



MILLVILLE CHILD CARE CENTRE

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Family Handbook



MILLVILLE CHILD CARE CENTRE PTY. LTD.

ACN 096164567

23-27 Hart Street, Colac 3250

Telephone (052) 322 550

Director email : millvillecc@bigpond.com

Office email: millvilleoffice@bigpond.com

Website: millvillechildcare.com

APPROVED PROVIDER: Millville Childcare Centre Pty. Ltd.

COMPANY DIRECTORS: Cathy & Phillip Thompson

Cathy Thompson: Qualifications

Diploma of Teaching (Primary)

Bachelor of Education (Primary)

Diploma of Early Childhood

Introduction

Welcome to Millville Child Care Centre, a family owned and operated Centre, where the emphasis is learning through play. At Millville we believe, 'it takes a village to raise a child' and families, educators and children all create this village. Our environment encourages children to explore, discover and develop a sense of wonder and awe, cultivate their imaginations, creativity, knowledge, and curiosity by following their own interests and ideas. They are supported by a team of warm, nurturing, enthusiastic professionals with a passion for high quality care. The learning environment is purposefully designed to reflect a homely, inviting, friendly and secure atmosphere, which creates a strong sense of belonging. It is rich with opportunity, experiences, adventure and challenge. We offer an indoor and outdoor program where children have a choice of where they would like to play and learn. Our outdoor areas centre around providing challenge, interest and sustainability. Vegetable gardens, animals, creek beds, water walls, swings, sand, mud, leaves, fruit trees, climbing trees and many nooks, crannies and cubbies form part of our beautiful, natural outdoor environment. We both value and encourage family participation in all aspects of our Centre and aim to work together to provide a warm, caring, supportive and nurturing environment that meets the differing needs of your family.

Millville Child Care Centre is a registered 85 place centre caring for children from birth to school age and offers full time, part time and occasional care. We offer both 3 year old and four year old kindergarten. The Centre is open from 7.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Please read through this booklet and feel free to discuss any issues with our staff. We hope your family has a positive, enjoyable experience at our Centre.

Our Philosophy

Millville Childcare Centre recognizes early childhood as a very valuable stage of life. We believe in providing a welcoming, inclusive, family type environment for children to learn and develop. We recognize and acknowledge that families are the primary and most influential educators and nurturers of their child and that children's learning and development takes place in the context of families.

We support and promote children's sense of belonging by developing respectful, collaborative relationships with families. We value the uniqueness of each child and their families and believe in providing an environment which encourages the development of each child to their full potential by having high expectations for every child.

We acknowledge, incorporate, appreciate and celebrate the culture and diversity of family and people within our community. We value our own indigenous heritage and those of the wider community. We endeavour to honour the history, culture and beliefs of all families.

We believe that the role of educators is to provide a constructive, stimulating environment where positive guidance, modelling and intentional teaching make learning possible.

We view children as capable, competent co contributors and recognize their right to play and be active participants in their own learning. We believe that interactions, attachment and providing a curriculum that enhances dispositions for learning, will provide the opportunity for children to realise their own potential.

We encourage children to explore their own identity, solve problems, create, construct, communicate by creating physical environments that support a wide range of opportunities to learn. We recognise the importance of building on children's interests, strengths, abilities, cultures and home experiences through a variety of child initiated, as well as active educator play based learning.

We believe that children are able to learn and develop in a safe and supportive environment. We believe that the safety, health and wellbeing of children is of the highest priority and are committed to acting in children's best interests. We will ensure our environment and practices are always safe, consistent with best practice and legislative requirements including the Child Safe Standards.

We recognise the importance of building secure, positive relationships with children to encourage children to form a strong sense of self. We encourage children to establish friendships and learn to live interdependently with others. We strive to support children in the ways they connect to the natural environment to promote awareness of environmental and sustainable practice.

We believe in providing warm and supportive relationships to promote a strong sense of wellbeing. We recognize that when children are involved and engaged, they will be enthusiastic participants in their learning and develop positive dispositions for life long learning.

We recognize and value the knowledge and commitment of educators and support all their professional learning and development. We actively encourage and provide opportunities and resources for critical reflection and evaluation to enrich decision making about children's curriculum and learning.

We believe that our philosophy statement changes as new insights are gained, practices are evaluated, or when the needs of families and educators alter.

Centre Goals

For Children...

- To provide a safe, warm, stimulating, happy secure and nurturing environment.
- To acknowledge the uniqueness and potential of each child.
- To foster a positive self-image through promoting feelings of confidence and success.
- To develop children's strengths and competencies.
- To promote feelings of well being and positively support children in their growth and development.
- To guide children's behaviour by example, positive reinforcement and encouragement.
- To foster self-discipline and responsibility for their actions.

To maintain high standards of personal care, creating a safe and healthy environment that respects children's sense of self and their dignity.

To support children as they learn to interact with others in a positive and acceptable way.

To promote play as a major contribution to development.

To provide programs that are developmentally appropriate and responsive to children's needs, interests and culture., strengths and abilities.

To respect the rights of children and provide an environment which encourages decision making, problem solving and independence.

To ensure that every child is allowed the same rights and opportunities, regardless of gender, race, religion, ability or culture.

