a sense of wellbeing.

St Paul's Lutheran Kindergarten follows Walker Learning Principals for our Curriculum. This format is based on the children's developmental milestones and interests. More information regarding this format can be found at the service.

St Paul's Lutheran Kindergarten collates special day photos, artwork, observations, and special event certificates for each child. These are available for families every day and are given to each family at the end of each year. We also ask families to supply a USB so we can transfer photos taken throughout the year.

Daily Requirements

What to Bring in your child's labelled bag:

CHILDREN 3-5 YEARS

- 2 named complete changes of clothing
- A named set of sheets top and bottom 1200mm x 800mm in a bag
- All children are required to bring a SunSmart hat – Legionnaire/broad brimmed hat that protects the face, neck, ears and crown of the head. No caps are allowed.
- Water bottle
- Lunch box for Morning tea, Lunch and Afternoon tea – Please remember food allergy restrictions (No nuts / Eggs)

We encourage toys to stay at home as they can become easily lost or broken.

Daily Procedures

Arrivals and Departures

Upon arrival and departure, the parent/guardian or authorised nominee is responsible for following the required sign-in/out procedure. Failure to follow this correctly could result in CCS payments being affected.

This is also a safety requirement in the event of an emergency evacuation or lockdown.

If your child is to be collected from the Service by someone besides the Authorised Nominee (as noted on your enrolment form), we ask you to phone the Service beforehand, stating the person's name and their relationship to the child. Photo identification will need to be produced upon their arrival e.g., drivers' licence.

If the person picking up your child is not known by the educators, they will be asked to show photo identification before your child is released into their care. An educator may contact you to confirm the arrangement.

Parents/guardians, please ensure you notify an educator of your child's arrival and that your child is left in the care of an educator. Please also ensure that upon collection of your child, you inform an educator that your child is leaving.

Arrival is an important time to communicate any information that might be of relevance to your child's well-being during the day. Parent/guardian and staff contact is often limited in the mornings however, if you need to have longer discussions with the staff, a convenient time can be arranged for this or perhaps a phone call or email during the day can help.

Custodial Arrangements: Parents/guardians are required to notify the Service Leader about any details relating to the legal custody of the child and any parenting order, parenting plan, other legal/court appointed documents (such as a protection order or DVO). An up-to-date copy will be required to be kept at the Service. Please note that any legal documents will be adhered to and one parent/guardian cannot request the Service to withhold collection from another parent/guardian without the relevant legal documentation advising of any changes.

Routines

In each program you will see a predictable pattern to the day, which is designed to give your child a sense of routine and security. Integrated into the predictable events of the day, interesting and motivating experiences are planned to challenge and stimulate children in the areas of social, emotional, physical, creative and intellectual development. We are committed to the provision of opportunities for learning and nurturing and to the development of children in ways which are informed by quality research and theory.

Spiritual Links

St Paul's Lutheran Kindergarten has links with the congregation and Pastor/Chaplain from St Paul's Lutheran church. They are available for families.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

Interactions with children

"The program offered will

- *Encourage children to express themselves and their opinions*
- *Allow children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem*
- *Maintains at all times the dignity and rights of each child*
- *Gives each child positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour*
- *Has regard to the family and cultural values, age, and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child"* (Reg 155)

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Communication – Partnerships

We believe that the partnership between parents/guardians and our staff is very important. For this to be effective, it is the responsibility of both parties to communicate with each other. The staff cannot always predict parent/guardian's concerns or questions, so please be proactive in approaching the Service Leader for discussions. Please arrange a set time to talk to the Service Leader if you have concerns or questions about your child. We may arrange a suitable time to talk outside of the program time so that due time and attention can be given to your concerns or questions about your child. A suitable area for private conversations will be made available when required.

Parents/guardians may enter the Service at any time their child is in attendance. Permission to enter will be withdrawn if a parent/guardian poses a risk to the safety of the children and staff or the parent/guardian has prohibited contact with the child by a court order (Reg 157).

Families will be provided with a copy of the Parent/Visitor/Adult Occupant Code of Conduct at enrolment. Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in the cancellation of your Child's enrolment.

Parent/Guardian Information / Orientation Session

We invite all families to come in and tour our service. We understand that daily life is busy and will accommodate all families in a time that suits them.

