

# Next Generation School of Early Learning

Centre Based Care

Next  
Generation

SCHOOL OF EARLY LEARNING

## Parent Handbook

(February 2023)

# Parent Handbook

## **Welcome to Next Generation School of Early Learning.**

Next Generation School of Early Learning are a 92 placed privately and family-owned child care centre. The centre is licensed by the Education and Care Regulatory Unit.

Our centre cares for children aged 6 weeks to 5 years of age.

It is our policy to communicate with parents and children on a regular basis and we welcome parent participation and involvement in the Centre.

### **Vision Statement**

**“At Next Generation we provide a warm and nurturing environment where children can become successful and capable learners”.**



**Front Entrance**

## **Policies & Procedures**

Below is a list of our centres policies and procedures. Should you wish to read any of these, a copy is available in the centre foyer or you can speak with our Operational Manager.

### **Quality Area One**

#### **Educational Program and Practice**

Educational Programs

Information for parents about educational program

### **Quality Area Two**

#### **Children's Health and Safety**

Healthy eating and food handling

Children's comfort, rest and relaxation

Use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs

Establishing a protective environment (child protection)

Emergency procedures

Incidents, injury, and trauma. Serious incidents and first aid

Illness and infectious disease

Health, hygiene, and infection control

Soiled laundry procedure

Doctor's clearance certificate

Medication and medical conditions

Supervision

Hand over procedure

Delivery and collection of children

Late collection action plan

Excursions and transport

Detailed emergency procedures

## **Risk Assessments**

Fire

Bomb threat

Missing child

Burglary/robbery/threatening behaviour

Power failure

Structural damage

Severe Thunderstorm/hailstorm

Earthquake

Flood

Bee/wasp swarm

Snake

Extreme heat

Water cut

## **Quality Area Three**

### **Physical Environment**

Occupational health and safety and handbook

Equipment and toys

Maintenance of a safe environment

Cyclone plan

Sun protection policy

Sustainability

## **Quality Area Four**

### **Staffing Arrangements**

Confidentiality/Privacy and confidentiality/privacy statement

Educator dress code

Equal opportunity

Educator and volunteer orientation

Educator appraisal, training, and development

Managing pregnancy in childcare

### Quality Area Five

#### **Relationships with Children**

Positive guidance of children

Interactions with children

### Quality Area Six

#### **Collaborative Relationships with Families and Communities**

Community involvement

Partnerships and communication with families

Enrolment and orientation

### Quality Area Seven

#### **Leadership and Service Management**

Recruitment of educators, staff and volunteers

Management and governance

Critical incident management plan

Educator grievances and disputes

Payment of fees

Record management

Diversity and inclusion

## **Our Centre Philosophy**

At Next Generation we believe in providing a home-like environment which encourages children to feel a sense of belonging to our family. We provide a warm, secure and nurturing environment where the rights of the child are paramount.

We recognise, respect and support the role of the parents as they are the children's primary and most imperative educators. Our Partnerships with families actively encourage their participation and collaboration with educators about Next Generation's programs and pedagogical decisions. Next Generation encourage children to be active participants in their learning and to become confident decision makers.

We take a holistic approach to teaching and learning, valuing teaching life skills and play based learning for all of our children. Learning through play provides children with opportunities to discover, create and imagine. Our educators undertake reflective practice to build on their professional knowledge of the early childhood setting to become co-learners with the children, families and wider community.

Through educator's professional development and collaboration with families we will strive to ensure that all children have opportunities to achieve learning outcomes in the Early Years Learning Framework. The aspirations our educators hold for children will foster their motivation to learn and reinforce themselves as capable and competent learners.

Next Generation are dedicated to equity and believe in all children's ability to succeed. Our educators and children demonstrate respect and celebrate the benefits of diversity. We show inclusive practices through our educational programs promoting children's cultural competence. Valuing and promoting Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are important to us and honouring their traditional practices and knowledge.



## **Educator and Room Configuration**

Our centre consists of Educators with varying qualifications and degrees of experience.

**Centre's Nominated Supervisor:** Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care.

**Operational Manager:** Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) and/or Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care.

**Room Leader's:** Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) and/or Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care or equivalent.

**Assistant Educator's:** Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care or working towards this qualification, Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care or working towards or Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) or working towards.

Each room has a combination of these educator's:

**Nursery 1** (0-15mths) – 1 Room Leader, 2 Assistant Educator's & 1 additional support Educator.

**Nursery 2** (15mth-2 years) - 1 Room Leader, 2 Assistant Educator's & 1 additional support Educator.

**Pre-Kindy 1** (2-2.5 years) – 1 Room Leader, 3 Assistant Educator's & 1 additional support Educator.

**Pre-Kindy 2** (2.5-3 years) – 1 Room Leader, 3 Assistant Educator's & 1 additional support Educator.

**Kindy** (3-5 years) – 1 Room Leader, 2 Assistant Educator's & 1 additional support Educator.

All educators participate in professional development courses throughout the year.