For Families...

To work in partnership with families to provide high quality care.

To encourage an atmosphere where both families and staff share their knowledge of the child so there is mutual understanding of the child as a whole.

To develop positive relationships based on trust, understanding and open communication

To assist each family to develop a sense of belonging and provide an atmosphere which promotes a feeling of confidence in leaving their child in our care.

To maintain confidentiality and respect the right of the family to privacy.

To develop programs in unison with families which actively encourages participation and respects families values/ ideas.

To build up resources that meets the needs of our families and provides support and information.

To acknowledge the uniqueness of each family and the significance of its culture, customs, language and beliefs.

To provide avenues for communication and discussion of each child's interests, strengths and abilities.

For Staff...

To work together to provide an atmosphere of trust, respect and support .

To actively embrace Millville's philosophy, policies and procedures.

To participate in developing a Quality Improvement Plan and be active in reflecting, extending and improving.

To acknowledge the strengths of my colleagues.

To work in a professional way to provide a high standard of care.

To promote policies and working conditions that are non-discriminatory and that foster self-esteem and competence.

To continue to develop our knowledge, understanding and professionalism.

To work with families to provide a Centre that encourages communication, respect and trust.

National Quality Standards

Our Service participates in and values the National Quality Framework (NQF), including the National Quality Standard (NQS), the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the National Regulations – an Australian Government initiative linked to the funding of the Child Care Benefit for parents. This is conducted through the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) and the state licensing department through scheduled site assessment visits and where appropriate, spontaneous visits.

The NQS provides standards of quality practices for care provided in our Service as well as guidance and support , self evaluation through our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The system also allows educators to continually improve practices by identifying the quality aspects of care the Service is already providing and assisting the Service in developing goals for further improvement through our QIP. The Service is required to complete and submit a comprehensive QIP every twelve months.

Millville will ensure that all educators and management are informed about current practices and requirements in the NQF process by attending appropriate in-service/training, accessing any other publications and information about the accreditation process that may be of benefit – including those published by ACECQA.

Educators will involve parents, families and management in each stage to seek their input and views into practices and care in our Service – this includes having parent input into policy reviews, parent meetings

and providing updates in newsletters about our current stage in the process.

The seven Standards under the NQS are –

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Leadership and service management

The Ratings are as follows –

- Excellent
- Exceeding National Quality Standard
- Meeting National Quality Standard
- Working towards National Quality Standard
- Significant improvement required

We will access regular updates on the ACECQA website – www.acecqa.gov.au

Assessment & Rating

In 2014 our Centre was assessed at Exceeding National Quality Standards in all 7 areas. We were rated as Exceeding National Quality Standards overall.

In 2017 our centre was rated as "Excellent" the first to be named in regional Victoria.

Our rating is displayed in our foyers and on our website.

Interactions with Children

Our interactions with children are always warm, responsive and positive. We aim to develop and maintain respectful, equitable and trusting relationships with each child. Educators support children to build and maintain positive and responsive relationships with other children and adults. Educators guide and support children to manage their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.. The dignity and rights of children are maintained at all times. Educators at Millville both value and are highly trained in this area.

Programming and Planning

Our program is guided by our Centre's philosophy and the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF 0-5) and the Victorian Early Years Learning Framework (VEYLF 0-8) All our curriculum decisions are based on these.. The frameworks describe the principles, practices and outcomes essential to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to 8 years of age, their transition to school and the early years at school.

The frameworks have a strong emphasis on play based learning. They have been designed for use by early childhood professionals working in partnerships with families, children's first and most influential educators.

Early childhood educators guided by the frameworks, will reinforce in their daily practice the principles laid out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention states that all children have the right to an education that lays the foundation for the rest of their lives, maximises their ability and respects their family, culture and other identities and languages. The Convention also recognizes children's right to play and be active participants in all matters affecting their lives. More broadly, the frameworks supports goal 2 of the Melbourne Declaration on Education Goals for Young Australians, that:

All young Australians become:

- Successful learners

- Confident and creative individuals
- Active and informed citizens

Educators at Millville plan programs and learning centres based on children's interests, strengths and abilities. They have high expectations of all children and use observations, discussions with children and other educators. Educators take written observations/photo observations/fill in checklists and work with families to ensure that the program is inclusive, stimulating, engaging and creates enthusiastic learners. They reflect on their own practice and how the program benefits every child.

The programs are on display in the foyers, rooms and on our website. Copies are also emailed and put in children's individual portfolios. We use the portfolio method of documentation which is available in the foyers. Families are welcome to borrow them, add comments, stories, photos etc

Educators analyse all data collected and implement goals and plans for both children and educators. They then design/plan experiences and environments to support children's learning and development in the context of the five learning outcomes (Identity, community, wellbeing, learning and communication). Learning areas are set up both inside and out and cover the many areas of development.

Literacy, numeracy, science, sustainability, art, music, dramatic play, imaginary play, gross/fine motor and sensory experiences are all part of a well designed curriculum. Educators reflect on all aspects of the plan, evaluating, reviewing and assessing children's learning and development.

One of the goals we work on is gaining confidence in the larger community. Incursions and excursions are very much part of our program. Incursions and excursions planned around curriculum areas such as Music, drama, cultural, safety, sustainability, animals, literacy and numeracy, knowledge of local community, wellbeing and interest base.

