



PARENT INFORMATION BOOK

Learning 4 Life

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Coolgardie Children's Centre

The Centre Philosophy (updated February 2013)

The philosophy of Coolgardie Children's Centre is to ensure that quality childcare and a stimulating environment are provided whilst catering to the individual needs of all children. The well being of each child is our priority.

All children will be provided the opportunity to develop in relation to the learning outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework (COAG 2009). Our programs provide a balance of indoor, outdoor, active and passive experiences that encourage self help and a sense on achievement in daily routines.

The centre aims to extend and enrich children's experiences and learning from birth to five years and through to the transition to school. In doing so we embrace the concepts of "being", "belonging" and "becoming" as milestones in each child's development as they connect to and contribute to their world.

At Coolgardie we believe in interest based learning. Our centre programs are developmentally appropriate and play orientated. Experiences cater to the current interests and abilities of all children. This assists in empowering children to view themselves as successful, capable and competent learners.

We recognise the importance of play and the acceptance of diversity. We encourage children to develop meaningful relationships through respect and acceptance as we work towards building the self esteem and independence of all children.

We believe that if children are to become long term, independent learners and effective communicators the environment must provide the opportunity for all children to be self thinkers and to feel valued. Children are respected for their contributions which encourage confidence and a sense of belonging to our centre community and the community in general.

Our aim is to build effective partnerships with families and the wider community. We recognize that children, families, staff and the community deserve consistency, equality, support, respect and confidentiality in all matters including culture, beliefs, values, health and security. We believe that staff and families need to collaborate to ensure the best start for each child. We encourage participation in our activities and our decision making regarding evaluation, review of policies and procedures, programs and planning, routines, activities and the sharing of details regarding the child's home life. The centre embraces the concept of genuine trusting relationships between families and staff.

Early Years Learning Framework Outcomes

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| Outcome 1 | Children develop a strong sense of identity |
| Outcome 2 | Children connect to and contribute to their world |
| Outcome 3 | Children develop a strong sense of well being |
| Outcome 4 | Children are confident and involved learners |
| Outcome 5 | Children are effective communicators |

Coolgardie Children's Centre

Statement of Principles

To help us to develop according to our philosophy we have devised a variety of programs, activities and conditions based on our principles and following the guidelines of the 2009 Early Years Learning Framework.

We offer:

- Structured and flexible programs following the interests of the children
- A stimulating and productive environment with the opportunity for play based learning
- An accepting attitude and a non-biased approach to activities
- An active interest in all cultures and cultural needs
- A balance of indoor and outdoor experiences and the opportunity for both active and passive play
- The opportunity of “being”, “belonging” and “becoming”
- Encouragement in developing a nutritious diet
- Support and appreciation of the families needs
- Interaction with the local community and community members
- The development of a Portfolio / Learning Story of each child's preschool life
- The opportunity for visiting groups through our annual calendar of community visitors
- The benefits of networking with local schools
- Walking excursions to local schools in the pre school year

Through continual observation we monitor your child's development and all staff members work together to ensure that Coolgardie Children's Centre provides a happy, safe and rewarding experience for all children.

Suggestions and comments regarding our centre are most welcome. If you have any problems, or wish to discuss any aspect of our centre please contact any staff member.

If you would like to share a skill or some time with the children at the centre please arrange this with an educator in your child's room.

We look forward to a happy and rewarding association with you and your family and we feel confident that your child's time at Coolgardie Children's Centre will be enjoyable for all concerned.

Please feel free to visit at any time.

Coolgardie Children's Centre

About the Centre

Coolgardie Children's Centre is a long day care centre catering for up to 46, 0-6 year olds and operating between 7.30am and 5.30pm.

The centre is owned and licensed by GGPD Pty Ltd and is managed by Geoff and Pat who have many years experience in the child care sector and play an active part in the centre's activities on a daily basis. They hold many awards for the operation of previously owned centres and these awards are displayed in the foyer at Coolgardie.

