



PARENTS

INFORMATION

HANDBOOK

Visit our website at:

www.cathskindy.com.au

Email to: cathskindy@bigpond.com

We welcome your family to:



At Cath's Kindy our aim is to provide a home like environment, warm, friendly, harmonious, inviting, welcoming, and lots of parent involvement. We want both the children and their parents to be comfortable. We openly promote free communication which is reflected in our Open Door Policy.

We feel we have a special responsibility to be involved in the care and development of your child.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Cath's Kindy is licensed by the Department of Education and Care Services. The Centre is privately owned by Ms Cathryn Ivanoff. Cathryn is directly involved in the running of the Centre. Cathryn has owned and operated her own Centre's successfully since 1998.

 **Our Team:** The Centre is staffed by a qualified team of Educators who are genuinely interested in the care and development of your child. All members of the Cath's Kindy team attend in-services throughout the year to maintain existing knowledge, keep up to date with best practice and continually update their methods and practices. With a wide range of experience, and a team which vary in age, we ensure a balance of care, practices and activities. A team that you can trust with your child.

Each room has a Room Leader and assistants within that room. We have our Nominated Supervisor, Karen, whom is responsible for ensuring compliance to regulations as well as all of the internal day to day routines at the Centre, staffing, rostering, the indoor and outdoor program, enrolments, changes to enrolments, etc.

 **Confidentiality (See our Confidentiality Policy)**

All information obtained by any member of the Centre as a part of his/her role in the Centre must be treated as confidential unless it is required by law or it has been approved for public release. This includes information

- about customers (parents, guardians, children)
- about other members of the Centre

Information should only be shared with other members of the Centre on a 'need to know' basis and with the use of discretion to protect the identity of individuals and /or their family.



 **Relief, Staff, Students and Visitors:** During the year the Centre will require to use relief staff due to annual leave, illnesses or whilst advancing their knowledge through training. All relief staff will be selected carefully and confidently. Students will also be visiting the Centre from schools with Work Experience, TAFE Colleges and University. Allowing this involved ensures the quality of practical training for our up and coming child care professionals. Parents, if you have any special talents that you would like to share with us please let us know.

 **Kitchen:** We provide nutritionally, balanced meals which include all the core food groups. We will care for each child's individual needs and include a wide variety and from different cultures. During Autumn/Winter, the menu is a 2 week rotational menu which contains a variety of home cooked style dishes. During Spring/Summer we have a self selection smorgasboard of sandwiches with various fillings and also made by request.

 **Centre:** The Centre will be maintained by the highest level of safety and hygiene. We will be proud to present to you a Centre which you will undoubtedly have pleasure bringing your child to.



OPEN DOORS POLICY

At Cath's Kindy we have pleasure in providing an Open Doors Policy.

- O OUR CENTRE IS ALWAYS OPEN FOR YOUR INSPECTION
- P PLEASE COME AND SEE HOW WE ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT & SOCIAL SKILLS
- E ENTERING AT ANY TIME GUARANTEES YOU OF THE CONTINUING QUALITY OF CARE
- N NEVER FEEL THAT YOU ARE NOT WELCOME

- D DON'T HESITATE IN OFFERING YOUR SKILLS AND SUGGESTIONS
- O OUR CENTRE IS PROUD OF THE QUALITY OF CARE WE PROVIDE
- O OUR STAFF ARE QUALIFIED, CARING, PASSIONATE, EXPERIENCED AND COMMITTED
- R RATHER THAN TAKE OUR WORD FOR THIS DROP IN AND SEE FOR YOURSELVES



OUR CENTRE'S AIM

Caring staff will always have a strong dedication and responsibility to all children and families.

Aiming to understand each child's individual needs to improve their self-esteem, independence, language development, communication and stimulate his/her curiosity and thinking.

Taking, caring learning experiences that are enjoyed by each child in a safe, healthy and happy environment to extend their development through age appropriate programming.

Having nutritionally balanced meals that will be provided to introduce foods from different cultures as well as catering to children's individual needs.

Staff will understand and respect your child's needs and feelings at all times.

Keeping in touch with families and making them aware of their child's developments.

Individuality will be respected and encouraged as each child develops, regardless of his/her culture. We welcome and encourage new cultures as a way of enhancing skills throughout the Centre.

Nurturing and fostering self esteem, encouragement, support and emotional strengths will be what we will focus on at Cath's Kindy.

Developing a close relationship with children and families and have an open and honest communication channel.

Your feedback and your child's responses to their days at Cath's Kindy will be your reassurance that we are providing and caring for your child, and we thank you for that honor.



FACILITIES OF THE CENTRE

Cath's Kindy provides care and education for children aged from 0 – 6 years. The Centre is licensed for 49 children. We also offer Before and After School Care and Vacation Care on a needs basis.

 **Hours of Operation:** We are open from Monday to Friday from 7.00am to 6.00pm.

The Centre will be closed for an annual break during the Christmas/New Year period and also Public Holidays. You will be advised of these through our Newsletter and notice boards.