Our playground centres around providing challenge, interest and sustainability. Veggie gardens, animals, creek beds, water walls, swings, and many nooks, crannies, cubbies, sandpits, will form part of our outdoor curriculum

Fitness Fridays & Movement Mondays

On Fridays we have introduced 'Fitness Fridays. This is another opportunity for us to promote health, wellbeing and fitness. This is part of our normal curriculum but on Fridays we have extra special emphasis. Educators will wear track pants, sneakers. Children are also encouraged to wear their fitness gear, ready for runs, yoga, ball skills, obstacle courses, gym. Movement Mondays are for 4 year old kinder room only.

Excursions

Children from all age groups are given opportunities to explore their wider environment. All excursions are planned taking into account the developmental needs, interests and abilities of the children, and are intended to compliment and extend the room program.

Families are advised of any forthcoming excursions (that are not covered by our routine outings form) by a note in their family pocket, flexibuzz or email. Details of the date, location and other necessary information are provided to families. Families are required to sign a consent form prior to the excursion which allows their child to attend. Children who have not been given permission must remain at the Centre. A risk assessment is carried out during the planning of the excursion and is available upon request.

Routine Outings

As part of the Victorian Early Years Learning Framework, we work toward developing a strong sense of identity, wellbeing, and community, being confident and involved learners who have good communication skills.

Our routine outings are designed to meet these outcomes. They are outings we go to regularly– local parks, the library, shopping centre, post office, shops, hospital, aged care facilities. We will put a sign up to say we are going on a routine outing or have been on one. We follow children's interests at the time which may involve a spontaneous trip to the post office or fruit shop.

Sustainability

As part of our curriculum we include sustainable practices and education. We believe in supporting children

to appreciate and care for the environment by embedding sustainable practices into the daily operation of our service, infrastructure and teaching. We encourage children to participate in recycling projects, reducing energy and conserving water. We intentionally teach and aim to provide children with the skills and knowledge to become environmentally responsible. Worm gardens, compost heaps, chooks, veggie and herb gardens and water tanks are all part of our environment.

3 year old Kindergarten

Your child must be 3 years of age before the 30th of April to be eligible to attend our 3 year old kindergarten program, Our 3 year program (echidna Room). As the program is offered in a long day care setting the program is run throughout the whole day. Children wishing to attend our 3 year old kinder program are offered to attend any morning session between 9am-1pm and will be charged a 3 year old kinder session, alternatively you may book in for a half day 7am-12pm/8am-1pm or a full day and your child will still participate in our 3 year old program. Children booked for 3 year old kinder have a term booking and are not charged for school holidays, if you decide you require care over the holidays it will be charged at a half day sessional rate. Children booked into the 3 year old kinder program only are not eligible for the 4 weeks of holiday rate.

4 year old Kindergarten...

Your child must be 4 years of age before the 30th of April to be eligible to attend our 4 year old kindergarten program, Millville's four year old will provide an inclusive, educational program that will challenge, enrich and extend their learning and not only prepare them for school but for life long learning. We have two four year old kindergarten groups: **The Waminda Group** (Tues, Wed, Friday 8.30-1.30)

The Jillaby Group (Monday, Thursday 8.30-4.30)

Kindergarten sessions are not eligible for holiday rate.

Enquiries

To be made to a Director. Prospective families will be shown through the Centre at a suitable time and briefly given an explanation of the Centre's policies. Families/Guardians will be required to read through the Family handbook and if the policies of the Centre are agreed to they will proceed with enrolling their child. If no places are available they will be placed on a waiting list. Families will be given an enrolment package that contains the Parent handbook, a background information sheet, a communication plan, our Privacy Policy and an enrolment form

Enrolment Procedure

Priority of Access

The Commonwealth Government has determined priority of access guidelines for day care centres.

Priority 1: a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect

Priority 2: a child of a single parent or parents who satisfy the work/training/study test under Section 14 of the 'A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999'

Priority 3: any other child.

Within these main categories, there are also sub categories that will be considered. For more information please visit the Department of education website—<https://www.education.gov.au/priority-filling-child-care-places>

A child care service may require a Priority 3 child to vacate a place to make room for a child in a higher priority group.

Enrolling Your Child

Once a position has been accepted, families are required to complete an online Enrolment form (via Hubworks). Supplement information is also given to families at this time which is required to be completed, signed and returned before your child can start care. Any Medical conditions need to be discussed at this time so proper arrangements for care can be made (this includes allergies) before care commences as per legislation. a gradual period of integration and orientation is arranged when possible. An enrolment bond, equivalent to one week's fees, is to be paid at this time.

Orientation to the Centre

Staff feel it is of the utmost importance that you and your children feel comfortable and secure at our Centre. We aim to create a sense of belonging in our Centre. Educators will work with you to help your children settle confidently and happily into our Centre. We will work with you to see what works best for you and your child/ren

- visiting the Centre with your child a few times before care actually starts and staying with them for a play
- being confident yourself (if you are anxious this can easily influence the way your child feels)
- always telling your child when you are going and when you will be back
- leaving your child for short periods of time and building up over a couple of weeks

Goodbye Routine

All children need a chance to "settle in" as they all react differently to new situations. It is important when the time comes to say "Goodbye" that you do so promptly and confidently. Reassure your children that you will return - never slip away without saying goodbye. When you drop your child off, do it in a way that your child can become familiar with. If you would like to check that your child has settled for the day, please feel free to telephone us.