In 2011 Coolgardie received the award of "Most Outstanding Child Care Centre" in the Illawarra, South Coast and Southern Highlands and finalists in 2012 and 2013.

Every attempt has been made to create a safe, home-like environment and to incorporate interesting and challenging equipment to meet the varying needs of each child.

Indoor Facilities

Coolgardie Children's Centre has been designed to provide a modern, functional centre with excellent bathroom and kitchen facilities and three purpose built rooms to provide the best possible environment for your child. Each area contains carefully chosen equipment, which will aid your child's development.

Extensive outdoor covered areas provide an excellent place for outdoor craft and games, even during wet weather.

Outdoor Facilities

Three separate outdoor play areas have been designed to provide many opportunities for creative play. These areas include a sandpit, vegetable and / or flower garden and extensive rubber soffit areas protected by several shade sails.

Outdoor equipment is mainly of a mobile nature to enable regular changes to provide variety and interest.

Meals

It will not be necessary to send any food or drinks for your child. Morning and afternoon tea and a nutritious lunch will be provided each day. Notify us of any special dietary needs of your child. Sample menus are available at the centre and they include a great variety of nutritious meals both hot and cold. Planning of all menus follows the guidelines of the New South Wales Department of Health. If your child has a favorite meal that we could include in our menus please let us know.

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Enrolment

Application forms for enrolment are available from the centre and when complete will be placed in order of receipt. When a vacancy exists the waiting list will be used to identify the next eligible child.

Preference of enrolment will be given to:

- a) Children presently enrolled;
- b) Children of working parents;
- c) Children of parents seeking work or training;
- d) Children or parents with a continuing disability or incapacity;
- e) Children at risk;
- f) Parents at home with more than one child below school age;
- g) Non-working parents.

Fees

Payment may be by direct debit, eftpos, cash or cheque and **must be paid in advance at all times**. Fees are payable for each week of your child's enrolment including when absent for sickness, holidays, public holidays etc. All payment should be placed in the envelopes provided at the sign on desk and deposited in the fee box. A late fee may be applicable for late payments.

Notice of withdrawal

At least two full weeks written notice is required if your child will not be returning to the Centre. If this notice is not received then two weeks fees in lieu will be charged. A "Two weeks notice form" is available for this purpose. Please ask at the office.

Staff

Our staff has a great variety of qualifications and many years of experience. Information about each staff member (including qualifications) is displayed at the Centre. All staff hold a current First Aid Certificates and it is the Centre's policy that all staff are involved in at least two in-service courses each year so that they remain familiar with current happenings in child care and continue to add to their professional development.

Government Child Care Benefit

Due to the nature of our service, all parents will be eligible for some degree of assistance with fees. Parents should contact the Family Assistance Office for income assessment, as this will determine what percentage of childcare assistance you are entitled to.

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The Kindy Pack

Each family is asked to purchase a "Kindy Pack" at enrolment. This pack is available at the centre and includes sheets designed especially for our beds, an apron and a hat. These will be your child's property and should be brought to kindy daily. This pack will also include a once only levy for sun cream. Costs for this pack will be kept to a minimum and should, in fact, be cheaper for parents than providing the essentials individually.

Settling In

Once your child is enrolled at the centre please feel free to come for a visit and spend time sharing some activities with your child. Please discuss this with the carers in your child's room.

The process of 'settling in' varies from child to child. Some children settle immediately and others find the transition more stressful. Generally it is best to stay with your child for a short time, then tell them you are leaving and will return. Try not to be too upset if your child is distressed when you leave (this usually lasts a very short time). The staff are used to this and are very experienced at providing comfort when needed.

Please be assured that we understand your concerns and are quite happy for you to check your child's progress by phoning the Centre at any time.

