



Parent Handbook

WEST PYMBLE, NSW

Version 3.0 – October 2023

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Welcome

Little Gumnuts Early Learning Group would love to welcome your family to our centre.

Little Gumnuts is a purpose-built facility with carefully chosen toys, games and activities that will stimulate your child's interest and facilitate learning through play and intentional teaching.

We value the early years and believe that it is in these years that children make the very important foundations for their future learning.

At Little Gumnuts, we hope to become an extended part of your family where your child will be valued, respected and nurtured.

We welcome parents and relatives to participate in our program and value a close relationship between the centre and home.

This handbook has been created for you and your family to provide information about the centre and to be used as a reference point while your children are being cared for at Little Gumnuts Early Learning Group.

Locations

The contact details for the Little Gumnuts Early Learning Group locations are:

WEST PYMBLE NSW

Address: 57-59 Kendall Street, WEST PYMBLE NSW 2073

Phone: (02) 9498 1684

Email: westpymble@littlegumnutsgroup.com.au

Website: www.littlegumnutsgroup.com.au

Hours of Operation

Little Gumnuts West Pymble Early Learning centre is open as follows:

Monday to Friday 7:30am to 6:00pm

We operate 50 weeks of the year, closed on Public Holidays and for 2 weeks across the Christmas/New Year period.

Room Capacities

Our room capacities, and minimum staffing complement, include:

WEST PYMBLE NSW

Platypus Room – children 2-3 years – can accommodate 20 children with 4 staff members

Kangaroo Room – children 4-5 years – can accommodate 20 children with 2-3 staff members

Fees

WAITLIST FEE and BOND

We do not charge a waitlist fee or a Bond.

ENROLMENT FEE

A one-off, non-refundable, enrolment fee of \$150 per child is payable after the enrolment has been confirmed. The enrolment fee covers:

- Linen, including sheets, towels and handtowels, supplied and maintained by the centre;
- Access to the parent portal where you can access your child's portfolio, the centre program, online forms, and more;
- An approved sun hat;
- Administration costs.

DAILY FEES

Fees must be paid for every day your child is enrolled, including absent days when your child is sick or on holidays and for Public Holidays. See 'Absent Days' section below.

A full daily fee is charged regardless of the number of hours your child attends.

Fees are to be paid fortnightly in advance on a Friday. Fees must be paid by direct debit or credit card.

The following Long Day Care fees apply to Little Gumnuts West Pymble Centre:

2 – 3 years
\$155.00 per day

3 – 5 years
\$155.00 per day

Daily fees include:

Nappies, up to 5 meals per day, Sunscreen and Education & Development Programs.

Government Childcare Subsidy (CCS)

The Australian Government assists families with the payment of Childcare fees through the *Child Care Subsidy (CCS)*. To get Childcare Subsidy (CCS) you must:

- care for a child 13 or younger who's not attending secondary school, unless an exemption applies
- use an approved childcare service
- be responsible for paying the childcare fees
- meet residency and immunisation requirements.

Full details are available from the Service Australia Website, at the following two (2) links:

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

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

You apply for CCS through MyGov and is paid to our service direct and applied to your fee account as a fee reduction. You pay the difference between our Fee and your subsidy as a gap payment.

You will need the Customer Reference Number (CRN) of both the person linked to the child, and the child, as part of the enrolment process.

Cancellations & Changes

Little Gumnuts Early Learning Group requires two (2) weeks' notice, in writing, for the cancellation of your child's enrolment, or for changes in your child's care days.

Absent Days

Each child is eligible for Childcare Subsidy (CCS) for the initial 42 days absence from care during each financial year.

These absences can be taken for many reasons and do not require supporting documentation.

CCS absence payments are available on a day on which care would otherwise have been provided if the child was not absent, and the family was charged for that care.

Public holidays will be counted as absence days for CCS if:

- The child would normally have attended the service or individual care on the day if it were not a public holiday and
- Fees are charged in respect of the absent child for the day.

CCS is payable for public holidays at the usual rate. Additional absent days may be approved by CCS, in special circumstances.