Arrangements for Collection of Children

All children must be signed in and out of the Centre by the parent or person nominated by the parent using our Electronic Sign In (ESI) system. This is a requirement of the Education & Care Services National Regulations (2011). It is an important record of your child's attendance and is necessary for CCS to be paid. Changes to authorisation to collect can be made via hubworks using your parent login or alternatively parent/guardians can complete an "authorisation to collect form" for a particular date or for an on going arrangement.

To ensure the correct staff/child ratios are maintained families should contact the Centre if they are unable to collect their child by the expected departure time. No child will be released from the Centre except to the parent or authorised adult, whose name appears on our records. Photo identification will be required if the person collecting is unknown to us.

ESI

Electronic Sign In (ESI) is the system used to sign children in and out of care. You will be asked to put in your own phone number and create a password. This is then used as your signature, so there is a record of who is dropping off and collecting your child. You should not share your login information with anyone else who is collecting your child as they will have their own unique login.

Custody and Access

A copy of current Custody Orders are required for our files and we will endeavour to abide by them. If there are any problems associated with custody and access, please discuss these with a Director

Yearly Placements

In August existing families will be offered a place for the following year. In November offers of places will be confirmed for the following year based on guidelines for priority of access.

Where to find Centre Information

Millville website

Our website displays information about our Centre including room programs, menus and recipes, newsletters, family handbooks, policies, forms, newsletters, calendars and photos.

Family Handbook

Our Handbook is designed to provide basic information on the Centre. This is a guide to the daily

procedures and requirements. It aims to answer the most common questions about the Centre. The Handbook is provided to all families as part of the orientation procedure and is reviewed annually.

Policies & Procedures

The Policy Manual contains all aspects related to the Centre's operation. The policies have been developed in conjunction with families and staff. These are also reviewed annually. The Policy Manual is available on our website in the Parent Protected area.

Foyer and Room Displays

Information on all aspects of our Centre, including programming, procedures, routines, policies, emergency evacuation and lock down procedures, upcoming events, menus and calendars are all display.

Communication Plan

We provide many opportunities for effective communication between staff and families. There are opportunities for informal conversations at drop off and pick up times. Written information will be provided on whiteboards, outlining daily activities and recording details of food eaten, rest details and nappy changes. Families are always welcome to fill in comments/suggestions or share family information on these. Programs are also on display in both rooms and the foyer. Feedback on any of our programs is welcomed anytime by placing comments in suggestions boxes or email our office. On a monthly/bi-monthly basis, a newsletter, room reflections and foyer displays provide information on our policies, programs, philosophy, goals, procedures, experiences, activities and developmental stages.

Twice a year staff will provide opportunities for interviews and a written record of their child's interests, interactions and developmental stages.

Families are also encouraged to arrange appointments to speak to staff or the Director at any time.

Our full communication plan is available on our website.

How we communicate with you

On enrolment, families are given a copy of our *Family Handbook* that outlines our centre philosophy statement and operational policies and procedures. Families are also shown through the centre and given all the child enrolment information and details of how our rooms are set-up.

To help us understand your child's needs, we ask you to provide all your family details including interests, likes dislikes, fears, special events that your family celebrate, and specific information such as food requirements, sleep patterns and medical history.

Hubworks

Is a web based Child Management System which we use to communicate with families via email. Families receive their own login details and can access their own information at anytime.

FlexiBuzz

A communication App that can be downloaded to your phone, Tablet or PC. We use Flexibuzz to notify families of special events, health warnings, operational issues and general reminders. **Please see Appendix 1 for instructions on how to connect.**

Child Portfolios

When your child starts at Millville we will create a portfolio starting with the information you provide us as part of the enrolment pack. Portfolios contain photos, art work, family information, child likes and dislikes and these portfolios will be added to throughout the year. Portfolios are kept in the foyer and are available for you to view and take home at anytime.

www.millville.com

Our website provides a comprehensive overview of who we are and how we operate. Families can also find newsletters, reflections, event calendar and much more information on our website. All enrolled families will be provided with login details to access the password protected parents pages.

Children's pockets

Each child or family will be assigned a pocket in the room foyer where information relating to fees, events, general childcare information etc. will be placed.

We produce a bi-monthly newsletter which highlights individual room activities and up-coming events. This will be sent out to families and displayed in all of our foyers.

The *Millville Events Calendar* is published each February and outlines our planned activities for the year. A copy of the calendar is provided on enrolment and can be found on our website.

Communications specific to your child...

There will be opportunities for informal conversations in the rooms at drop-off and pick-up times with our educators or by appointment if required.

More formal feedback regarding your child will be provided half yearly when our educators will conduct an interview with parents and discuss your child's interests, interactions and progress through developmental stages

On a daily basis, written information regarding your child will be recorded on room whiteboards outlining food and beverages consumed, sleep/ rest periods taken and toileting/nappy changes. Information on experiences, activities and social interactions will be written up on whiteboard and in room display books. Our room foyer displays including photographs of the children at play are put up to show different aspects of our philosophy, goals, policies, procedures, experiences, activities and developmental stages.