 **Centre Setup:** The Centre has 3 separate learning environments:

- **Snails:** 0 – 2 years
- **Caterpillars:** 2 – 4 years
- **Butterflies:** 4 – 6 years

 **Enrolment Procedure:** Upon contacting the Centre with an enquiry/enrolment. You will be offered a personal orientation to come in with your child/ren. The Nominated Supervisor will then go through the Centre with you and provide you with information regarding the Centre, fees, CCR and CCB as well as discussing the individual needs of the child and any other relevant family input necessary. A start date will be discussed based on availability. As the position becomes available, you will be called. On Enrolment a non-refundable registration fee per family is payable and a security bond must be paid, and the provision of:

- › Birth certificates
- › Immunisation Records
- › Court Order (if applicable)

must be provided as well as the completion of an Enrolment Form.



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- 🐞➔ **Re-Enrolment Procedures:** Each year around July, a letter will be sent to all parents regarding enrolment for the following year. The completed form will need to be returned to the Centre along with the enrolment fee payable per family. This will confirm your child's position for the following year.
 - 🐞➔ **Enrolment Termination:** The Director must be given two weeks notice in writing if you are taking your child out of the Centre or wish to decrease days. If notification is not given you will be responsible for full fees for the two week notice period. Please be advised that commencing 1st September each year, no terminations will be accepted unless the position can be filled. Fees will be payable until the end of the year.
 - 🐞➔ **Rest Time:** A period of the day is designated as rest time or quiet time. This varies depending upon the age of the child and the requests from the family regarding rest time. No child will be forced to sleep. Relaxed, quiet, tranquil ambience is created allowing children who wish to sleep to do so, those who do not are provided with books or taken outside to play. All children must bring their own bedding due to hygiene and comfort.
 - 🐞➔ **Nappies & Toilet Training:** The Centre will assist parents in the toilet training of their child. We ask that parents bring enough nappies for their child each day, marked with their child's name. Nappies are changed frequently throughout the day and of course, when necessary. However, if your child is still in nappies, they will need to stay in the Caterpillars room until they are toilet trained before progression into the Butterflies room.
 - 🐞➔ **Parent Communication Sheets to Staff:** These sheets are located in the foyer and are used for whenever parents/carers need to advise the staff of anything from a new phone number to somebody new picking up their child or any information you feel relevant to advise.
 - 🐞➔ **Code Of Conduct:** Below is the Centre's Code of Conduct. Upon enrolment and signing the enrolment form you agree to abide by the Centre's Code of Conduct at all times.
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CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

The community of Wilton and surrounding areas throughout Macarthur are entitled to the highest standards of conduct, integrity and ethics from all members of the Cath's Kindy team.

The code of conduct sets the standards of behaviour, which each individual is expected to demonstrate towards:

- Customers (children, parents and guardians.)
- Fellow Carers
- Staff
- Management
- Associated Agencies

and at all times whilst working for or on behalf of Cath's Kindy.

This code applies in any situation which could be identified with or reflect on Cath's Kindy, anytime when wearing a Cath's Kindy uniform, attendance at conferences/training workshops and any other situation in which Cath's Kindy can be identified.

Principles

The code is based on the following principles:

Fairness

Every person associated with Cath's Kindy – customers (children, parents and guardians), staff, carers and management must be treated fairly, courteously, impartially and with respect all times. There will be no discrimination against or vilification of any person or child.



All members are entitled to expect and receive the same treatment from customers and do not have to suffer harassment, victimisation, abuse, discrimination or vilification.

Integrity

All staff members of Cath's Kindy must maintain the highest standards of integrity and honesty in all dealings with:

- Customers (children, parents and guardians)
- Carers
- Staff
- Management
- Associated Agencies

Accountability

Staff members are accountable for upholding the principles of this Code of Conduct and relevant Cath's Kindy Policies.

Customer Service

Staff will answer enquiries promptly and provide accurate information to customers regarding our service. They will provide a quality long day care based service to clients at all times and will always put the 'best interests of the children first'.

Confidentiality

All information obtained by any person of the Centre as a part of his/her role in the Centre must be treated as confidential unless it is required by law or it has been approved for public release. This includes information

- about customers (parents, guardians, children)
- about other members of the Centre



Information should only be shared with other members of the Centre on a 'need to know' basis and with the use of discretion to protect the identity of individuals and /or their family.

Conflicts of Interest

In a situation in which a member of the scheme has a conflict of interest, that person must immediately advise the Nominated Supervisor or Director, as appropriate, and take no further part in the activity, decision or process.

Members of the Centre are not required and must not be compelled to take actions which conflict with their legitimate personal, professional or religious beliefs, ethics, integrity and honesty.

There will be no repercussions for any member who refuses to take such actions.



CENTRE PHILOSOPHY

At Cath's Kindy our aim is to provide a home like environment, warm, friendly, harmonious, inviting, welcoming, and lots of parent involvement. We want not only the children to feel comfortable but also parents. We openly promote free communication without time restrictions which is reflected in our Open Door Policy.

We encourage children to be active, independent learners, using the staff and environment as facilitators to their learning rather than imposers of knowledge. This promotes confidence and positive development of the child's self esteem.

When a child is confident and willing to try they will learn. Every child has strengths in a different areas of development. Learning is fun, it can be as an individual, or in a group with either peers or other children and adults. Learning and development is not a race, children develop at their own pace, to push this will inhibit rather than enhance a child's development.

To ensure comfort, care and mutual respect to each individual child. A strong focus on the social aspects of each child as they progress getting ready for their transition to school.

Our framework will reflect all of the above points, be interest based and promote individual developments and achievements as well as following the Early Years Learning Framework and National Quality Standards.