Daily Arrival and Departure

It is each parent's responsibility to sign the attendance book twice each day:

- **On arrival** – Please let a staff member know that your child has arrived and sign the attendance book.
- **On Departure** – Please let a staff member know that you are collecting your child and re-sign the attendance book.

If an adult, other than a parent, will be collecting a child they must be either named on the enrolment form or the authorised supervisor must have been notified previously. No child will be allowed to leave the Centre with an unauthorised person or with any person under 16 years of age.

If, for some reason, you will be late picking up your child please ring the Centre and inform the Staff as soon as you can. This enables staff to prepare both themselves and your child for your late arrival. Please be aware that the centre closes at 5.30pm and late fees of \$1 per minute apply for late collection of children (please see the centre's policy folder).

Court Orders

It is important that the Centre has a copy of any court orders, which apply to access of non-custodial parents. We are unable to withhold children from parents without such paper work.

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Guidance and Behaviour Management

Coolgardie Children's Centre has developed a behaviour management policy, which is displayed in the policy book at the Centre. Acceptable behaviour is encouraged by example and children are given positive guidance by clear instruction and well-defined limits. Staff therefore, ensure that children understand what is expected of them and continually praise children's efforts to behave appropriately.

Health Policy

A. Immunisation

The Kindy requires a full immunisation record of all attending children. We require parents to provide us with a copy of either:

- 1) The immunisation page from the child's "Personal Health Record" book; OR
- 2) An Immunisation Certificate from the doctor listing immunisations given; OR
- 3) A letter from the child's doctor stating that you object to immunisation for your child for specific reasons;

Please keep us up to date with new information about your child. Any parent choosing not to immunise their child will be required to keep their child home during an outbreak, or suspected outbreak, of the diseases involved. This also applies if parents fail to update the centre with their child's current immunisation details. More details are available from the Centre's policy documents.

B. Infectious Disease

For the safety of children, staff and visitors the Centre must be informed if any child is exposed to any infectious disease. If a child has an infectious disease they must be kept away from the Centre until the required time of isolation has elapsed and a doctor's clearance is presented identifying the illness and date of return. The Department of Health Guidelines on infectious diseases are followed strictly and exclusion times are listed in the Centre's health policy.

C. Medicine

The Centre is unable to administer medicine unless prescribed by a doctor. Any such medication should be given to a staff member in its original container stating the doctor and child's name, dosage and frequency. Parents must complete a medication form each day that medication is required. All medication will be stored in the kitchen (if refrigerated, in a locked container) and it is the parent's responsibility to collect it at the end of each day.

D. Sickness

In consideration of all children and staff at the Centre sick children should not attend until they have recovered sufficiently to take part in all normal activities. Parents will be notified if the staff consider that a child is not well enough to be at the Centre and such children must be collected promptly by a parent or authorised person. A copy of the full health policy will be distributed to parents on enrolment of children and should be kept for future reference.

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Absence of staff

As we have several staff above the required number each day it is usually not necessary to employ casual staff. This means that the children will be cared for by the same staff each day.

Volunteers and Students

We have regular visits to the Centre from volunteer workers and High School Work Experience students as well as students doing courses in Early Childhood at University and TAFE. We welcome these visits and they are greatly enjoyed by the children. All who apply to enter the Kindy in this capacity are interviewed to assess their suitability.

Excursions and Visitors

At present our policy is to arrange and encourage a variety of visitors to the Centre rather than taking children out of the Centre. We have regular visits from local community groups as well as performances and displays about a variety of things. Parents will always be notified about these visits and any interested parents are welcome to share these occasions with their child. An annual calendar of events is available and an annual cost covers all visiting groups for the year..

Safety and Emergency Procedures

The Centre has policies in place to cater for these. Our safety checklist is completed monthly by a nominated staff member and children are regularly 'reminded' about safety and emergency procedures. Evacuation and anaphylaxis drills are practiced and documented regularly so that children and staff are familiar with their role.