If you have any questions regarding our communication plan, please talk to any of our educators or centre director, Cathy Thompson.

Feedback

We appreciate input from families and this is a way you can put your thoughts, concerns or ideas and give us feedback on all aspects of our centre. Suggestion boxes are located in foyer and feedback forms are provided, surveys are put out twice yearly for parents to assess the service and to comment.

Family Helpers

We welcome family participation in our centre. There are many opportunities for families to involve themselves at our centre. Family days and nights are offered throughout the year. We welcome your talents, skills and expertise in our curriculum. We have a family roster to help within the Kindergarten sessions, however you will need to have a current WWCC and attend a helpers meeting to be able to work with the children in a session. Donating materials, gardening, sustainable practices, are all areas in which you can be involved.

Fees and Operation

The fees are calculated according to the yearly expenditure of the Centre.

On admission families who are eligible, on the basis of their combined income, may apply for child care subsidy (CCS) through Centrelink which will reduce the fee you as families pay. All families need to apply at Centrelink on enrolment at the Centre. Families who receive Child Care Subsidy (CCS) are entitled to a fee reduction.

Tax invoices are generated fortnightly and shows you the amount you will need to pay us. Tax invoices are generated one month in advance and due 2 weeks after the date generated. An on-time payment will put you two weeks in advance as per our fee policy.

Account Statements are issued monthly and are for you to check over to ensure we have not overcharged/undercharged you or charged you for a day you are not booked. It is also a way to check payments. If you notice an error please contact us immediately.

Payment Options

Direct Debit – Our preferred method of payment is via Direct Debit from your nominated bank account. Application forms are available on enrolment or upon request.

Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)- internet banking transfer directly to our bank account. Please use your child's name as the reference. Millville account: 033-217 235442 Westpac Banking Corporations.

Eftpos Terminal – For your convenience we have a self serve EFTPOS terminal in our main foyer. Please write your child's name on the receipt, place in an envelope provided and place in the fees box located under sign in bench in office foyer.

Note: For the safety of our staff and children no cash is kept on the premises. Cash and cheques are not accepted for fees

Fee Schedule

These will be published in July each year and emailed to families. A copy will be put in pockets.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

CCS is a payment made by the Commonwealth Government to help families with the cost of quality child care.

Entitlement for eligible families is determined by Centrelink. It is calculated on the families gross income. Application to receive CCS is done via the **mygov** website. When Centrelink has received and processed your application they will then notify our centre and your family as to your eligible hours and the percentage of fees that must be paid by you. You will then be responsible to pay the gap fee between this and our Centre's fees.

Until Centrelink has assessed the application and notified the Centre of the appropriate percentage, full fees must be charged. A refund will be credited where appropriate. It is the parent's responsibility to re-apply for assistance each year.

Information booklets on CCS are available at Centrelink or online at education.gov.au You will need to notify Centrelink if there are any changes in your families income. You will need to provide the Centre with your Centrelink reference number and your child's Centrelink reference number for your child to be formally enrolled and receive a reduced fee and the 50% rebate.

Fees will be charged for booked days whether your child attends the Centre or not. This includes public and school holidays, sick days and rostered days off. A holding fee will apply for all public holidays and for up to 4 weeks a year for holidays.

Accounts / Receipts

Fees are required to be paid fortnightly. Accounts are processed a month in advance and they are due a fortnight after that which will put you a fortnight in advance. Accounts will be placed in family pockets in foyer or emailed. Fees can be paid by direct debit, Electronic Funds Transfer or via our EFTPOS terminal located in the office foyer. You are able to process these payments yourself and put the receipt with your child's name clearly marked on the receipt and placed into the fees box under the sign-in desk located in the office foyer.

Arrears

If fees are not paid and are in arrears by a fortnight, a reminder sticker appears on the next invoice.

If a further fortnight elapses without payment your child's position will be at risk.

Please discuss any financial problems or queries you may have with a Director to ensure your child's place at the Centre. These fees will be reviewed when the new budget is made at the end of the financial year.

Notification to Cease Care

Two weeks' notice is required if your child is leaving the Centre. If you do not use the two weeks, we are required to charge full fees for this time.

Holiday Leave

If going on extended holiday leave you must fill out a holiday form located in each foyer, and on our website two weeks before you leave. This way we will endeavour to sell your days to other families using the Centre. However, no guarantee can be given that this will be possible. A holding fee will be required to reserve your place during this period of leave. This notice must be given by filling in a form located on the sign in bench of each room. A holding fee will only be applicable for four weeks a (calendar) year. Full fees will be charged for all other leave.

Late Pick Up Fees

Children must be collected from the Centre before 6.00 p.m. unless an emergency arises.

The Centre should be notified wherever possible of changes in pick up times. Legal staff/child ratios may be exceeded if families do not pick up their children by the specified time.

If families fail to pick up their children by closing time (except in cases of emergency) a late fee will be charged. The fee is \$2.00 per child for each 5 minutes after 6.00 p.m.