Children will learn who they are, they will be safe, happy and healthy. They will relate positively to others and enjoy themselves. Children will learn in appropriate ways and will learn to respect the natural environment. Learning will not be limited by gender or race. Decision making will be shared and conflicts resolved peacefully.

The importance of the home and family will be recognized and ongoing communication and interaction between home and the Centre will positively foster children's learning.

We will remain a Centre with a Community feel and this will be embedded within our Program and with our interactions with our families and the Community.

Values of The Service Unit

Cath's Kindy Staff will abide by the principles outlined within:

- The National Laws and Regulations
- The Early Childhood Association Code of Ethics (See Appendix 2)
- The guidelines outlined in the Child Care Handbook of the Department of Families and Children, and Indigenous Affairs.
- Families will be supported, while protecting and respecting their rights to care for and make decisions about their children
- A safe, sensitive and caring environment will be provided which maximizes the opportunities of families and children to reach their potential
- An inclusive environment will be promoted in which diversity is valued and respected and each individual child's needs are met.



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- A flexible service will be provided, which promotes choice and independence for families, and promotes cooperation with other services to best meet the needs of families and children.

Appendix I

RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child states that children have the right to be protected, provided for, and respected as individuals without any exception or discrimination. The Australian Children's Charter supports these rights with an Australian focus.

The Cath's Kindy team have specifically identified that children in our care have the following unequivocal rights:

- To dignity and respect
- To a safe, healthy environment in which all of their basic needs are met
- To have opportunities to develop intellectual, social, physical and creative abilities to the fullest potential
- To be treated as an individual and have personal needs met
- To have culture, religion and language respected and affirmed
- To have opportunities for play as a learning experience
- To have opportunities for rest and leisure
- To feel safe physically, emotionally and psychologically
- To a caring, responsive, professional educator
- To have access to appropriate spaces, equipment and social opportunities to support their development
- To routine and continuity in a settled environment
- Not to be punished physically or psychologically or exposed to ridicule
- To choose what to be involved in and have an opinion on matters affecting them



RIGHTS OF FAMILIES

The team at Cath's Kindy acknowledges that our work is not only with the children we provide care for but with their families also. We have a commitment to meeting the needs of the individual child in the context of their family and culture and acknowledge the influences the family has on the child.

The Cath's Kindy team respects and values the rights of the family and aims to meet their need for high quality care. We also acknowledge and respect the following rights of families:

- To have their children's needs met
- To be consulted about and participate in reciprocal decision making about matters effecting the care and well being of their child and the management of the service
- To accessible, affordable, high quality child care
- To choose the environment that they prefer for their child, and to feel confident that within the Long Day Care setting, their children are participating in everyday experiences
- To privacy and confidentiality
- To respect for the immediacy of family needs
- To general feedback on their child's development and progress on a daily basis
- To feel confident that all complaints will be handled effectively and that speedy, unbiased conflict resolution will take place
- To choose what their children will or will not be involved in. If the Centre or the individual educator cannot accommodate these choices, the parent has the right to seek alternative care
- To understanding and respect for differing family lifestyles
- To have their culture, religion and language respected and affirmed
- To a consistent environment for their child



RIGHTS OF THE EDUCATOR

Those people who provide the high quality care that families and children have a right to, also have rights that Cath's Kindy management acknowledges and values.

These are identified as follows:

- The Educator and their family have the right to privacy and confidentiality
- To training, education and professional development opportunities
- To be consulted about matters affecting their working environment, and participate in reciprocal decision making on these matters
- To be shown respect when communication must be made to families in relation to the health of their child and to not feel threatened or intimidated in any manner when making these decisions, whilst we appreciate that at times work commitments are difficult, our first and paramount concerns are for the welfare and care of the child
- To be shown respect for adherence to policies and procedures of the Centre
- No form of abuse or use of “foul” language will be tolerated, failure to comply will result in either a meeting or immediate refusal of care
- To respect for individual differences
- To open, honest feedback and support
- To be treated with respect and as a professional educator
- To receive information on any changes which may effect child’s care and to be advised on any matters which may effect the child’s care whilst maintaining respect for the family’s privacy
- To make decisions effecting their working environment
- To speedy, unbiased conflict resolution
- To have their culture, religion and language respected and affirmed.



Appendix 2

AUSTRALIAN EARLY CHILDHOOD CODE OF ETHICS

Cath's Kindy supports and upholds the Australian Early Childhood Code of Ethics.

In this Code of Ethics, for the purposes of this document, these terms are given the following meanings:

Children — People between the ages of birth and eight years.

Families — The people who have significant care responsibilities for and/or kinship relationships with the child.

Early Childhood Professional — A person who works with or on behalf of children and families in early childhood settings.

Communities — Groups of people who identify as having shared values and intentions. These groups are recognised as complex, being simultaneously connected by commonality and diversity.

Employer — An individual or organisation which employs early childhood professionals.

Student — A person undertaking study at a secondary or tertiary institution.

In this Code of Ethics the protection and wellbeing of children is paramount and therefore speaking out or taking action in the presence of unethical practice is an Essential professional responsibility.

This code of ethics states:

IN RELATION TO CHILDREN I WILL:

1. Act in the best interests of all children.
2. Respect the rights of children as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991) and commit to advocating for these rights.