## **Centre hours**

Monday to Friday 7am-6pm.

The centre will be closed on Public Holidays. The centre will be open all other days of the year. If there are any changes you will be advised in writing.

It is essential that you manage your ability to drop off and pick within our operational hours to ensure we comply with licensing regulations and our centre insurance policy.

Our centre has policies and procedures which are expected to be followed at all times by all employee's and families. If you would like to view and read our centre policies or procedures, there is a file located in our foyer for you to view.

## **Arrival and Departure**

At Next Generation our priority is the safety and well-being of your children. We therefore request that you electronically sign your child in and out each day to ensure an accurate record is maintained of which children are in care. This is what we rely on throughout the day to keep track of children within our care and refer to in the case of an emergency situation.

To maintain a healthy and hygienic environment we ask that families (adults and children, including non-enrolled siblings), all either use the hand sanitiser at the entrance of the building and at each room or use our handwashing facilities which are also located in each room upon arrival and departure. This will assist in the prevention of germs being brought in and out of the centre.

Only authorised personnel may collect children from Next Generation. Primary carers may list and authorised emergency contacts. Children must not be dropped off before 7:00am and must be picked up by 6:00pm or a late collection fee will apply (see page 11).

It is natural to feel anxious about leaving your child/ren in care for the first time. Each child's experience in an Early Childhood setting will be different. Some children will settle sooner than other and will be ready to join in straight away, others may be more shy, weary or even show signs of anxiety.

Here are a few suggestions to help settle your child easier:

- Talk to your child about starting day-care.
- Be positive about starting care, your child can pick up on your feelings.
- Make sure they have everything they need.
- Develop a 'before day-care' routine.
- Allow time for your child to put away their bags and to say goodbye



- Always say goodbye to your child before you leave. Your child may develop a fear if they think you may suddenly disappear. Say good-bye and give them a big hug and kiss before handing them over to their educators, leave calmly and quickly and avoid remaining in sight through the windows after you leave.
- Provide the educators with as much information as you can. Including any tips and tricks to help settling your child. There is no such thing as too much information.
- Send your child to day-care with a photo of you or a family pet, this is something they can look at when they are feeling a little sad or anxious.
- Feel free to ring the centre at any time during the day to speak to the educators in your child's room for an update.
- When you return to collect your child greet them and spend some time with them. Ask the educators what they got up to today or what activities they loved. Talk about this in the car on the way home and then next time you come into day-care, bring up that activity again and how they may get to do that again.

Please be aware that we have a smoke free environment. Parents and visitors are discouraged from smoking around the premises and are prohibited from smoking on premises. Please note our emergency evacuation procedures on all exits at the centre.

If you have any concerns about how your child is settling, please ask an educator for further information.



## **Centre Fees**

It is Next Generation's Policy to always have your accounts up to date. Fee payment options available are:

1. Direct debit is the only payment option through Debit Success.

As stated in your Enrolment Form's, if you default on a payment, you will have 2 business days to ensure payment is made. If no payment is made, your position at the centre will be cancelled.

## **Enrolment Fee**

Next Generation will charge an Enrolment fee for every child who has been enrolled into our centre. This fee will be charged once your child's enrolment has been confirmed to secure the position. The current application fee is \$60 per child, this fee is non-refundable.

## **Late Payment of Fees**

If you default on a payment by the Debit Success Direct Debit System, you will have (2) days to ensure payment is made. If your account is not paid, your position at the centre will be cancelled. Placement may also be terminated where an enrolled child is absent from the centre for two weeks or more without prior written notice given.

### **Late collection fee**

A Late Collection Fee will be charged if your child has not been collected by 6pm. \$15 per child will be charged if your child is collected between 6:00-6:15pm. An additional \$15 per child per 15 mins will be charged after 6:15pm. On the fourth consecutive occasion where your child is collected after 6pm a standard \$50.00 late fee will be charged. These fees are charged to cover the Educator's wages for the period of time they were required to remain at the centre after their shift had commenced.

### **Withdrawal/Ceasing Care**

When a child is to be withdrawn from care, the parent or guardian must give two weeks' written notice.

It's important to remember that an absence on your last day of care will result in you not being able to claim CCS and will be charged the full daily fee. All outstanding accounts must be paid up to date before leaving the service.

If you withdraw your child with no notice two weeks fees will be payable regardless.