Spending time with you allows us to understand your needs and the needs of your child. Through this time, we can answer questions and show you what your child's day will look like.

After enrolling and prior to your child starting with us we invite you to come along with your child and meet the staff whilst your child familiarises themselves with the room and children.

You are welcome to come in as many times as you like and are also welcomed to stay on your child's first day to help settling in.

Contact Details

Please keep your contact details up-to-date at all times. This allows for quick communication in the event of an illness or emergency. **Please ensure that authorised nominee names and numbers are also current.**

Regular Communication

A communication pocket is provided for each family. They are labelled with your child's name and are located on the wall hallway wall next to our Foyer. Please check your communication pocket daily.

Communication regarding the day's events will be available through photographs on seesaw and written observations displayed in the sign out area for you to enjoy prior to the collection of your child. These are valuable tools to give a snapshot about the day so you can discuss and reflect with your child about their day.

Regular newsletters help staff to communicate the program, interests and events at St Paul's Lutheran Kindergarten. Most information will be emailed. Please ensure your email address is current.

Family Information Area

Notices and information for families are displayed in the Service's entry and/or rooms. We ask that you check these on a regular basis.

Family Involvement

We value family input into the program. We welcome your participation and recognise the importance of this for the children. We work in partnership with families for the benefit of encouraging the full potential of their child/children. We value the individuality and uniqueness of each family and encourage the development of positive relationships. We request that everyone who enters our Service speak and act in a child friendly manner.

From time to time, Educators may ask parents/guardians to share their experiences and knowledge with the children.

If you are attending the program, please bring a sun safe hat, enclosed shoes, food and water (if required).

Advisory Group (Governance)

This is a group comprised of members from the families of St Paul's Lutheran Primary School, congregation and local community/parents. The meetings usually occur bi-monthly and will be advertised on the notice board.

The aims of the group are to:

- Concentrate on planning and goal setting;
- Explore, decide upon and co-ordinate fundraising ventures and family events;
- Provide a support network

All parents/guardians are encouraged to become involved in the Advisory Group in whatever capacity you are able. Notice of meetings can be found on the information board.

Family Social Events

During the course of the year, we may hold some special social events for all families.

Babysitting

Families are requested **not** to ask staff of the Service if they provide private babysitting. Staff need to maintain a professional relationship with families.

Photographs

Service photographs are taken once a year and we ask that families read the notices about these days and inform staff if you do not wish to partake in these. At St Paul's Lutheran Kindergarten, we have digital devices that are used daily to photograph the children. These photos become the basis of our daily visual diaries, which are on display in each room. We also use the photos to document your child's development throughout the year in their Seesaw page.

CCTV

Our Service is committed to the safety of employees and children. In order to provide this, our Service operates Close Circuit Television Systems (CCTV) in some locations. The CCTV surveillance and any monitoring are used for the purposes of:

- Ensuring the safety of the Service, including its employees, children, visitors, volunteers, students, contractors and members of the public.
- Prevention of crime, theft and vandalism.
- Ability to investigate and report on incidents where surveillance provides supporting evidence;

and will only involve optical surveillance. Our CCTV system is used in line with the GSM - CCTV Policy.

Media Involvement

Our Service has set out the following procedures regarding media involvement:

- Permission to photograph or video is included in the Enrolment Agreement Form. This includes newspapers and advertising displays etc. If parents/guardians do not give permission, the Service will ensure that the child is not included in these activities.
- Should photos go into local newspapers, first names only will be printed unless otherwise negotiated.
- Should the Service wish to print multiple copies of photos for advertising, written permission will be sought from parents/guardians prior to use.

Social Media

St Paul's Lutheran Kindergarten has various social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and seesaw). The Facebook page is a closed group and parents are reminded of their privacy and confidentiality responsibilities when they join this page.

We also ask that you do not 'friend' or accept 'friend' requests from staff members as this can cause difficulties in maintaining professional boundaries. Should you have any concerns over Social Media issues/posts/comments, please follow the Service's grievance procedure.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

Children's Clothing

Please ensure that clothes are marked with the child's name to ensure that all items of clothing are returned to the rightful owner. Please dress your child in clothing that is suitable and appropriate for active play. Suitable clothes are those that are easy for your child to manage independently, easy to move in and of no concern if stained from activities. It is a requirement that children wear t-shirts or tops with sleeves that cover the shoulders (in preference to tank-tops or singlet tops), to further ensure protection from the sun.