For full information about CCS absence payments and eligibility, see the Services Australia website:

<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy/how-manage-your-payment/if-your-child-absent-from-child-care>

All Inclusive

In general, our centres offer a no-fuss all-inclusive service that provides everything children require during their time at our centres, covering:

- Secure and conveniently located high-quality centres;
- Up to five (5) healthy and nutritious meals per day prepared on premise;
- Sunhats, sunscreen, and nappies;
- Teams of professionally certified early childhood education specialists;
- Child:Staff ratios on or above those governed by the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations;
- Interactive communication via the KinderM8 Parent Portal.

We recommend that you pack the following items daily:

- Backpack clearly labelled with your child's name,
- 2 changes (or more) of clothing including underwear,
- Your Child's drink bottle,
- Your Child's sun hat (if it was taken home),
- Comfort items such as dummy, teddies, sleep cuddle item etc,
- bottle and formula (clearly labelled).

All items brought into the Centre should be clearly named and be recognisable by the child.

Parents are asked to check their child's belongings each afternoon. Lost and unnamed articles will be placed in a "Lost Property Box" in the front foyer. Please check this frequently.

Our Philosophy

The Little Gumnuts Statement of Philosophy reflects the principles of the National Quality Standards, the Early Years Learning Framework, the National Law and Regulations, the Centre Curriculum Guidelines and our Vision and Values. It guides the decisions, policies and daily practices of our team and assists in planning, implementing and evaluating quality experiences for our children.

Our Vision

The Little Gumnuts Early Learning Group Vision articulates the hopes of the organisation and paints a picture of the future. Our vision is:

*To support young families in their endeavour
to raise happy healthy children.*

Our Values

The Little Gumnuts values statement is our declaration of our core beliefs, both to guide our team's actions and also to connect with our children, families and other stakeholders.

The Little Gumnuts Early Learning Group Values are:

Innovative Leadership

We are driven by the passionate pursuit of quality early childhood education and guide our stakeholders through innovative thinking, responsible policy and inclusive practices.

Open & Honest Relationships

Our relationships are respectful, mutual and reciprocal and are built on trust, authenticity and ethical behaviour.

Growth & Innovation

We recognise childhood as a time for all children to be entrenched in secure and trusting environments that allow them to explore, play, discover and learn.

Acceptance & Belonging

We recognise and celebrate the efforts and achievements of our children, educators and staff to attain positive contributions and outcomes.

Equality & Diversity

We embrace, advocate for, and invest in the rights of all children to access and actively participate in our programs and have a sense of truly belonging in our community.

Safe & Secure

We provide a safe and secure environment for our children and team to enjoy while embracing our responsibilities to our children, our communities, our people, our environments & our long term sustainability.

Our Children

- We believe all children are unique individuals who need opportunities to extend on their individual strengths, needs, interests and growing sense of agency. We believe all children, regardless of their age, gender, background, religion, culture or abilities should be able to

participate in all aspects of the curriculum in order to engage in dispositions of learning such as curiosity, trial and error, and persistence.

- We believe that all children should feel welcome and need a sense of belonging developed through nourishing, secure, respectful and reciprocal partnerships with Educators and their peers. We will do this by greeting children by name, displaying their individual and family photos, and modelling positive social interactions.
- We believe children learn best through hands-on play-based experiences, in environments that provide stimulating, practical and exciting experiences using resources that are open-ended, educational, natural, recycled and fun. We will engage children in opportunities to investigate the natural world, participate in sustainable practices and engage to promote creativity and imagination. We will also engage children in opportunities involving 'risk play' which allows them to challenge themselves, follow their gut instincts and become good decision makers in the future.
- We believe all children are competent and capable and we value and respect their thoughts and ideas. We do this by involving them in 'real' tasks; displaying their artwork in meaningful ways; giving them opportunities for expressive language through 'talk times' and providing them with opportunities to actively reflect on their own learning and assist in documenting this learning.
- We believe it is a child's right to become a successful, confident learner within a safe, respectful learning environment. We will provide a safe, nourishing and comfortable environment where children feel wanted, loved and valued. Our educators will engage with the children in our service, not just supervise them. We will ensure each child's health and wellbeing are paramount by formulating and adhering to a range of health and safety policies and procedures, including promoting healthy eating practices based on whole foods and eliminating many additives and preservatives from our menu.
- We believe every child should be given the opportunity to enjoy being a child. We do this by scheduling long periods of uninterrupted time to truly live in the moment, explore the environment, revisit their investigations to extend on their learning, and engage in experiences that are 'uniquely outdoors'.