### **Holiday Days**

Each enrolled child is entitled to 10 holiday days per financial year. You can use these days when your child is absent due to being on holidays. These days are charged at 50% of our daily fee and count towards your 42 CCS allowable absent days. For these days to apply you must provide the centre with 2 weeks' written notice prior to the commencement of the holiday days, the dates can be emailed to the centre.

### **Change of Details**

Please inform the Operational Manager of any changes in your personal details. This includes phone numbers, addresses and emergency contact details. When your child receives a new vaccination, we require an updated copy of their immunisation records.

### **Exclusion due to illness**

Your child will not be able to attend a care session if:

- They have a contagious illness

- They have had paracetamol/pain relief that morning/day (paracetamol masks symptoms of illness)
- If they have vomited or had loose bowel motions in the past 48 hours
- A medical practitioner has recommended they not attend child care
- If they are not immunised and there is an outbreak of a disease that is prevented by immunisation
- If your child is unwell prior to arriving at the centre.
- If they have or have had a fever over 38 degrees in the last 24 hours

Please use your own judgement. Your child may not be contagious but if they are generally feeling unwell children benefit from staying home for rest and some extra cuddles.

Children who have had a contagious illness or an unspecified rash/spot must produce a doctor's clearance certificate.

### **Change in bookings**

If you wish to change your child's permanent booking, we will require two weeks' notice. We will endeavour to accommodate all requests where possible, please note that we will not hold a place under any circumstances without payment. We **DO NOT** casually swap days once your child has a permanent booking nor do we provide an ongoing casual booking or fortnightly bookings.

### **Casual Days**

If you require an extra day in addition to your booked session days, we can offer this where a place is available. You can either call, email or request an extra booking via the Xplor app to see if we have space for an additional casual day, your CCS will apply to this extra day if your approved CCS hours allow. If your circumstances for needing the additional day change, we can cancel the additional day at no charge if at least 24 hours' notice is provided.

### **Medication**

Qualified Educators are able to administer medication to children. If the child has never had the medication before the parent must administer the first dose, educators are not responsible for any adverse reactions the child may have. The medication must have a pharmacist's label on them. Only prescribed medication will be administered by educators. Please refer to our medication policy for more information on over-the-counter medication.

The label **must** have the child's name clearly printed, the dosage amount, dosage frequency and the expiry date of the medication. If the medication is by prescription only it must also have the prescribing doctor's name.

If medication is required, it is the parent's responsibility to fill out a permission to administer medication form. The medication must be handed to an educator and not left in children's bags.

## **Child Care Subsidy (CCS)**

### **THE PARENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CONTACTING CENTRELINK AND PROVIDING NEXT GENERATION WITH THE CORRECT CUSTOMER REFERENCE NUMBERS (CRN).**

Families will first need to apply for the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) through MyGov/Centrelink.

Once you have applied for CCS you may be eligible for a percentage discount on your child care fees. Next Generation cannot adjust your CCS percentage, this is your responsibility.

Children are allowed up to 42 absences per year (includes public holidays and holiday days) where CCS is payable. No proof of absence is needed for these days. Any days in excess of 42 will be charged at the full fee rate without a medical certificate.

Child Care Subsidy rates are dependent upon your family's combined taxable income and working arrangements. To get Child Care Subsidy you need to meet certain criteria.

Your child must also:

- meet immunisation requirements, and
- not be attending secondary school



All information can be found at:

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy>

## **Persons Authorised to Collect Child**

A child can only be released into the care of parent, a guardian, or a responsible person (when approved by the parent). This will only include persons nominated as emergency contacts, or persons nominated to collect the child on specific occasions.

In an emergency, verbal permission can be given over the phone but will only include people already listed on the enrolment form. Only the parent of the child can give this permission.

The person collecting the child must be over the age of 18 and be able to produce proof of identity.

## **What to bring**

Each day your child attends Next Generation they will need to bring a bag containing:

- At least two spare changes of clothes (more if toilet training)
- A set of sheets for rest time (Single fitted sheet and single flat sheet/blanket/sleeping suit (please be aware of weather patterns)
- Nappies – (if required, at least 5 per day)
- Bottles (if required)
- Formula (in either a compartment container or in a sealed un-opened tin)/ Expressed breast milk (stored and labelled correctly) – if required. Long life cow's milk/Lactose free milk or soy milk will be provided if drinking milk.
- A comforter for sleep time (optional)
- Water bottle
- Hat for outside play (Next Generation provide a green bucket hat upon enrolment).