Nutrition

We promote good nutrition and healthy eating habits. As such, please note the following:

- We request that you do not send lollies, cordial, juice, chips, chocolate, or foods high in sugar, preservatives, flavouring and colouring at any time.
- Please provide a drink bottle (clearly named) each day - 500ml - 750ml is a good size to ensure your child is drinking enough water. Please send the water bottle full at the start of the day.
- If we have a child enrolled at the Service with severe or anaphylactic allergies to certain foods or food products, we may ask all families to exclude these items. This ensures the health and safety of all children.

You will need to provide your child with food and drink for morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea each day.

Preferred Foods	Foods to stay at home
Fruit (Fresh/Dried)	Roll Ups
Vegetables	LCM bars
Yoghurts	Chips
Cheese, crackers	Lollies
Sandwiches/Wraps/Rolls	Soft Drinks
Custards	Chocolate
Healthy Baked Treats	Junk Food

If your child has any special dietary considerations, please make us aware of these. Parents/guardians are asked to provide a detailed list of foods that your child is not allowed to have.

We also celebrate other special events or holidays during the year with food, often multi-cultural and endeavour to make cooking experiences a regular part of our program.

Rest and Relaxation

Resting is an important part of the day. An atmosphere conducive to relaxation is provided to allow children to 'recharge' and aims to meet the individual needs of each child. We encourage you to discuss your child's needs with their individual educators.

The service will ensure that the individual needs of the child regarding sleep and rest are met (Reg 81)

Behaviour Guidance

Educators will gently guide children towards acceptable, respectful and considerate behaviour to others. Within the play-based program, children learn about social skills and rules appropriate to their developmental level. Children are supported and empowered to choose the right behaviour which helps them to begin to self-regulate their own and others' behaviours.

If Educators observe inappropriate behaviours, they will analyse the reasons and/or contributing factors and implement strategies to change the behaviour. This may include having conversations with parents/guardians about the child's behaviour, any strategies being used by parents/guardians and seeking external support if required. An individual plan may be written outlining the agreed strategies, so that all educators and families are consistent in guiding a child's behaviour.

Please refer to *the Service's Behaviour Guidance Policy*

Incursions and Excursions

To complement the program, from time to time we will be inviting visitors into our Service (incursion) or take the children on excursions. All incursions and excursions are carefully planned and risk assessed. Incursions or excursions may incur an additional cost, which will be added to your account. If this is eligible it will also attract some CCS.

Parents/guardians will be notified of any upcoming events and be required to complete any necessary authorisations.

Hygiene and Safety

We take great care to provide a safe and hygienic environment for the children in our care. We aim to reduce the chance of accidents and minimise cross-infection. The following procedures are implemented:

- The Service is cleaned at the end of each day and during the day if the need arises.
- Children are taught and expected to wash their hands, particularly after toileting and before meals.
- All equipment and the grounds are checked regularly and maintained in a safe condition.
- Softfall areas have been established under climbing and swing areas to absorb the impact if a child were to fall.
- In the case of a pandemic, specific guidelines will be given to families.
- Staff and families will be required to follow all Public Health directives.

Illness and Injury in Care

Educators are required to maintain their First Aid qualifications. This includes CPR, Anaphylaxis and Asthma training. The environment is arranged and resources selected,

according to safety guidelines so that the risk of injury to both children and staff is minimised.

Minimum exclusion guidelines (as per the Illness in Care Policy) will be adhered to. A letter from your Doctor may be required.

Children with contagious illnesses will not be permitted to attend and non-immunised children will be excluded (as per the Illness in Care Policy). As per your enrolment agreement, the Service must be advised of any contagious illnesses.

In the case of injury to a child whilst in care, staff will administer appropriate first aid immediately. Please refer to Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy for more detailed information on the Service's procedures.

If first aid has been given to your child during the day, staff will complete an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness form which you will be required to read and sign.