If families fail to collect their children by closing time and staff are unable to locate families or emergency contacts the after-hours Child Protection Service will be contacted after 1 hour has elapsed. The procedure is displayed in the foyer.

Allowable Absences

The Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services has regulations on Allowable Absences. Families are eligible for up to 42 days for each child per calendar year. Days which count as allowable absences are any casual absences and absence caused by holidays or illness without a medical certificate. Absences which do not count towards the 42 day limit can be claimed if a medical certificate is supplied. CCs is also payable for absences taken for the following reasons; illness (with a medical certificate), non-immunisation, rostered days off, rotating shift work, temporary closure of a school or pupil free days(at service), periods of local emergency, court-ordered shared custody, attendance at pre-school.

Food and Nutrition

All meals at the Centre are carefully planned to ensure your child has a balanced diet. Our qualified cook prepares all meals. Our four week rotating menu is displayed in the foyer and on our website so you may plan your child's other meals at home. Children are encouraged to try all food provided.

Lunch consists of two courses. Hot or cold - depending on the time of year. Freshly cooked vegetables are prepared daily for babies and toddlers. Morning and afternoon teas are provided - consisting of fresh fruit, dry biscuits, scones, cheese, vegetables or cakes. Water is served with each meal and is available throughout the day. Milk drinks are either provided at morning or afternoon tea.

It is your responsibility to notify staff of any food allergies or dietary restrictions which concern your child. You will be required to fill out an allergy communication plan. Meals are planned to accommodate individual special diets where possible. However, in some cases it may be necessary for you to supply special drink or food. Any food brought to the centre must be signed in and given to an Educator. Children are not permitted to bring unhealthy snacks or lollies to the Centre

Health policies

Millville Child Care Centre is committed to providing a clean and healthy environment that protects the well being and health of children and staff. Stringent health and hygiene standards operate at the Centre as outlined in our Policy Manual. Children will need to stay away from the Centre if they are unwell or have an infectious disease. They can only return to the Centre if they are completely well. Families need to get a clearance for the Doctor for their child to return to the Centre if they have had an infectious disease. All families will be notified, as part of our policies, by Flexibuzz and with signs on the door, if there has been an infectious disease notification. If your child has had Gastroenteritis or symptoms of this, they are required to stay away for at least 24 hours after the symptoms have ceased.

Following is the procedure for the treatment of an unwell child.

As soon as staff become aware your child is unwell the Centre will contact you. Leaving a daily contact number that differs from your normal daily contact number is mandatory. As the centre does not have the facilities to look after a sick child and infection can spread quickly through a group we ask you, or your emergency contact, to pick your child up as soon as possible and within one hour of the Centre making contact with you.

An Authorisation Form must be completed when enrolling your child. The form must be signed by families/guardians. It states that all costs incurred by medical, ambulance and hospital treatment will be paid by the families.

Our child-staff ratios are designed to provide a positive, interactive and safe environment. Therefore if your child is too unwell to participate in our indoor/outdoor program we do need them to stay at home until they are well again.

Medications

Staff must be informed verbally if your child is on medication. The parent then must record all details on the medication authorisation sheet. No medication will be given unless this is filled in daily and signed. Dosage must be clearly marked by the chemist on the original label, in the child's name.

Staff are not permitted to administer medication which is:

- **out of date**
- **does not have the child's name on the container, or**
- **when the correct authorisation is not entered in the medications book.**

Two staff members will check the prescribed dosage before administering.

Medical Conditions

Families are required to provide information about their child's health care needs, allergies, medical conditions and medication on the enrolment form and are responsible for updating the service about of these things, including any new medication, ceasing of medication, or changes to their child's prescription.

Upon enrolment or notification of a medical condition, parents will be given a pack including Medical Condition Policy, Risk minimisation Plan and Communication Plan. Children will be able to participate in the program once these plans are completed.

Immunisation

The introduction of legislation known as, 'No Jab, No Play' requires children to be fully vaccinated before they can commence at early childhood education and care services,

You are required to provide an up to date Immunisation History Statement provided by Medicare as part of your enrolment process:

The statement will need to show that your child's immunisations are up to date for their age.

Immunisation History Statements can be requested at any time by contacting Medicare:

Phone: 1800 653 809

Email: acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au

Website: www.medicareaustralia.gov.au

Incidents, Injury & Illness

In the event of an accident, injury or illness families will be informed either by phone (if serious) or on collection of their child at the end of the day. In the event of a serious accident or medical emergency, a doctor will be called and if required an ambulance summoned. If necessary, hospital admission will be arranged by the attending doctor (or your own, if possible). Attempts to notify you will be made immediately. There is an emergency and accident procedure displayed in the foyer and children's rooms. Staff follow this procedure in the case of an emergency or accident. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is also notified within 24 hours and a full report is given to them.

Rest

Rest/quiet period and sleeps for all children will be according to their individual needs. Please discuss your young children's needs for rest with the person in charge of their room so that we may follow the home routine as closely as possible. Educators will take into account families' preferences about the amount of sleep their child has at the service, and will accommodate any requests about their child's sleeping practices where these are not inconsistent with the safe sleeping practices discussed in the policy, and meet a child's needs for sleep or rest.

