

Country Cubs Preschool & Long Day Care

Parent Handbook

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HANDBOOK**



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SECTION 1: SERVICE INFORMATION

Country Cubs Preschool & Long Day Care

The service has been operating for over 20 years. The centre is licensed for 50 children per day, caring for children 20 months - 5 years.

We operate for 51 weeks per year; the Centre closes for one week over the Christmas period. We are open from 6.30am - 6.30pm. The centre is closed for all Public Holidays.

SECTION 2: FEES

Preschool: \$129.00 per day

Before School Care: \$43.00 per morning

Accounts are issued monthly, if you are registered for Child Care Subsidy this will be deducted from the account and the balance will be issued to you. More information regarding fees can be obtained from your child's enrolment form. Fees can be paid by Direct Debit, Internet banking or Cash.

SECTION 3: TRANSPORT

The service uses three buses for transport for the Preschool and Outside School Hours Care services. All buses are fitted with DVD players for your child's enjoyment. The centre maintains full insurance and public liability for these buses. Transport drivers have appropriate licenses to operate these vehicles. Transport is included in your sessional fee.

SECTION 4: ENROLLING YOUR CHILD IN CARE

An enrolment form must be completed prior to your child's enrolment. We will also require you to contact Services Australia (Formerly Centrelink) if you are going to claim Child Care Subsidy. This needs to be completed promptly to avoid paying full fees. We will also need to sight and copy your child's Immunisation record. We also require a copy of your child's birth certificate or passport as proof of identity. The service uses a program for Child Care Subsidy which requires your DOB, your child's DOB and both CRN numbers from Services Australia. (Formerly Centrelink) to finalise the enrolment process on this system. Please provide the service with these details by completing and returning the enrolment form.

SECTION 5: IMMUNISATION

From 1 January 2018, only children who are fully immunised for their age OR have a medical reason not to be immunised OR are on a catch-up schedule can be enrolled in childcare. Children who have not been immunised due to their parent's vaccine conscientious objection cannot be enrolled in childcare.

AIR Immunisation History Statement

Parents must provide an Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) History Statement (that shows a child is up to date or can't be immunised for medical reasons) OR an AIR Immunisation History Form (that shows a child is on a recognised catch-up schedule), when enrolling a child in childcare. Parents can request a copy of their child's AIR Immunisation History Statement at any time (up to their child being 14 years of age):

- using their Medicare online account through myGov <https://my.gov.au/>
- using the Medicare Express Plus App
www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/express-plus-mobile-apps
- calling the AIR General Enquiries Line on **1800 653 809**

SECTION 6: CHILD CARE SUBSIDY AND ADDITIONAL SUBSIDIES

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring that Australian families are able to access affordable, flexible and high quality child care. The Government provides a number of subsidies and programs to help with the cost of child care, with the Child Care Subsidy being the main type of assistance that most families will use.

The Additional Child Care Subsidy is a top up payment in addition to the Child Care Subsidy which will provide targeted additional fee assistance to families and children who need extra support.

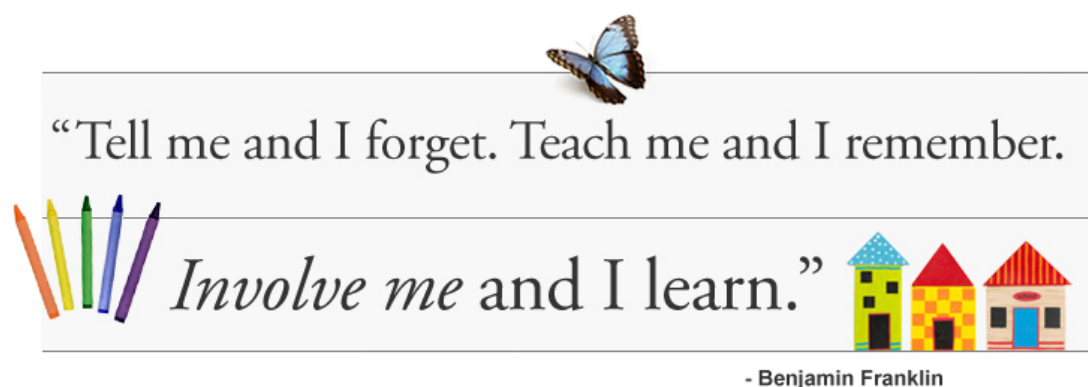
The Additional Child Care Subsidy has four elements:

- child wellbeing
- grandparents
- temporary financial hardship
- transition to work.
- The Additional Child Care Subsidy (transition to work) is a payment from the Australian Government to help families with the cost of child care while they are transitioning to work from income support payments by engaging in work, study or training activities.

- Additional Child Care Subsidy (temporary financial hardship) is a short-term payment from the Australian Government to help families experiencing significant financial stress with the cost of child care. This payment will help with the continuity of child care for children and provide support to families when they need it most.
- Additional Child Care Subsidy (grandparent) is a payment from the Australian Government to help grandparents on income support who are the principal carers of their grandchild(ren) with the cost of child care. This payment is to support grandparents who help out their families in difficult circumstances by being the principal carer for their grandchild(ren).

Child Care Subsidy can be applied for by Contacting Services Australia (Formerly Centrelink) on 13 61 50.

You are responsible for ensuring your Child Care Subsidy is set up correctly with FAO and are current. Full fees will be charged until this has been completed. Please read the fact sheets enclosed to see if you are eligible to apply for additional subsidies. The fact sheets will also tell you how to apply.



SECTION 7: MEET OUR EDUCATORS

Country Cubs aims to employ educators with a range of formal educations, life experiences, backgrounds and gender that can make a valued contribution to the service. Our educators are trained to ensure they provide an environment for children where they can learn and feel respected and cared for. Country Cubs encourages educators to build relationships based around mutual respect, support and professionalism. All educators employed at Country Cubs undergo a working with children check. Educators have been selected because of the skills, abilities and qualities they bring to our service. Educators maintain Early Childhood qualifications and undertake in-service training and professional development. All educators are required to maintain Advanced First Aid, Asthma & Anaphylaxis training.

SECTION 8: POLICIES

The service maintains policies which affect our practices and procedures within the service. A policy folder is located at the service. We strongly recommend that you read the information in this folder which clearly outlines your obligations in relation to service issues. Policies for the service are reviewed annually in consultation with educators and parents. If you wish to be involved in policy reviews please speak with an educator.

SECTION 9: LICENSING, RATING AND ASSESSMENT, ACECQA

The Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) works with all governments to provide guidance, resources and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.

The National Quality Framework (NQF) provides a national approach to regulation, assessment and quality improvement for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services across Australia.

Education and care services are assessed and rated by Early Childhood Education Directorate, NSW Department of Education.

Services are assessed against the 7 quality areas of the [National Quality Standard](#)

The NQF introduced a new quality standard in 2012 to improve education and care across long day care, family day care, preschool/kindergarten, and outside school hours care services.

The NQF includes:

- [National Law and National Regulations](#)
- [National Quality Standard](#)
- [Assessment and Quality Rating Service](#)
- [National Learning Frameworks](#).
 - The National Quality Standard (NQS) sets a high national benchmark for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services in Australia.
 - The NQS includes 7 quality areas that are important to outcomes for children.
 - Services are assessed and rated by their regulatory authority against the NQS, and given a rating for each of the 7 quality areas and an overall rating based on these results.

SECTION 10: CENTRE PROGRAM, PARENT INTERVIEWS, PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

Please read the information fact sheet on The Early Years Learning Framework enclosed in your parent handbook pack.

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) describes the principles, practice and outcomes essential to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school. The Framework has a strong emphasis on play-based learning as play is the best vehicle for young children's learning providing the most appropriate stimulus for brain development. The Framework also recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development.