Injury on Intake

Upon arrival at the Service, if your child has an existing injury, you are required to inform an educator and an Injury on Intake form will be completed. If an educator notices an injury throughout the day, that did not occur at the Service, an Injury on Intake form will be completed and you will be asked to acknowledge this by signing the form upon collection. Educators may also phone you during the day to discuss the injury.

Medication

Please refer to Medication, Paracetamol and Natural Remedies Policy for specific information in regards to medication.

Our Service has a policy for managing medical conditions which sets out practices if a child enrolled has a specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition.

Parents/guardians will be required to provide the Service with a medical management plan for their child for any specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition. The Service will develop a risk minimisation and communication plan in conjunction with parents/guardians, to ensure that the risks relating to their child's specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition are assessed and minimised (as per Reg 90).

Our Service has a copy of the Management of Medical Conditions Policy readily available and families who indicate that their child has a medical condition or allergy will be provided with a copy (Reg 91).

If medication of any type is required during your child's attendance, then a medication form must be completed by the parent/guardian or person nominated on the enrolment form. Staff will only be able to administer medication after the form is completed correctly and signed; staff will complete and sign their section when the medication is administered.

In the case of complex medication administration, such as insulin, discussions will be held with families prior to or during enrolment, to ascertain whether the Service is able to accommodate the specific health needs of the child.

In cases of emergency, a parent/guardian or person nominated on the enrolment form can consent to the administration of medication verbally or if parent/guardian or nominated person cannot be contacted then a registered medical practitioner or emergency service can consent.

In an anaphylaxis or asthma emergency, staff may administer medication without authorisation. Parent/guardians and emergency services will be contacted as soon as practicable.(Reg 94)

The medication administered will be from its original container before the expiry or use-by date, in accordance with any instructions attached to the medication or provided by a registered medical practitioner, prescribed medication, from a container that bears the original label with the name of the child to whom it is prescribed, with a second person checking the dosage of the medication and witnessing its administration. Details of the administration must be recorded on the Medication Authorisation Form.

(Regs 92-95)

Immunisation

The immunisation status of your child must be completed on your child's enrolment form and a copy of your child's immunisation history statement (Medicare) must be provided. Families who choose not to immunise their children, other than for medical exemptions, will not receive government subsidies (<http://www.ncirs.org.au/public/no-jab-no-play-no-jab-no-pay>).

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing staff with updated immunisation information. Children who have not been immunised will be excluded from care during specific outbreaks or epidemics of some infectious diseases such as measles and whooping cough. For information relating to fee payment during exclusion periods, please refer to Immunisation – Children Policy.

Sun Protection

Educators will apply sunscreen to children several times during the day. The Service provides sunscreen, however, if your child requires a specific brand, you will need to provide this to the Service, clearly labelled with your child's name. Please apply sunscreen to your child prior to or on arrival at the Service. Please ensure that clothing is sun smart. Sleeves are required for all children to protect shoulders. **Sun Smart hats are compulsory for all children. Caps are not permitted.**

Emergency and Evacuation Procedures

Emergency and evacuation diagrams are prominently displayed in the rooms and are clearly visible to staff and visitors. These diagrams include emergency services' contact numbers and locations and local meeting points in the event of an evacuation. A copy of the emergency procedures for the Service is distributed to all new staff and volunteers on their first day at the Service. Parents/guardians, staff, contractors, trades people, volunteers and visitors are referred to the Emergency Procedures for appropriate action in the case of fire or other emergency requiring evacuation/lock-down. If you arrive at the Service during an evacuation or lock-down, please follow the direction of the Service's staff.

The Service will regularly rehearse evacuation/lockdown procedures.

Child Protection

All staff are committed to protecting children and young people from harm and promoting children's safety, dignity and well-being. (See QLECS' Statement of Commitment Appendix 1)

All early childhood educators are mandatory reporters and as such will report any child safety concerns to the relevant authority.

All staff at the Service who work with children are aware of the current child protection law in the provider's jurisdiction and understand their obligations under that law. (Reg 84)

All staff are required to maintain Child Protection training.

Smoking, Drug and Alcohol Free Environment

The Service maintains an environment free from the use of tobacco, e-cigarettes/vaping, illicit drugs and alcohol. (Reg 82).

Please note that there are specific exclusion boundaries in regard to smoking and the use of e-cigarettes - 5 metres beyond the property boundary.