Our Families

- Our educators will work with families to develop nourishing, respectful partnerships that enable the exchange of information about their child's interests, strengths and needs as well as their personal preferences, thoughts and ideas on care giving strategies, educational pursuits and policies and procedures. We understand that parents want to know how their children are developing for their age and how their children cope in an early childhood education and care service environment.
- We believe all families, regardless of their structure, background, religion, culture or abilities should feel welcomed, respected and valued for the integral and pivotal role they play as their child's first teacher. We believe families provide us with valuable knowledge about their children and need educators who understand and support the complexities of being a parent.
- We support families in their parenting role by assisting them to access other agencies in our community and providing advice and resources when the need arises. We will welcome families into our service community by inviting them to participate in special days and outings throughout the year.
- We inform families about our educational program, The Early Years Learning Framework, and the National Quality Standards (NQS), through Parent Information Nights, website information, daily conversations, children's observations and printed media such as newsletters, photos,

and take-home items. By doing this, we hope they feel they are involved in the educational process.

- We have an Open Door Policy that welcomes families at any time of the day to participate as they feel comfortable. We believe this inclusive practice promotes a sense of comfort and allows them to see, firsthand, what occurs throughout the day.
- We will engage in shared decision making with families and where possible incorporate their ideas, so the service becomes an extension of their family. Families are encouraged to approach educators/staff with questions or concerns. Families can speak to educators/staff in their child's class directly or contact our Director. We conduct family meetings and surveys throughout the year to gain valuable feedback to assist with our continuous improvement.

Our Team

- We believe that all educators and staff, regardless of their age, gender, background, religion, culture, experience, qualification or ability should feel welcomed, respected, valued, and appreciated as part of our team. Educators/Team Members are encouraged to express their thoughts and ideas, knowing these will be listened to and seriously considered. We recognise and utilise each other's strengths and knowledge for the benefit of our children and families. This includes acknowledging the important role our administrative, support, catering and Leadership team do in ensuring our service operates effectively.
- Educators/Team Members are trained in the service's policies and procedures and are actively involved in any reviews to ensure a consistent approach in the service program and delivery.
- A professional team approach will be fostered by supporting Educators/Team Members studying or undertaking professional development. This engages all Educators/Team Members in a process of critical reflection as they discuss their learning with others, which improves personal and professional development and encourages continuous improvement in our policies and practices.
- Educators/Team Members will formulate annual professional goals and are involved in developing service goals as part of our Quality Improvement Plan. This reflects our commitment towards continuous improvement. Educators/Team Members are provided with regular professional development training based on these goals, to learn new skills, gain fresh ideas, and access networks within the wider community. We subscribe to appropriate journal publications that our Educators/Team Members are encouraged to read and reflect upon, and our Director regularly conducts development sessions on a range of topics relating to early childhood.
- We will provide educators/staff with a happy, friendly, positive, supportive and flexible work environment, which fosters motivation and commitment to a strong work ethic.
- As part of our commitment to high quality programs based on researched 'best practice' and to encourage a culture of life-long learning, we provide scheduled Administrative Time to all our team. This time allows them to complete observations on children; develop our educational programs and menus; share ideas, values, teaching practices and goals; and critically evaluate themselves.
- Management consistently reviews procedures, practices and positions to ensure Educators/Team Members are content and best suited to their positions in order to minimise staff turnover and to maintain a familiar, reliable team within the service.
- New educators and staff, or those returning from a long period of leave, participate in an effective induction process to ensure they understand what is expected in their role and what they can expect from the service. All Educators/Team Members are given support, guidance and assistance during their employment with the service.