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3. Recognise children as active citizens participating in different communities such as family, children's services and schools.
 4. Work with children to help them understand that they are global citizens with shared responsibilities to the environment and humanity.
 5. Respect the special relationship between children and their families and incorporate this perspective in all my interactions with children.
 6. Create and maintain safe, healthy environments, spaces and places, which enhance children's learning, development, engagement, initiative, self-worth, dignity and show respect for their contributions.
 7. Work to ensure children and families with additional needs can exercise their rights.
 8. Acknowledge the uniqueness and potential of all children, in recognition that enjoying their childhood without undue pressure is important.
 9. Acknowledge the holistic nature of children's learning and the significance of children's cultural and linguistic identities.
 10. Work to ensure children are not discriminated against on the basis of gender, age, ability, economic status, family structure, lifestyle, ethnicity, religion, language, culture, or national origin.
 11. Acknowledge children as competent learners, and build active communities of engagement and inquiry.
 12. Honour children's right to play, as both a process and context for learning.



IN RELATION TO FAMILIES I WILL:

1. Listen to and learn from families, in order to acknowledge and build upon their strengths and competencies, and support them in their role of nurturing children.
2. Assist each family to develop a sense of belonging and inclusion.
3. Develop positive relationships based on mutual trust and open communication.
4. Develop partnerships with families and engage in shared decision making where appropriate.
5. Acknowledge the rights of families to make decisions about their children.
6. Respect the uniqueness of each family and strive to learn about their culture, structure, lifestyle, customs, language, beliefs and kinship systems.
7. Develop shared planning, monitoring and assessment practices for children's learning and communicate this in ways that families understand.
8. Acknowledge that each family is affected by the community contexts in which they engage.
9. Be sensitive to the vulnerabilities of children and families and respond in ways that empower and maintain the dignity of all children and families.
10. Maintain confidentiality and respect the right of the family to privacy.

IN RELATION TO COLLEAGUES, I WILL:

1. Encourage my colleagues to adopt and act in accordance with this Code, and take action in the presence of unethical behaviours.
2. Build collaborative relationships based on trust, respect and honesty.



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3. Acknowledge and support the personal strengths, professional experience and diversity which my colleagues bring to their work.
 4. Make every effort to use constructive methods to manage differences of opinion in the spirit of collegiality.
 5. Share and build knowledge, experiences and resources with my colleagues.
 6. Collaborate with my colleagues to generate a culture of continual reflection and renewal of high quality practices in early childhood.

IN RELATION TO COMMUNITIES, I WILL:

1. Learn about the communities that I work within and enact curriculum programs which are responsive to those contexts and community priorities.
2. Connect with people, services and agencies within the communities that support children and families.
3. Promote shared aspirations amongst communities in order to enhance children's health and wellbeing.
4. Advocate for the development and implementation of laws and policies that promote child-friendly communities and work to change those that work against child and family wellbeing.
5. Utilise knowledge and research to advocate for universal access to a range of high-quality early childhood programs for all children.
6. Work to promote community understanding of how children learn in order that appropriate systems of assessment and reporting are used to benefit children.



IN RELATION TO STUDENTS, I WILL:

1. Learn about the communities that I work within and enact curriculum programs which are responsive to those contexts and community priorities.
2. Connect with people, services and agencies within the communities that support children and families.
3. Promote shared aspirations amongst communities in order to enhance children's health and wellbeing.
4. Advocate for the development and implementation of laws and policies that promote child-friendly communities and work to change those that work against child and family wellbeing.
5. Utilise knowledge and research to advocate for universal access to a range of high-quality early childhood programs for all children.
6. Work to promote community understanding of how children learn in order that appropriate systems of assessment and reporting are used to benefit children.

IN RELATION TO MY EMPLOYER I WILL:

1. Support workplace policies, standards and practices that are fair, non-discriminatory and are in the best interest of children and families.
2. Promote and support ongoing professional development within my work team.
3. Adhere to lawful policies and procedures and when there is conflict, attempt to effect change through constructive action within the organisation or seek change through appropriate procedures.



IN RELATION TO MYSELF AS A PROFESSIONAL, I WILL:

1. Base my work on contemporary perspectives on research, theory, content knowledge, high quality early childhood practices and my understandings of the children and families with whom I work.
2. Regard myself as a learner who undertakes reflection, critical self-study, continuing professional development and engages with contemporary theory and practice.
3. Seek and build collaborative professional relationships.
4. Acknowledge the power dimensions within professional relationships.
5. Act in ways that advance the interests and standing of my profession.
6. Work within the limits of my professional role and avoid misrepresentation of my professional competence and qualifications.
7. Mentor other early childhood professionals and students.
8. Advocate in relation to issues that impact on my profession and on young children and their families.
9. Encourage qualities and practices of leadership within the early childhood profession.



IN RELATION TO THE CODUCT OF RESEARCH, I WILL:

1. Recognise that research includes my routine documentation and investigations of children's learning and development, as well as more formal research projects undertaken with and by external bodies.
2. Be responsive to children's participation in research, negotiating their involvement taking account of matters such as safety, fatigue, privacy and their interest.
3. Support research to strengthen and expand the knowledge base of early childhood, and where possible, initiate, contribute to, facilitate and disseminate such research.
4. Make every effort to understand the purpose and value of proposed research projects and make informed decisions as to the participation of myself, colleagues, children, families and communities.
5. Ensure research in which I am involved meets standard ethical procedures including informed consent, opportunity to withdraw and confidentiality.
6. Ensure that images of children and other data are only collected with informed consent and are stored and utilised according to legislative and policy requirements.
7. Represent the findings of all research accurately.