All parents/guardians/visitors are required to adhere to these legislated conditions.

STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

Staffing and Roles

Children at our Service are in the care of qualified and suitably trained early childhood specialists. This team provides a collective wealth of knowledge, skills and expertise that directly relates to the provision of a high quality early childhood program for your child. Information about staff is displayed at the Service.

Service Leader

The role of the Service Leader is to work closely with educators, the Approved Provider and families to ensure the effective and efficient day to day running of the Service. The Service Leader takes whatever action is necessary to ensure the health and safety of the children at our Service. The Service Leader is responsible for ensuring high standards in both the administrative and educational programs and for planning and overall supervision of the children.

Educational Leader

The role of the Educational Leader is to work in consultation with the Service Leader and with all educators, children and families to lead, develop and implement the educational program. This includes program reflection/evaluation, children's developmental outcomes, documentation and portfolios, and any Service operations which are related to the curriculum. The Educational Leader is available for families to discuss individual children's development and goals.(Reg 118)

Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) and Educators

Early Childhood Teachers and Educators work as a team and in partnerships with families to plan and deliver a quality education and care program for children. Our ECTs primarily work with children in the Kindergarten age group.

Students and Volunteers

Our Service welcomes students and volunteers. We receive requests from Universities, TAFE Colleges and schools to host students who are taking part in work experience programs that relate to Early Childhood Education. Before any student or volunteer is permitted to spend time at our Service, they must be approved by the Service Leader, hold a Positive Suitability Card, sign confidentiality and policy agreements and undergo an induction process. Families will be notified if a student will be visiting the Service.

Volunteers may also be accepted, only after careful screening and consideration of the children's needs. All volunteers, apart from a parent/guardian of a child who is in attendance, must hold a Positive Suitability Card.

Professional Development

The Service actively supports on-going Professional Development of all staff. Staff members attend courses, seminars, conferences and workshops throughout the year. Suitably trained relief staff will be employed in the absence of staff members.

LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE MANAGEMENT

Queensland Lutheran Early Childhood Services (QLECS)

QLECS is the Approved Provider's representative for Lutheran Early Childhood Services in Queensland and New South Wales and a support and management branch for Victorian Services. QLECS support and oversee the running of the Service, including financial, staffing and compliance matters. Each Service has its own Children's Services Manager and their details are displayed in the Service. The Children's Services Manager (CSM) is part of the QLECS Operations Team and works closely with the staff of the Service in areas such as programming, regulatory requirements, grant applications, staffing, financial administration and any other areas as required.

Fees

Our Service is a not-for-profit organisation that relies on the prompt payment of fees to remain financially viable. Fees are based on a carefully considered budget. Any surplus is expended into improving equipment, resources, facilities and building improvements at the Service. It is important that your fees are kept up to date at all times. Your statement will show all charges and fees payable and any applicable subsidies.

Payments must be continued during a child's absence for illness, holidays or for any other reason. Statutory holidays must be paid for however fees are not charged during the end of year closure.

In the case of a government authority declared Pandemic, fees will continue to be charged unless the Service has been directed by a Government authority. This is due to requirements under the Family Assistance Law (families in receipt of government funds).

Failure to pay fees will result in your details being referred to The business office at St Paul's Lutheran Primary School where the debt recovery process, as per the Collection of Client Debt policy, will be implemented. Your child's continuing enrolment may be placed at risk.

If your family is experiencing financial difficulties or exceptional circumstances, please discuss this with the Service Leader. A payment plan may be established for you.

Full fees are payable until enrolments meet CCS requirements. Adjustments will then be made.

Late fees are charged to families who have not arrived by the Service's closing time. As late pick-up can be disruptive to staff and your child, we ask that if you know you are going to be late, please contact the Service and/or try and make other arrangements. If a parent/guardian has not made contact five minutes after the closing time, staff will try to contact the parent/guardian. If no contact can be made they will try the authorised persons indicated on the enrolment form. If no contact is made with anyone authorised on the enrolment form 30 minutes after closing time, the police will be called and we will follow their recommendations. The late fee is listed below:

\$5.00 at 6.05pm then \$2.00 per minute after this, or if late for a booked Session, the longer Session fee may be charged.

If there are outstanding fees a late fee penalty may be applied.