The service has planned weekly educational programs. The service has specific goals in relation to the programs delivered. The centre has a philosophy statement which is the backbone for everything we do within the service. The philosophy is displayed near the programming boards. The programs are planned with a combination of factors; we ensure that your child's development and progress is monitored through weekly child observations. We observe your child's personal interests to deliver a program that is rich, educational and fun. If you can assist us with the program in any way it would be greatly appreciated. Parent and family profile information is incorporated into our program so we are able to make links through these experiences in our program based on EYLF. If you feel you would like to make comments about any aspect of the program please discuss this with an educator. Parent interviews are conducted annually and offered to parents on request.

If we become concerned regarding an area of your child's development e.g. speech, you will receive a personal letter regarding our concerns with information on seeking further services and information. If you have a concern regarding your child's development please discuss this with an educator. The centre also supports children with additional needs or special requirements. The centre supports integration and liaises with other support agencies to provide you with the care your child and family needs.



SECTION 11: MEALS AND LUNCH BOXES

The service follows principles of the Munch and Move Program. *Munch & Move* is a NSW Health initiative that supports the healthy development of children birth to 5 years by promoting physical activity, healthy eating and reduced small screen time. The service's menus and cooking activities are based on principles of this program. Our Afternoon Tea menu was established in consultation with a representative from Healthy Communities.

The service provides water throughout the day. We also provide Afternoon Tea. The service has an Afternoon Tea menu which changes weekly. These have been devised with your child's health and nutrition in mind. We request when you pack your child's lunchbox that you consider children's dietary requirements. Please ensure that you provide adequate amounts of food in a lunchbox with your child's name clearly marked on there. Should you be concerned about your child's food or water intake please discuss this with an educator. If your child has specific dietary requirements, please note these in your child's enrolment form and bring them to the attention of the Director. For children attending the service after 5.30pm a late snack will be offered. If you require information on children's dietary food intake requirements there is a Nutrition folder located at each service. Please ask educators to email or copy any information you require. There are also some great lunchbox ideas and foods to pack for your child. Please take a look at the Nutrition folders when you can.

SECTION 12: WHAT TO BRING

The service has a Clothing and Comfort policy which clearly outlines the services practices and guidelines in regards to clothing and comfort. Please ensure you read this policy to ensure you understand your role in ensuring the service fulfills its obligations. Our centre is a SunSmart service and meets the guidelines for this approval.

You will need to supply:

- A complete change of clothes (more than one change if your child is toilet training)
- A legionnaire or bucket hat. We have a no hat, no play policy
- A sheet or blanket if your child will be sleeping or resting
- A comforter for sleep time if your child requires one
- A lunchbox clearly labeled with your child's food for the day
- A drink bottle clearly labelled. We provide water.

Please dress your child in comfortable clothes. Remember small buttons can be difficult for your child when they are toilet training. Clothes should be easily washable. Children wear smocks during painting and messy activities. All paint will wash off in the washing machine. For OH&S reasons we ask that children

do not wear thongs or slip on shoes. Please ensure all of your child's clothes and belongings are labelled.

SECTION 13: COMPUTERS, T.V AND GAMES

Children have set times during the Educational program for them to experience and learn through media. We allow children to watch television programs, DVD'S and Videos with G ratings. Children will also engage in experiences with various devices e.g. Computers, iPads, iPods.

SECTION 14: ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

When you arrive at the centre with your child please ensure that you sign in. Two signatures are required daily, when you arrive and when you leave. This information is vital as it provides educators with information about who is at the centre, it is utilised during Fire Drills and Emergency Drills as a record of attendance. Signatures are also required to substantiate fee relief. You are also required to sign the authority for attendance records on the enrolment form which gives educators permission to sign your child in and out of the service if you have overlooked to do so.

We understand that leaving your child can be difficult. Even though it may be upsetting for your child, it is best if you say Goodbye and let them know when you will be back to collect them. If you give children a time of the day when you might be back this gives them the chance to build some trust and feel secure about the day. When completing your child's enrolment form you will be asked to supply the names of other people who are able to collect your child from the centre. If for any reason you are unable to collect your child, please telephone the centre and let us know who will be collecting your child.