- Educators/Team Members are qualified Early Childhood Professionals and actively promote the important role they play in shaping children’s futures and supporting the role of families both within the service and within the wider community.

Our Community

- We will be actively involved in our community via centre activities and family/social events both inside and outside our operating hours. From this, children learn care and empathy for others, explore the natural world, and develop a sense of belonging and community spirit. It also encourages children to become active community members and supports them to voice their concerns in matters that affect them in the wider community.
- Educators/Team Members use the wider community as a teaching tool by incorporating events into our curriculum. We celebrate and embrace gazetted days (e.g. Jeans for Genes, Sustainability activities), participate in community events and encourage donations of resources and time from community members and local businesses.
- We acknowledge the traditional owners, the Kuringgai people. We aim to incorporate aspects of their Indigenous culture respectfully into our programs.
- We will actively promote our service in the community and advocate for Early Childhood by welcoming early childhood students on Vocational Education Work Placements and high school work experience.

Our Focus on Sustainability

- Little Gumnuts Early Learning Group will minimise our environmental footprint by significantly reducing the amount of waste we produce and implementing more sustainable practices.
- We will instil environmental responsibility into all aspects of our operation, encouraging recycling, composting, plant growing, animal care and minimising our landfill waste.
- We will purchase from sustainable sources where possible and implement programs that teach sustainable practices to our children.

Our Education Curriculum

- We provide individualised early childhood programs that nourish respectful partnerships through a play-based curriculum. Our inviting indoor and outdoor learning environments foster a positive approach to learning across all developmental areas. Documentation and take-home outputs allow children to have ownership of their learning and make connections between home, the service and the wider community.
- We will plan experiences that are meaningful, interesting and educational. These will be based on educator’s observations, children’s and parent’s ideas, individual specialised programs from other agencies/professionals, and community events. They will acknowledge children’s agency; provide practical, open-ended opportunities for children to thrive; and will foster their love of learning, curiosity and wonder by using the children’s interests, ideas and own knowledge to guide our Session Topics.
- We will allow educators to have ownership over the service’s program and to guide each other and liaise with our Educational Leaders in order to foster a professional and united team, dedicated to creating a relevant educational program for every child. We will employ additional educators to ensure sustainable practices, creative experiences and meaningful links with our community are embedded into our service.
- Educators use an inclusive anti-bias approach to ensure programs cover all abilities and learning styles. We continuously reflect on our practice; incorporate visuals and key words in home

languages; and use intentional teaching to educate children on social equity and global empathy. We actively involve children in growing their own food and assisting in the preparation of the food they will eat.

- Educators are given released ‘Set Up Time’ and will set up purposeful experiences and learning areas to enhance children’s interests, extend milestone development and engage children in the learning focus of our Class Aims. The Indoor and Outdoor environments are viewed as a “third teacher”, deliberately arranged to enhance independent learning, exploration and skill development. A range of open-ended, varied, natural, recycled and manmade equipment is utilised.
- Educators will assess each child’s ongoing learning and development by documenting individual and group observations as part of our summative assessments of children’s learning; formative assessments for children’s learning against the five learning outcomes of the EYLF and share assessments as children learn with families.

Policies under the National Regulations

The National Regulations require Childcare Centres to have formal policies relating to the following topics:

- Health and Safety, including matters relating to—
 - Nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements;
 - Sun protection;
 - Water safety, including safety during any water-based activities;
 - Administration of first aid;
 - Sleep and rest for children;
 - Incident, injury, trauma and illness procedures;
 - Dealing with infectious diseases;
 - Dealing with medical conditions in children;
 - Emergency and evacuation;
- Delivery of children to, and collection of children from, education and care service premises;
- Excursions;
- Transportation of children;
- Providing a child safe environment;
- Staffing, including:
 - A code of conduct for staff members; and
 - Determining the responsible person present at the service; and
 - The participation of volunteers and students on practicum placements;
 - Interactions with children;
- Enrolment and orientation;
- Governance and management of the service, including confidentiality of records;
- The acceptance and refusal of authorisations;
- Payment of fees and provision of a statement of fees charged by the education and care service;
- Dealing with complaints.