Fee Refunds

Fee refunds will only be issued when the Authorised Service representative has ensured:

- that a family is due the payment
- all transactions have been processed, taking into consideration items such as but not limited to CCS
- outstanding CCS is processed before refunds are eligible to be repaid back to parents.
- Cessation of CCS has been checked and the CCS enrolment has been ended before applying for a refund. With cessation of enrolment, the refund will not be issued until CCS is finalised and CCS paid for final absences has been withdrawn. This is to ensure CCS balancing is completed and no debt is applied to the account.

For further information regarding parent/guardian refunds, please refer to the Fee Refunds Authorisation Policy.

Under the State Government Funding Scheme, each Approved Kindergarten Program must offer a program for 15 hours per week. A child must be enrolled in the program for a minimum of 15 hours for the Service to be eligible for funding that is paid directly to the Service to support the kindergarten program. Children who attend more than one Service must nominate only one service to receive the funding.

Method of Payment

We are a cash free Service. All fees are to be paid by either Eftpos at the service or via direct deposit set up by families through your banking institute.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS):

Our Service is an Approved Care Provider and eligible parents/guardians can access Child Care Subsidy to assist with the payment of their fees. Child Care Subsidy (CCS) reduces the amount eligible families pay for child care (your 'out of pocket' or 'Gap' fee). To claim CCS, families must apply for Customer Reference Numbers (CRNs) through Centrelink. Once you have been issued with yours and your child's CRNs you need to submit a claim for Child Care Subsidy to Centrelink using your Centrelink online account (through MyGov). If you are assessed as eligible to receive CCS, you will need to supply the CRN and date of birth for both you and your child to the Service Leader so that the information can be entered into the Service's software system before the child attends the Service. The Service uploads child enrolment and attendance information weekly via the Service's software system to the government's Child Care Subsidy System. It calculates the CCS and fees are charged to the family minus your CCS entitlement.

If there are any changes made to the primary carer or CRN details (**as registered with Centrelink and linked to the Child's CCS application**, (e.g. incorrect information has been given and needs to change), this will **not be backdated past 14 days** when the correct information is provided.

In order to receive CCS, you must enter into a Complying Written Agreement (CWA) with the Service, which you are required to confirm online and after 14 continuous weeks of non-attendance. Please note that the CCS process should ideally be finalised before your child's first day of attendance to ensure you receive your entitlements. This includes the Primary Parent agreeing to the electronic CWA as well as completing their Government Enrolment through myGov. Failure to do so will result in full fees being paid until your CCS is successfully activated.

Parents who receive CCS have an obligation that fee payments are kept up to date. Failure to do so may result in CCS being required to be paid back to the government and your child's enrolment cancelled.

Families who do not meet the activity test but have a Kindergarten-age child attending an approved Kindergarten program in a Centre Based Day Care service will be eligible for 36 hours of subsidised care per fortnight.

Shared Care

If a family shares the care of their child, that is, the child spends time living with one parent for one week, and the other parent the next week, both parents should have their own account at the Service (with separate enrolment forms) and separately apply for CCS. CCS calculations will be based upon each parent's individual circumstances and their gap fees may differ. Each parent is required to have their own CWA with the Service.

We realise this is a lot to comprehend and urge families to contact Centrelink on 13 61 50 should you require further information.

Absences

Each child is eligible for CCS for 42 days for allowable absences from care across all approved child care services during each financial year without the need to provide documentation, such as medical certificates. Absences beyond the first 42 days (up to a maximum of 10 further absences) will only be paid for as 'additional absences' if parents/guardians provide evidence that the absence has occurred under a permitted circumstance. Currently families are allowed up to 52 days due to COVID, however this may change during the year and revert to the usual 42 days. Please note that these are total absences across all Services your child may attend; not a per Service allowance. Additional absences do not include public holidays.

Cessation of Care

If the absences occur at or before the child's first day of physical attendance at the Service, or directly after their final day of physical attendance, no CCS will be paid for that absence as it is considered to be a Cessation of Care. Full fees for all absences before first physical attendance and after last physical attendance will be charged. If CCS is applied, it will be withdrawn by CCSS when the CCS enrolment ceases. In this instance, the account holder will be responsible for any outstanding amounts. For absences within the first seven days or final seven days of physical attendance, cessation of care may be waived, for the same reasons (with evidence provided) as permitted under additional absences; e.g. illness, COVID, etc.