All clothing, footwear, bottles and other items need to be clearly labelled, so educators can return all items to their correct owner. If you have lost one of your children's items, please speak with one of the educators in your child's room or check the lost property in the foyer.

Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that is easily removed for toileting and suitable for running, climbing and painting. **Children will be encouraged to participate in messy and water play experiences, please be aware that children's clothes may become messy.** We will provide aprons and clothing protection where possible.

We ask that the only toy brought to our centre from home is a sleep comforter. Any other toys can create conflict between children and the toy may become lost or broken. Children can bring something special for show and tell, but this will be placed in a safe place until home time.

## **Sun Safety**

Next Generation are a sun safe centre. We encourage parents to apply sunscreen to your child before they arrive at the centre. Children need to be dressed appropriately for outdoor play. **This means wearing shirts or dresses with sleeves, no singlets or tank tops.** A broad brimmed or legionnaire hat will be worn for the duration of outdoor play. Educators will apply sunscreen to children before outdoor play. If your child has sensitive skin, please provide your own suitable sunscreen.

## **The Program**

The Educators at Next Generation are committed to providing a stimulating educational program that is based on the children's strengths, interests and needs. Educators plan experiences for children based around the Early Years Learning Framework. We document the distance they have travelled through the learning outcomes. This is achieved by regularly observing and assessing the children's learning on an individual and group basis. The children's observations are available on your child's profile through Xplor and additional special event photos and work samples are added to their portfolios.

The Room Leader in each age group will review the learning and allocate individual and group goals from observations to develop a child centred program. Each age-group has their own program displayed in their room, this is also available on Xplor. Parent involvement in this process is always welcomed.

A separate special events calendar runs throughout the year. All age groups participate in each event. The events are advertised by flyers closer to the date and via group email. The program also includes excursions and visits by entertainers to complement and extend children's learning about the wider community. We follow the National Early Years Learning Framework to assess the children's learning progress. At the end of a child's time at Next Generation their observations and portfolio's are a wonderful tool to share with your child's teacher at formal school.

We have an Educational Leader who designs and develops the observation and program formats that we use. These formats are unique to our service. Our Educational Leader also oversees the implementation of our programs. The Educational Leader assesses their suitability to meet the needs of our enrolled children.

## **Meals**

Next Generation provide a nutritious 4 weekly rotating menu that changes with the season. The menu consists of morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and late snack which are all prepared by our Food Co-Ordinator on our premises.

Morning tea: 9:00am

Lunch: 11:00am

Afternoon tea: 2:00pm

Late snack: 5:00pm



Water is available throughout the day and each meal is served with water. Milk is also offered as an option at morning teatime. There is a menu displayed in each room as well as outside the kitchen.

If your child has any special dietary requirements or allergies, please fill in the appropriate allergy forms enclosed in your enrolment pack or communicate this with us in writing. If Next Generation cannot meet the dietary requirements for your child, you will be required to provide meals for them. A food bought from home register will need to be completed daily.

We would prefer allergies/intolerances to be confirmed by a doctor.

As there are enrolled children with allergies, we ask that **no outside food** is to be brought into the centre without reason. This is for the safety of all children.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

Birthday cakes may be brought in for your child on their birthday, these must be cakes made in a commercial kitchen and all listed ingredients must be given to the educators. No homemade cakes are to be supplied. Alternatively, a pre-mix cake box may be provided and the Educator's will make this with the children and then cook in our commercial kitchen.

ANAPHYLAXIS IS THE MOST ACUTE AND SERIOUS FORM OF ALLERGY. APPROXIMATELY 1 IN 200 INDIVIDUALS WILL EXPERIENCE SUCH A REACTION.

FOR THIS REASON THE CENTRE IS AN **"ALLERGY AWARE CENTRE"**.

PEANUT BUTTER AND OTHER NUTBASED PRODUCTS, INCLUDING NUTBASED MILKS ARE NOT PROVIDED OR ALLOWED TO BE BROUGHT INTO THE CENTRE.

### **Parent Involvement**

Next Generation have an "Open door" Policy. Parents are always welcome to visit and spend time at the centre to see what the children are doing. We welcome your involvement in:

Assisting with excursions,

Participating in centre events

Sharing an interest

Cooking with the children

Reading stories or sharing a craft activity

Curriculum decisions

Or any other talents you may be able to bring in the centre.

Centre events and centre event reflections will be emailed to your nominated email address.



We have a Parent Advisory Committee, if you are interested in joining, please see the Operational Manager.



## **Conclusion**

The educators at Next Generation have extensive experience in Early Childhood Education and Care, totalling more than 60 years combined. We thank you for providing us with the opportunity to share your child's learning journey with us. We look forward to a long and happy relationship with your family.