Additionally, the Centre has numerous additional policies and procedures that cover all aspects of our employment, operation and the care we provide for your children.

All Little Gumnuts Early Learning Group Policies are available on our website in the Centre Operations Manual.

National Quality Framework and Standards

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

Research shows quality education and care early in life leads to better health, education and employment outcomes later in life. The early years are critical for establishing self-esteem, resilience, healthy growth and capacity to learn. Quality education and care shapes every child's future and lays the foundation for development and learning.

The National Quality Standard (NQS) sets a benchmark for the quality of children's education and care services in Australia. The NQS covers long day care where services are assessed and rated against 7 Quality Areas, 15 Standards and 40 Elements. The 7 Quality Areas that make up the NQS are:

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

Early Years Learning Framework

The *Early Years Learning Framework* was developed to ensure your child receives quality education programs in their early childhood setting. This is a vital time for them to learn and develop.

The Framework's vision is for all children to experience play-based learning that is engaging and builds success for life. It is a guide for early childhood educators who work with children from birth to five years.

Our Educators will use the Framework, in partnership with families, to develop learning programs responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities, and recognise that children learn through their play.

The Early Years Learning Framework describes childhood as a time of belonging, being and becoming.

- **Belonging** is the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel they belong because of the relationships they have with their family, community, culture and place.
- **Being** is about living here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need time to just 'be'—time to play, try new things and have fun.
- **Becoming** is about the learning and development that young children experience. Children start to form their sense of identity from an early age, which shapes the type of adult they will become.

Play is learning and is very important for children. Through play babies and young children explore and learn to understand the world around them as they come to communicate, discover, imagine and create. When children play, they are showing what they have learned and what they are trying to understand.

This is why play is one of the foundations of the Early Years Learning Framework. By using this Framework educators will guide your child's play by carefully designing learning activities and stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments.

Program, Education and Learning

Our Educators develop personalised programs for each child based on the *Early Years Learning Framework* as our Syllabus. Our Educators are always happy to discuss your child's program, and progress, at any time. To assist you to monitor progress, we have the following tools:

CHILDREN'S PORTFOLIOS

Educators will create online portfolios that will include your child's work samples, artwork, photos and learning stories. Parents will have access to their own child's portfolio through the Parent's Portal App.

PROGRAM / DAILY DIARY

Your child's program is constantly updated and can be viewed through the Parent's Portal App. We encourage parents to view this regularly and discuss with your child's educators if you have any questions.

Children's programs are designed according to the children's interests, needs, strengths and abilities. We will also plan around world events, the environment, staff strengths and educational topics.

REFLECTIONS

Staff will reflect on the program, children's interests and their evaluations regularly and post these reflections on the Parent's Portal App. Children's families are very important to the program. We value parent input, especially around their cultural and diverse backgrounds, so that you can influence your child's program and ask that you share any thoughts, ideas and opinions with the centre.

Arrival and Departure

It is extremely important, for safety and legal reasons, that your child's arrival and departure are correctly recorded each day. This is done through the KinderM8 electronic management program. The program only allows your child to be collected by those authorised upon enrolment.

Educators must be informed of changes to normal collection routine in writing. If educators have not met the person collecting your child, they will be asked to present photo identification. Educators will not allow your child to be collected by someone you have not nominated. People under 16 years of age will not be allowed to collect a child from the centre.

In an emergency if someone other than a person listed on the "Authority to Collect" is required to collect your child, you must inform us in writing and confirm verbally.

Late Collection

The Centre closes promptly at 6pm. If you know that you may be late collecting your child, please inform us as soon as possible.

If the educators must stay longer than their scheduled working hours to look after your child, you may be charged a late-collection fee. Parents will receive a separate invoice for late fees. Late fees are charged at \$2 per minute. This goes towards reimbursing educators for their time and any out-of-pocket expenses incurred.

Please note that three occurrences of late collection of a child may result in the child's enrolment being reviewed. We advise you to make yourself aware of the details of this policy.