STARTING YOUR CHILD

 **Settling In:** Each child reacts differently when starting for the first time. Some will settle quickly, whilst others will take extra time to become comfortable and feel safe with their new environment. Staff will comfort your child if he or she becomes upset. Remember, this is very normal and so be patient. Most children settle quickly after the parent/carer has left. We do ask that you say goodbye to them and reassure them you will pick them up later. Please, we encourage you to call us throughout the day to check on your child to ensure that he or she has settled. Should they become too distressed we will contact you.

Whilst we try to discourage the bringing of personal items apart from rest time items, if you feel there may be an item that may make your child feel more secure, you are encouraged to bring it with you. Feel free to discuss at anytime any concerns you may have regarding your child settling in.

 **Orientation:** We offer you an orientation process upon enrolling your child or placing your child's name on our waiting list. If you feel you would like more information or details about particular areas of the Centre, please inform the staff, or you may wish to peruse our Policies folder that is readily available to parents/carers in the foyer area.

 **Behaviour:** At Cath's Kindy we expect children to behave in a socially acceptable manner. In order to maintain a harmonious, happy and friendly atmosphere, children are encouraged to respect themselves, each other, equipment and the staff. When behavior outside our expectations occurs, staff will assess the situation and positively re-direct the child to an alternate activity. Staff will always be sympathetic and encouraging in their approach so that feelings are not frayed and the child always maintains their own dignity and self-esteem. If unacceptable behavior continues, then parents will be notified so that an approach can be formulated.



Hitting or threatening will not be tolerated or acceptable discipline at this Centre and staff are made aware of the correct approaches. Also, relevant staff have the appropriate Child Protection training to ensure correct procedures are adhered to which is mandatory by law. Also staff have undergone Working With Children checks also prior to working at the Centre.

SPECIAL OCCASIONS

 **Birthdays:** Children love to share their Birthday with their class friends. Parents are welcome to celebrate by:

- › Bringing a individual cupcakes, muffins etc or traditional belief to the Centre
- › Making sure it caters for all the children (please discuss with staff)
- › Bringing in other items that will suit your child
- › Please inform staff a day or two before this special day so that catering and menu requirements may be sorted out.

 Parents are encouraged to talk to staff about ideas or questions concerning what they can do on their Child's Birthday.

 **Photos:** During the year, children will be photographed at the Centre by staff for use in their personal portfolios. We also, on an annual basis have a professional photographer come into the Centre and photograph the children individually and in their individual groups. Parents will be notified of the dates, costs, etc.

 **News:** the aim of news is to encourage the sharing of special events in a group. This promotes self confidence as well as language skills, self-esteem, confidence and group interaction. If your child has special news or a special item that he/she would like to share with their friends, please feel free to bring it in with your child and discuss with staff.



 **Incursions & Events:** throughout the year, incursions or events that are planned will cater for each day of the week so that all the children get an opportunity to do something different. This will be carefully and thoroughly planned and will require parent's co-operation. As these events are planned, you will be notified with all the information and will be required to give your child authority to attend. We may at times, seek parent's assistance to help with supervision. The cost of events are in addition to your daily fees, but will be kept to a minimum.

COMMUNICATION: Communication is very important to us. We have a variety of means in which to communicate with you throughout each day. They are:

 **Journals:** Each day we invite you to read your child's room Journal. The Journal is located in the foyer and gives you an overview of your child's day in their group environment as well as their outdoor experiences directly from the child's teacher.

 **Family Input Book:** We really encourage family input. A special outing, something you did on the weekend, an item or event that you partipate in. Anything that involves you and your family we love to know about it as it allows us input to an extension of programming an interest based activity for your child. Therefore allowing us to be involved in your activites whilst at Kindy. Please feel free to write in the family input book and we will then incorporate that into the rooms.

 **Portfolios:** All creative work, learning stories, intentional teachings, special event activities, as well as photos are displayed in your child's Portfolio. Your child's portfolio will be presented to you at the end of each year as a special keepsake of their time with us at Cath's Kindy. You are more than welcome to have a look at your child's portfolio at any time throughout the year.

 **Communications Chart:** In the foyer area on notice boards located near your child's room, there are Communications Summary. We will inform you of your child's eating and sleeping routine, and, for our Snails and Caterpillars room their nappy change routines also.



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-  **Staff to Parent Communication:** Each child at the Centre will have a “pigeon hole” located in the foyer area. Symbols on the pockets coincide with the symbols on the lockers. Any information for the parents/carers will be forwarded via these pockets. This information can be collected when picking up your child.

 -  **Personal Communication:** Any issues that you feel require urgent attention, please don’t hesitate to speak with the Director, Nominated Supervisor or staff person at any time. At times these concerns can be worrying and can be dealt with quickly and easily. We are at your disposal to treat any concern you may have effectively and efficiently. We make mention of the Code Of Conduct with this communication.

 -  **Newsletters:** Throughout the year you will receive bi-monthly newsletters via email which provides you with dates of upcoming events, any issues that may be of interest as well as an overview of your child’s room from their teacher.

 -  **Notice Boards:** There are various notice boards located through the Centre and in the foyer area. Please look for any information that may be relevant to you.

 -  **Staff Meetings:** Staff meetings are held regularly throughout the year and we welcome any parents who may like to attend. Just ask staff when the next one is scheduled. We encourage your involvement and input and also require different committees to be formed when doing accreditation. If you would like to be involved in this please let staff know.