Discontinuing Enrolment

You are required to give **two weeks written notice** to the Service Leader if you are discontinuing your child's enrolment. **Fees are payable up to and including end of the notification date. Please note that Cessation of Care rules apply (as above) regardless of the notice period.**

Policies

The Service has a range of policies and procedures readily available as per regulatory requirements.

A condition of enrolling your child at our Service, is that you agree and abide by the Service's policies. These policies cover all aspects of operation and management in accordance with regulations. The policies also incorporate the Code of Ethics produced by Early Childhood Australia. If you would like to raise an issue about a policy, please put your views in writing addressed to the Service Leader and/or the Children's Services Manager.

Inclusion Policy

Children have a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences. We recognise the unique individuality of each child and their family and observe a policy of acceptance and respect for everyone regardless of race, creed, gender, class, culture or ability.

Where a child has additional needs, parents/guardians are asked to discuss their child's requirements/expectations with the Service Leader. Medical/diagnostic information will be required. The Service may be eligible for Inclusion Support funding.

Insurance

The Service is fully covered by Public and Products Liability through the LCA Insurance Fund.

Feedback and Concerns

Family input, comments and questions are always welcome. From time to time you may receive a survey or evaluation form asking you to provide feedback on you and your child's experiences at the Service. Please take the time to read and respond to these requests as they assist us to improve the quality of our Service. We value constructive feedback from all stakeholders.

Open communication is the most effective means of addressing any issues.

The following procedure is recommended for parents/guardians to follow if a concern arises:

1. In the first instance, please approach the Service Leader to discuss the matter. Be willing to express how you feel clearly and be open to working with the Service Leader to resolve this matter. This may involve more than one discussion.
2. Concerns that are unresolved can be conveyed to the Children's Services Manager (CSM) verbally or in writing. Contact details for your CSM are on display at the Service.

Families may also contact the Regulatory Authority with enquiries or complaints at any time.

Department of Education Early Childhood Education and Care
North Lakes Reginal Office
PO Box 248
Kallangur Qld 4503
Telephone: (07) 5433 6106
Email: northlakes.ecec@qed.qld.gov.au

CONCLUSION

It is our hope that your family will enjoy being a part of our Service. Should you require further information or explanation regarding this booklet, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Appendix 1



CHILD PROTECTION STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

- 1. We are committed to promoting and supporting environments which:**
 - Protect children and young people from actual or potential harm.
 - Enable and encourage concerns to be raised and responded to openly and consistently; through
 - the provision of training and education for staff, families and children.

- 2. We recognise that we have a duty of care and shared responsibility to:**
 - Protect all children and young people from all forms of harm and abuse.
 - Ensure our organisation's culture provides a sense of safety for children and young people.

- 3. We will endeavour to safeguard children, young people and their families in all our Services by:**
 - Valuing, listening to, engaging with and respecting children, young people and their families.
 - Establishing and implementing best practice for working with children, young people and families, meeting all statutory obligations.
 - Developing skills that encourage children, young people and their families to speak up if they feel uncomfortable with the way they are being treated by staff, other children and/or adults, at all times.

- 4. In our recruitment of staff and volunteers, we will:**
 - Follow procedures that provide for the careful selection and recruitment of suitable employees and voluntary workers.
 - Provide education, training, support, supervision and resources in all statutory requirements and the organisation's policies and codes of ethics, to keep children, young people and families safe.

- 5. In our publicity we will:**
 - Share information about the organisation's practices and mandatory responsibilities in safeguarding staff, children, young people and their families from all forms of harm and abuse.

- 6. When concerns are raised, we will:**
 - Respond without delay to every concern that a child, young person or their family, may have been harmed, or be at risk from harm or abuse.
 - Work with our stakeholders and appropriate statutory bodies during an investigation into harm or abuse.

- 7. In responding, our organisation will:**
 - Make available pastoral care to any child, young person, their families or staff involved in any allegation of harm or abuse.
 - Facilitate connections and access to professional organisations, support agencies or para-professionals.

We are committed to the continuing and ongoing review and implementation of our organisation's child safe standards.