Educators have a legal obligation to ensure children are safe and are offered sleep or rest when they need it. If a child is displaying signs of tiredness, educators must allow the child to sleep or rest for a reasonable period of time.

Sun smart

In line with our sun smart policy, all children are required to wear sun smart clothing between September and April each year. Children are required to wear a wide brimmed hat, sleeves and protective clothing (no singlet or crop tops). We will apply sunscreen 15 minutes before each outside time according to UV ratings for that day which are on display in the foyers. Children will be encouraged to play in the shade between these hours.

Toilet Training

Staff aim to follow the child's and parent's requirements regarding toilet training. Please discuss your child's readiness with the staff so together we can plan the best approach to meet the needs of your child. Remember to supply changes of underpants and clothing.

Nappies

Disposable nappies are supplied at the Centre.

Clothing and Possessions

Staff will encourage your child to be independent, so older children should be dressed in clothing which they can easily manage themselves.

It is advisable to dress your child in practical clothing which is easily washed, as we do have a range of potentially messy or wet activities. Shoes need to be comfortable, well fitted and suitable for outdoor play and climbing.

As part of current research we support 'Barefoot is Best' but if you wish for your children to wear shoes outside please advise the educators and we will try to encourage the children to wear shoes. **Appendix 2**

Each child is required to bring a full change of clothing in case of an accident. Please send along a coat, hat and gumboots during cold weather. During summer the children will require sunhats. All children's clothes need to be clearly labelled.

We would appreciate you keeping children's toys at home. The only exception is a young child's security soft toy for sleeping, which must be clearly labelled with the child's name.

Birthdays

We welcome the celebration of children's birthdays. As part of our Food Safety Program we do require a cake to be purchased from an approved supplier with list of ingredients and unopened. We are happy to take photos.

What you need to bring to Millville

- Spare change of clothes
- Wet Bag (for soiled or wet clothing)
- Broad rimmed sun smart hat from September to April
- Coats, hats, rubber boots (winter)
- Drink bottle filled with **water** (daily)
- Milk/Formula bottles (for babies)

Please have all items clearly labelled. Bags are to be placed in children's locker and drink bottles in the drink bench. Hats, etc are to be placed in children's lockers or on pegs on hat line.

What the Centre provides

- Sunscreen (Woolworths brand)

- Morning and Afternoon tea/late snack
- 2 course cooked midday meal
- Cow's milk
- Water
- Art smocks
- Disposable nappies
- Bed linen

Occupational Health and Safety

Millville Childcare Centre values the health and safety of all our employees, families and visitors. We have worked hard to provide an environment that is safe and without risk to health. Our Occupational Health and Safety policy outlines our procedures and practises.

We aim to meet the highest standard of the obligations set out under the Occupational Health and Safety act of 1985. Any concerns or queries should be directed to our Health and Safety Representative Sara Vickers.

Students

We encourage participation of students from tertiary institutions and local schools. Students at our Centre are always under the direction of qualified staff and are bound by the Centre's confidentiality policy and all other policies of the Centre.

Privacy Policy

In order to provide families with the highest standard of service, our Centre is required to collect personal information about children and families/guardians before and during the course of a child's enrolment at this Centre. Millville Childcare Centre is committed to protecting each individuals privacy and we abide by the National Privacy Principles contained within the Privacy act (1988) and the Health Records Act, 2001, (Vic) and other applicable privacy laws. Privacy of the personal information that we hold is of the utmost importance to us and we conduct our business with respect and integrity. Our policy sets out how we collect, handle and store personal information and a copy of this is given to you on enrolment.

Photos

Photos are taken by Educators at the centre to support our program planning. We like to share these photos with families and we individually select photos (using google photos) to make albums that can be shared with families. Often photos are captured of groups of children and these photos are also shared to the album, it is for this reason we insist that any photos shared with families that contain other children are not uploaded to social media. If you do not wish your child to be in these albums, please inform the service.

Parking

Please ensure you use the parks provided outside our Centre (please note this is 15 minute parking). We would ask that you refrain from parking in the crossover as it blocks access to our staff car park. We would also appreciate you refraining from parking south of Farrington St as these houses do not have driveways and need access at the front of their houses. We also ask that for the safety of our children you do not park on our nature strips.

Grievance Procedure

If parents have a concern regarding the care of their child, this should be discussed with either the staff member in charge of the room or the director. If a parent has a complaint or comment about the service, they will be encouraged to talk to the Director/Primary Nominee or Nominees who will arrange a time to discuss their concern and come to a resolution to address the issue.

The Director will meet the parties involved and discuss what had been decided regarding the issue, within a week of the complaint. Staff will also be informed of any relevant issues that they need to address or be aware of.

If the issue is not resolved in the discussion between the Director and parent then the Director will develop a strategy for resolving the problem, in conjunction with any parties involved. The Director or Primary Nominee may contract the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to discuss the complaint.

The Director or Primary Nominee will look at calling in a mediator or specialist if the problem cannot be resolved.

The complaint will be recorded and dated indicating the issue of concern and how it was resolved. The Director, Cathy Thompson can be contacted personally, by letter or phone on 52322550. The primary Nominee can be contacted personally by letter or phone on 52322550.