 -  **An invitation to participate:** Parents, Grandparents and carers at Cath’s Kindy are welcome to participate at the Centre in a variety of activities that we program through the year. If you are interested in spending time at the Centre please discuss with staff to arrange timing etc. We also have a parent committee which enables us to bounce ideas and information off, should you be interested in being on this committee please speak with the Director.
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PAYMENT OF FEES

Fees are payable for the duration of your child's attendance at the Centre, including Public Holidays and absences due to child's health or holidays. Fees are calculated on a weekly basis. Upon enrolment you will be required to pay a one off enrolment fee and a bond. This will be carried over each year and put onto fees towards the end of your child's last year with us. Or it will be refunded provided fees are up to date and two weeks written notice is received to withdraw attendance (refer to the Parent Enrolment Agreement in the Enrolment Form). Fees must be kept one week in advance at all times. See Payment of Fees Policy for further information.

At the end of each week you must ensure that your fees are up to date. Your account will be debited a late payment fee for any fees in arrears, this late payment fee will be added onto your current weekly.. If you go for longer than one week of non payment of fees your child's position at the Centre will be withdrawn.

Should Centre Management decide to increase fees a notice will be placed either via newsletter or notice board two weeks prior.

 **Methods of fee payments:** We do not have eftpos.. We would prefer direct deposit. Do not hand money to staff. A statement of your fees will be given to you weekly via email. Fees will be noted in the computer and in a fees book.

 **Late Fees:** The Centre closes at 6.00pm. We ask your assistance in ensuring you allow enough time to read journals, sign out, speak with staff, gather your child's belongings and exit the premises by 6.00pm. Should you be later than 6.00pm a Late Fee applies. There is no fee relief on late fees. A form will be filled out which requires your signature and the amount will be billed to your account for payment. We understand that at times there are unforeseen circumstances that will happen to cause you to be late to pick up and we appreciate a phone call advising us. A phone call does not cancel out the late fee.



 **Recovery of Fees:** If the Centre needs to employ a Debt Collection Agency for the recovery of fees, then the amount payable will also include the cost of the Debt Collecting Agency as well as the outstanding fee amount. This is the responsibility of the parent/carer.

 **Child Care Benefit (Fee Relief):** Child Care Benefit is a payment made by the Commonwealth Government to help families with the cost of childcare. The government will pay a percentage of the fee depending on your gross income. This will be explained to you by the Director on enrolment. The Family Assistance Office will then assess your income and an assessment notice to the Centre and also the parent/carer. Until receipt of this notice, full fees are payable.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Pre-school is not the best place for a sick child as there is a lot of close contact, which increases the risk of cross infections. If your child has any illness or complaints, please keep them at home, if in doubt, please contact your Family Doctor to discuss.

The Centre abides by the regulations as set down by the NSW Health Department as regards to infections and contagious diseases.

An important note to remember, children will be more comfortable at home with their parent/carer whilst they are not feeling well

 **Illness:** If staff consider any child too sick to remain at the Centre, parents must consider the decision to be final. Parents must also be aware of the need to follow the Centre's Code Of Conduct. Staff will contact the parent who will then have to make arrangements to collect their child as soon as possible. The Centre does understand how difficult it is to leave work, therefore it is important that parents provide the Centre with the names of emergency contacts.



A Doctors Certificate giving clearance must be given if the child is suspected or was suffering from an infectious disease before their return to the Centre. Please be advised that no days in lieu will be given should your child obtain a diagnosis from a Doctor which allows your child to return to Kindy on the same day. Staff are not medical practitioners they are merely looking after the well being of your child as well as all the other children attending on that day. No form of abuse from a parent/carer to any staff member will be tolerated from Centre Management.

 **Absences:** Fees must be paid if your child is absent. You are required to notify the Centre as soon as possible if your child is going to be absent. If your child is absent for more than one week without notification, staff will endeavor to make contact to ensure everything is OK. If contact is not successful then your enrolment will be terminated and you will be liable for any outstanding fees inclusive of the two weeks notice.

 **Medication:** If your child needs to have any medication you must complete the necessary medication authority form. Fill in clearly all the necessary information as requested on the form. Give medication to staff with the signed form. Do not leave the medicine in your child's bag. All medication must remain in the original bottle. Any medication or creams which have been mixed in different containers must be accompanied with a letter from your Doctor stating what the medication is, and what it is used for. All medication must be clearly marked with your child's name, the dosage required and the expiry date. Please be advised that asking for Panadol type medication to be given throughout the day via a Medication Form will be not accepted unless a Doctor's note is provided explaining times and the reason why this medication is needed. If your child needs Panadol type medication every 4 hours it is our belief for the wellbeing of your child and the whole Centre that your child remain at home.



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-  Please note that we will not administer medication if your child has not had that particular medication before. The medication must be administered for the first 24 hours by the parent/carer. This is due to the risk of reactions of any kind. See Medications Policy for further information.

 -  **Emergencies:** At Cath's Kindy every precaution will be taken to avoid accidents and injuries. However, in the case of an accident or injury, we will seek medical advice or call an ambulance should we believe this to be necessary. Every effort will be carried out to contact parents and or emergency contacts that are nominated on the Enrolment Form.