SECTION 15: PARENT PARTICIPATION & WELCOME

Parents are welcome to visit the services at any time. If you have a skill or interest you would like to share with us as part of our program please speak to a staff member. We want you and your family to feel welcome and comfortable at the centre, no matter how big or small and if you have a concern or question please ask an educator. We hope you enjoy your time at Country Cubs.

Some lessons
can't be taught.
They simply have
to be learned.

- Jedi Picoult

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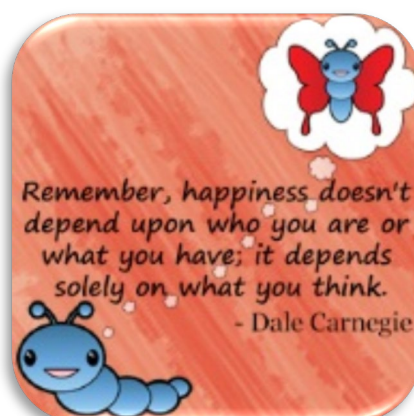
SECTION 16: SOCIAL EVENTS AND EXCURSIONS

Throughout the year we have planned social events for families. Some are planned around the children's program e.g. Grandparents Day, and others are to celebrate an occasion e.g. Christmas or others are just to allow and encourage families to get to know others. We also plan excursions at the Preschool each term. Excursions are planned daily for Vacation Care. We feel excursions are beneficial and worthwhile, allowing children to experience the wider community and other events and situations. We get together at the end of the year and children leaving for big school enjoy a graduation ceremony. We sing songs and share gifts with our families. We encourage and welcome families to share these social occasions with us.

SECTION 17: PARENT GRIEVANCES

We encourage families that have comments, queries or concerns regarding the service to be able to voice them. There are feedback boxes at each service where you can leave your comments, queries or feedback. If you have a grievance regarding the service or the delivery of any aspect of the service we would like you to discuss this with the Director as your first option. We have a grievance form which can be completed with the assistance of the Director. This form aims to address and rectify the situation. Once the concern has been addressed a Grievance Evaluation Form will be completed. We also have the option of completing a Family Support Plan for issues concerning you regarding the service or your child. The support plan aims to unite family and service management dealing with issues of concern e.g. children's behaviour. All grievance forms received will be addressed within 48 hours of receiving the report. Once a support plan has been established a review period of 14 days will apply, to ensure the plan is achieving the desired result.

If you feel that the situation has not been resolved with the two options above you may like to seek alternative avenues of assistance. You may also choose to discuss your concerns with a representative of the Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate on 1800 619 113.



SECTION 18: SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT

Country Cubs Preschool has a Smoke Free Environment Policy which prohibits all persons from the smoking of any substance in the buildings, and within metre radius of those buildings. We request that parents, families, relatives and friends refrain from smoking in these areas. More information about the Smoke Free Policy can be accessed in the Services policy guide.

SECTION 19: MEDIA CONSENT

Country Cubs Preschool implements the use of digital cameras within the service to capture special moments and activities that your child participates in, and to use this media for various aspects within the service such as individual child portfolios, journals and newsletters. In our efforts to work towards a sustainable future, Country Cubs will offer families the opportunity to receive media electronically via email. It is evident that children will appear in other children's photos throughout activities, therefore we require parents to complete a Media Consent Form which will authorise photos of their children to appear in media sent to families.

Disclaimer

All media collected within Country Cubs Preschool and Outside School Hours Care including photographs, videos, digital design, art, and the company logo is subjected to Copyright. All media stated relating to the child or children may not be reproduced or distributed in any form whatsoever, including electronic, mechanical or informational, without expressed written, dated and signed permission from the parent(s) in care. The author reserves the right to alter and update any relevant media without notice.

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SECTION 20: PRIORITY OF ACCESS

Our service is guided by the Priority of Access guidelines which are set out by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment and Workplace relations. The guidelines are enclosed with this Handbook pack or on disc. Please read through the guidelines to see how this may affect you. Every attempt is made by the service to ensure your care requirements are fulfilled, but at times you may be required to change days so the service can enforce the guidelines.

Amended & Approved for use 17/02/2020
Director - Cheryll Kooyman