Parent Participation

Coolgardie Children's Centre welcomes parent participation in the care and education of their children. Any parent who would like to be involved with the parent committee can register their name with the authorized supervisor. The parent committee meets at the Centre on one morning per month and dates are displayed in the foyer. These parents are able to help the staff greatly by covering books, discussing policy documents, arranging activities, discussing aspects of accreditation etc.

During the year there are many occasions when family members are invited to join the children e.g. grandparents day, Easter and Christmas celebrations, farm visits etc. etc.

However, the Centre operates on "Open Door" policy and you are welcome to visit at any time. Please let the staff know if you have any skills that you would like to share with the Centre e.g. cooking, singing, music, dance, language etc.

Coolgardie Children's Centre

The Centre's Program

Programs are planned after careful observation of each individual child and with the Centre's general philosophy and aims in mind. Activities follow the interest of the children.

The children are provided with a variety of activities and experiences which encourage their development in all areas. The centre activities and programs support the Early Years Learning Framework which aims to achieve all aspects of "being, becoming and belonging" for each child.

Developmental records are kept on each child and these allow staff to program for each child's individual needs.

Please feel free to discuss your child's development or the Centre's program at any time. Staff will develop a portfolio for your child whilst at the centre. You are welcome to have a look at any time and will receive this when your child leaves the centre.

Grievance Policy

In the event that you may have a concern or grievance with any aspect of our centre please follow the procedures set out in our grievance policy document displayed in the foyer. Grievance forms are available in the specially marked folder on the sign in desk. We welcome the opportunity to deal with your concerns in a prompt and efficient manner.

Communication

Each family enrolled at Coolgardie is assigned a "pigeon hole" for this purpose. Please empty this daily and read all information supplied. The notice boards also contain relevant information as do the regular newsletters. Please be sure to read these as it is our main way of keeping you up to date with what's happening in the Centre.

Each room has a parent diary for communicating with staff as well as the main diary in the foyer. Please use these to record anything about your child that you may think can be helpful to staff.

The digital photo frame in the foyer and the day books in each room are also an excellent record of your child's time at the centre. Please take the time to have a look and any parent comments in the day book would be appreciated.

If you have any concerns or queries please don't hesitate to contact the Licensee or Authorised Supervisor.

Your suggestions and comments regarding our centre are most welcome. If you have any problems, or wish to discuss any aspect of our centre please contact any staff member.

Coolgardie Children's Centre

Our Philosophy of Learning at Coolgardie Children's Centre

In a caring and positive atmosphere, we create a warm and happy place for children to learn. As we bridge the gap from home to school, we guide children to a continued good self-image while building social skills in a warm, friendly and homelike setting.

Sensory, motor, perceptual and language skills are introduced through materials and activities which are both child-centred and teacher-directed. Work is planned which emphasises *the process rather than the product*, fostering a sense of accomplishment and pride.

Based on the theory that *children learn through play*, our routines encourage active involvement, meaningful experimentation and reinforcement through repetition. Schedules are designed which balance structure and free choice, as well as active and quiet times.

Recognising that *children grow in predictable stages*, we treat each child as an individual, working from the level each child has attained and moving forward a step at a time. We teach a *love of learning* by allowing children to experience their own stage of development and helping them to feel success *without pressure*.

We value the active involvement of parents in our program, both through committee and classroom participation. Parents are encouraged to participate in centre activities whenever possible, as these times enable the children to see their parents as important and concerned members of their new school environment, while providing parents with opportunities to view the child with teachers and other children.

Parents may gain valuable insights and techniques from the expertise of the staff; and, at the same time, share their own talents and interests to maintain the excellent quality here at Coolgardie Children's Centre. Learning then becomes a shared experience, which hopefully will continue throughout each child's educational process.

We look forward to a happy and rewarding association with you and your family and we feel confident that your child's time at Coolgardie Children's Centre will be enjoyable for all concerned.

Management and Staff – Coolgardie Children's Centre, Corrimal