 -  **Accidents and Injuries:** Our Centre has an Accident Report Book which lists any injuries and or accidents that might require treatment. All injuries or accidents are also noted on an Accident Report Form and given to parents to sign when they pick their child up. A copy will also be given to the parents and we keep the original on file.

 -  **Storage of Hazardous Substances:** All cleaning agents and other hazardous substances are stored in the utility craft room overhead cupboard and the overhead cupboards in the kitchen which is completely out of each of children. At no time will children be able to come into contact with these substances.

 -  **Arrivals and Departures:** It is imperative that you sign your child in and out of the Centre. You must fill in the Sign In Sheets located in the foyer/locker area alongside your child's name. You need to note time in and time out and sign in each area where indicated. This is a legal document that is used in the event of the Centre needing to be evacuated, report receipting Child Care Benefit and also for DOCS. Parents/Carers must escort their child in the Centre. Once you have signed your child in, please bring your child to where the staff are supervising the children and notify staff of your child's arrival. When collecting your child you MUST inform the staff that you are taking your child. Please wait for a staff member to acknowledge. Upon departure, once again, the child must be signed out noting the time with your signature. Your child will only be released to the nominated persons on the enrolment form.
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Please notify staff if someone other than yourself will be collecting your child as under NO circumstances will your child be released without written permission from the parent/carer. Staff will also request to sight identification from anybody picking up that they are not familiar with and will check this against written permission from the parent/carer. Please note that all persons responsible for picking up must be 18 years and over. Please do not take offence as this procedure is in the interest of your child's safety.

-  **Room Doors and Gates:** Parents and visitors are asked to ensure that they close the entry doors and gates so that children cannot get through unnoticed. We seek your co-operation in this very important matter. Also, if you could assist us in ensuring your child does not swing off the front gate which is located in the car park area it would be appreciated.
-  **Car Park:** In the interest of families, staff and children's safety we have a 5km Go Slow ruling in the car park. You must enter and exit the car park in a forward motion and you must not exceed 5km.
-  **Hygiene:** Procedures are set in place to ensure optimum hygiene standards in all areas of the Centre. Food preparation areas are kept meticulously clean, strict guidelines are set down for nappy changes. Hand washing is a set, routine activity throughout the day. We do not launder at the Centre, however, soiled clothes are rinsed and returned in plastic bags for laundering at home.
-  **Hats and Sunscreen:** Cath's Kindy has implemented the "Sun Smart Program" initiated by the NSW Cancer Council. This program's primary aim is to promote positive attitudes and behavior about skin protection amongst the children in our care. For the child's protection, we apply SPF 30 sunscreen to your child before outdoor play. We would ask your co-operation that a wide brim or legionnaire style hat be brought the Centre on each day of attendance. Children's hats are to be taken home at the end of the day for hygiene purposes



 **Fire Drills & Evacuations Procedures:** In the event of a fire or any other emergency an evacuation procedure is in place. Staff hold First Aid Certificates. The Centre is equipped with fire extinguishers, fire blankets and smoke detectors are installed throughout the Centre. Evacuations are practiced regularly throughout the year so that the staff and children can be familiar with the procedures and the steps it takes to get everybody out of the building should this be necessary.

PACKING FOR THE DAY:

Please label all of your child's belongings with a laundry type marker.

-  At least 2 complete sets of clothes – extra underpants, singlets, t-shirts, pants, shorts, socks etc.
-  In case of a change in the weather – cool or warm clothes should be packed also.
-  1 set of cot sheets or a single bed sheet
-  Small blanket
-  Small pillow (optional)
-  Bottles, dummies etc.
-  Nappies – allow 6 per day please
-  Hat
-  Drink Bottle (with their name clearly labeled on it)
-  Something to comfort them at rest time e.g. doll, teddy bear etc (if necessary).



Please dress your child so that they can be comfortable for the hands on activities at the Centre, which at times, whilst care is taken, can be quite messy. Also that is easily removable for toilet visits and or nappy changes.

All the children have individual lockers for their rest requirements. All children's items are to be kept in their locker. They are sent home on the last day of attendance to be washed and returned on their first day of attendance.

We ask each parent to supply a pillowcase or a large string bag with the child's name clearly marked on it so that we can place all linen and rest time items in the bag at the end of rest time. This is required to maintain good hygiene.

NUTRITION AND MENU PLANNING

AIM: Our aim is to provide the children with a balanced and nutritional diet that meets 50% of their recommended daily intakes. By introducing a variety of foods from the Core Food Groups. They are breads, cereals, dairy, meat and meat alternatives, fruits and vegetables. We also cater for children with a variety of nutritional alternate foods due to special diets, religious beliefs etc. We will role model to the children the benefits of eating a balanced diet by sitting down during mealtimes and discussing eating habits and varieties of foods with the children.

How this is implemented:

- 👉 Milk, and water will be served with meals daily on a rotational basis
- 👉 Children will be served food that includes foods from the core food groups ensuring that it provides variety in color, taste and texture.
- 👉 Parents are encouraged to have their point of view and suggest other meals. They might find a favorite home meal and it may be introduced to the daily menu for variety.
- 👉 The menu is displayed in the foyer area
- 👉 Children will have access to water throughout the day
- 👉 The menu is compiled and revised for the Summer and Winter months



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- Food preparation, serving and handling will be managed in accordance with hygiene practices and there are staff that have completed the necessary training on menu planning and nutrition to ensure this is complied with
 - Meal times are an enjoyable event for the children
 - Meal times will provide for the development of children's social, emotional, fine motor, language and cognitive skills
 - Mealtimes will provide healthy eating attitudes for the children
 - All the children will be encouraged to try foods but will never be forced to do so in any way
 - The children will be able to eat as much or as little as they please
 - Children will be involved in cooking experiences so that they can develop food handling and preparation skills
 - Food will be of generous portions, if children are still hungry, they are able to have more than one serving

During the day, children are put into age appropriate groups for "group time". The individual's interaction within the group is observed and the effectiveness of the tasks given to the children in that program is assessed.