The Persons with Management and Control, Cathy Thompson, can be contacted personally, by letter or by phone on 52322550 or 0402390780.(After Hours Only) The Nominated Supervisor can be contacted personally by letter or by phone on 52322550

REGULATORY AUTHORITY CONTACT DETAILS:

Department of Education and Training

South Western Victoria Region

75 High St, Belmont

Ph: 03 52155136 Ph: 1300 307 415

Appendix 1

Flexibuzz is the application we use to communicate with families much of our day to day communication such as illness/communicable disease notifications, excursions, special days, reminders, program reflections and much more.

We ask you follow the attached instructions to download the app, if you have any queries please see a staff member.

Boxes to connect to:

0-2yr old room— Possum

2-3yr old room—Wallaby

3-4yr old room—Echidna

Kinder—Platypus



The poster is titled "FlexiBuzz" and provides a four-step guide for users. Step 01, "Sign up for FlexiBuzz and then login", includes instructions to search for the app in app stores or visit the website. Step 02, "Connect to us", shows a search icon and instructs users to find the organization. Step 03, "Select your communication groups", shows an add icon and instructs users to select relevant groups. Step 04, "Get started", shows a home icon and instructs users to view recent posts. The poster also includes contact information for further assistance and the FlexiBuzz logo at the bottom.

STEP 01 Sign up for FlexiBuzz and then login

Search "FlexiBuzz" in your app store. Go to web.flexibuzz.com and click "Sign Up".

STEP 02 Connect to us

Select the "Search" icon and type in our name. Select us from the results.

STEP 03 Select your communication groups

Click the "Add" icon beside the communication groups that apply to you.

STEP 04 Get started

Click the "Home" icon to view our recent posts.

For further information or assistance please visit our website www.flexibuzz.com or email us via support@flexibuzz.com.

FlexiBuzz 

Appendix 2

Barefoot Is Best

Overwhelmingly the evidence supports what children knew all along. That is, that walking barefoot is an integral part of normal development and has broad, long term health benefits and here are some of the reasons why:

Walking barefoot develops a sense of body awareness or proprioception

Babies and children learn about their bodies, where different bits are and what they can do with them through all the sensations they receive through nerve endings. Feet and toes are jam packed with nerve endings so that children can feel the ground beneath them in order to develop a sense of where their body is in space and how they can move to safely negotiate their environment. By placing shoes on our children's feet we are reducing the amount and quality of sensory information the child is getting about their environment and body. This in turn limits the development of sensory pathways that promote healthy and functional movement patterns. When wearing shoes, we get less information about where we are walking and therefore need to look down to get this information. This increases the risk of losing balance and falling, particularly for toddlers and young children.

Walking barefoot develops a natural, healthy gait

Barefoot walking promotes better biomechanics in terms of distributing weight evenly and efficiently throughout the body. When children are born they do not have bones, but only cartilage in their feet. It is not until the late teenage years that the 28 bones of an adult foot are fully ossified. Up until that point forcing feet to conform to the shape of a shoe will ultimately result in permanent changes to the shape of a child's foot. Changing the shape of our feet will in turn alter how effectively and efficiently our feet work.

When we are barefoot, we develop a more natural gait which is gentler, has a shorter stride and less pressure through our heels. When barefoot, our knees bend more to cushion each step and our toes work to help us grip and move forward. Many of the functions of our feet are altered when walking in shoes. The resultant gait is much harder on many joints throughout our body and can result in both pain and deformity.

Walking barefoot strengthens the feet and body

When walking barefoot we can grip the ground more easily using the muscles of our feet and toes. Our feet are designed similarly to our hands and have lots of small muscles that allow us to develop finely tuned movements with small muscle adjustments. When we are barefoot, the small muscles in our feet adapt the shape of our foot and body position to the surface we are walking on. This not only strengthens these muscles but also results in more effective grip and balance thereby reducing the risk of trips and falls. When wearing shoes, our feet stop working in the way they were designed resulting in reduced strength and agility. It is only through walking barefoot that we are able to maintain the full function of our feet.

Walking barefoot improves safety

Apart from the freedom that we feel when we throw our shoes off, it also teaches children to assess a situation and adapt to it. For example, if there is a rocky surface children quickly learn to slow their pace and look for and tread on the most stable surface. When walking barefoot we tend to step with less force and are more likely to notice if we are putting our feet on something sharp, therefore avoiding injury. A heightened awareness of surroundings and ability to react adaptively in many different situations are skills that will help children assess and adapt to risk in other facets of their lives. Research also suggests that children who are barefoot tend to be less clumsy and use a more natural gait making them more stable and less likely to trip.

Walking barefoot provides a direct connection to our natural environment

Walking barefoot provides a direct connection to our natural world which in turn allows us to blow off steam, relax and reawaken our senses. Research and experience tells us that children and adults thrive in the outdoors and natural environments. Wearing shoes places a barrier between our feet and the natural world reducing the health promoting effects of spending time in nature. Walking barefoot promotes an affinity for nature which is not only good for our feet, but does wonders for our physical development and social and emotional health and wellbeing.

We understand that some families like their children to wear shoes outside, particularly in winter. If this is the case, please speak to educators and we will try to encourage this.