OUR PROGRAM

The centre supports and has implemented the Early Years Learning Framework. As part of the Early Years Learning Framework there are 5 outcomes that within our program we are developing and working with the children. They are:

1. Children have a strong sense of identity;
2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing;
4. Children are confident and involved learners; and
5. Children are effective communicators

An activity for each of these areas is planned each day and children are encouraged to participate in the varied learning experiences.



We encourage children to be active, independent learners, taking advantage of the staff and the centre's environment to facilitate their learning experience. This promotes confidence and positive development of the child's self esteem. When a child is confident and willing to try they will learn. Every child has strengths in different areas of development. Learning should be fun, at Cath's Kindy, children enjoy learning on an individual basis and as part of co-operative learning groups. Learning and development is not a race, children develop at their own pace, to push this will inhibit rather than enhance a child's development.

Group time activities are set so that the children will develop self-help skills, self esteem and function in a social group. Art and craft activities are available to children, we focus on process rather than product allowing children to explore with materials and textures. We will collect pieces of art and craft along with photos and compile in your child's Portfolio for you to take as a keepsake. Multicultural themes will be introduced for children to share aspects from different cultures and backgrounds.

The program includes:

- Active and quiet activities
- Indoor and outdoor activities
- Individual, small group and large group activities
- Structured and unstructured activities
- Activities designed to develop each child's social, emotional, cognitive, fine and gross motor skills, as well as their creativity and self help skills.
- An inclusive approach, giving all children access to all activities
- A multicultural perspective valuing diversity
- Flexibility
- Opportunities for children to make choices and take on new challenges
- Encouraging a partnership with parents



Documenting information about children and their interests, beliefs, questions, discoveries and ideas at Cath's Kindy assists staff to plan for routines, transitions, and play and learning experiences. This information, together with knowledge and an awareness of child development, builds an understanding of the 'whole' child.

SCHOOL READINESS/INTENTIONAL TEACHING: Throughout all of our learning environments, intentional teaching takes place in a structured and an unstructured manner. In all 3 environments the level of this intentional teaching is age appropriate. The program reflects our intentional teaching and it is also documented within the child's portfolio as well as reviewed on a weekly basis.

We introduce children to the basic needs for entry to school, on an academic as well as a social level. These include; name recognition (writing and reading), number and shape recognition, pencil skills, scissor skills, communication skills and self-help skills.

Our School Readiness Program is facilitated in conjunction with input from local schools to ensure a consistent transition. We will reinforce these concepts throughout the year with the use of flash cards, displaying names and numbers, letter copying, writing their own names and group activities. In the final months before school, children who are going to school the next year will not have rest time and will start doing additional school type activities to greater enhance their development as well as structuring their day without a rest period. Throughout the year, we will work with our local schools whom advise us of any open day for new children commencing in the next year, which we will provide to you as they are provided to us. The School Readiness program takes place daily through each school term. It is documented and reviewed weekly to extend or assist where necessary.

Around the end of Term 2, Parent Teacher Interviews are arranged (2-6 year olds) to discuss your child's progress and development. Of course, all communication is open and available each and every day. Formalised interviews offer an opportunity outside of the busy and rushed environment.



We strive to ensure that your child's and your transition to the world of "big school" is as smooth as possible and will provide you with all the support necessary for this very important milestone in yours and your child's life.



CONCLUSION: I believe that children commencing at Cath’s Kindy face an important transition in their lives, as do their parents/carers. It is important to enhance this experience and make it enjoyable and rewarding as these formative years will precede children’s lives in a school environment. I will aim to provide you with support, care and respect that are required for each child to develop socially and developmentally.

With this in mind, I have set out to provide and maintain a Centre that will undoubtedly have the highest standards in hygiene and safety. At the same time I will strive to provide a home away from home atmosphere, with an implicit understanding of families needs and concerns with regards to their children and their care. I know that your child is the most important aspect not only to you but to my Centre and I mirror this sentiment being a mother myself. Staffing levels will be maintained to ensure that children receive individual attention and effective supervision. The “Open Door Policy” is very genuine, I am very happy to welcome parents/carers at anytime. I also welcome any discussions or ideas that you may wish to put forward. I am hopeful that parent involvement is prevalent in all areas covered in this Handbook.

This Handbook is designed to help you get to know your Centre and understand some of the procedures and regulations that we have in place. There are policy folders readily available for you to read at anytime. I hope you find them useful and informative. However, if you have any questions please ask the staff or myself at any time, we are here to help. I have endeavored to cover all aspects in providing care for your child and furnish you with all the relevant information so you as parents can make informed decisions.

I thank you for entrusting us with the care of your child and hope you that you, your child and your family enjoy their time with us at Cath’s Kindy.

Kind regards.

CATHRYN IVANOFF
DIRECTOR