Legal Orders

We understand that family situations may change so we ask that you keep us updated to ensure we can cater for your child and family needs.

We ask that you provide a copy of any Court Orders and/or Restraining Orders to the Centre Director on Enrolment or when approved by the court should the child/children already be enrolled. It is also the responsibility of parents to inform the Centre Director of any family separation issues where Court Orders/Restraining Orders are not in place.

The details of any Court Orders shared with the Centre Director and staff of the centre will remain confidential. The family situation can mean changes to who parents wish to collect their child/children. Without Court/ Restraining Orders we legally must release children to either parent.

Food and Nutrition

Depending on your child's care hours, the West Pymble Centre provides breakfast, morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and an evening snack. Water and milk are provided at each mealtime and water is freely available at all times.

Food at the Centre is selected on the basis of providing children with a balanced diet. Menus have been developed in accordance with the *Munch and Move* Guidelines and have been reviewed by a qualified nutritionist.

Parents should discuss requirements specific to their culture and should note any special dietary requirements on the enrolment form.

Please note that we are **NUT FREE** to minimise risks to children with severe nut allergies.

Birthday Celebrations

Your child's birthday is a very important part of our regular celebrations at the centre. If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday, we ask that you **DO NOT** provide a cake due the vast amount of allergies children may have. The centre can provide cake to celebrate, and Birthdays may be grouped with other children celebrating that week.

If there are any other special occasions you would like us to celebrate with your child, please speak to your child's educator.

Excursion and Visitors

Sometimes excursions are organised as part of our program for the older children. When planning an excursion, the children's abilities and interests are always taken into consideration.

We will require specific consent for any excursion or event. Strict Educator:Child ratios are always adhered to, and safety standards maintained. The help of parents to accompany may also be requested and your support is always appreciated.

We will also endeavour to invite special visitors to the centre to further enhance the program and cater for the children's interests.

Please note that there may be an additional cost for excursions or visitors.

Communication & Surveillance

Rooms and outdoor areas along with the front foyer and the car park may be monitored for safety and security reasons.

The footage may only be accessed by the Centre Director and management. Footage will be provided to the Police, the Education Regulator, and any other authority required by law, if necessary.

Parents will **NOT** be allowed to view security footage for Privacy Regulation compliance.

Open communication between educators and families is essential for the effective care of the children. There are various ways the centre will communicate such as notice boards, regular newsletters and email updates. The primary communication method is through the Parent Portal where daily activity reports are provided, specific to your child, along with photos and images of your child's work and achievements.

Behaviour Management

Children are at all times encouraged to act in a manner which promotes harmony, well-being and respect for themselves, others and the environment.

Stern punishment and or smacking is not permitted, nor is any other form of punishment which results in the humiliation or frightening of a child.

Children are guided positively towards more acceptable behaviour by being given choices which are acceptable, thereby promoting self-discipline as a learning experience. The older children are encouraged to take ownership of their negative behaviour. This is done via asking a series of questions.

Children will work together with educators at the start of every year to develop expectations in place of "rules" so that all children feel valued in the process.

Rest Times

2-5 YEAR OLDS

A relaxation period each day will occur after lunch. According to regulations each child must be given the opportunity to rest. Some of the children use this time to sleep. Others will be given the opportunity to rest whilst listening to relaxing music, a recorded story, read a book or to play quietly in a peaceful and relaxing environment. If you do not wish for your child to sleep, please let your room educators know.

Toys from Home

We ask that your child does **NOT** bring personal toys from home. This is to prevent the disappointment from breakage or loss.

Children and infants are permitted to bring along a favourite cuddly toy or blanket. This is especially encouraged in the settling in period for the child.

Additional Needs

At Little Gumnuts Early Learning Group, we aim to be inclusive of all children regardless of their abilities.

If you have any concerns about your child's development, please fill in the enrolment accordingly and express your concerns with the Centre Director. The more we know, the better we can accommodate your child's specific needs.

Additionally, we may be able to refer you to health professionals that may be able to assist your child if deemed appropriate. If your child has a specific diagnosis, please discuss this with the Centre Director. This will allow us to plan and cater better for your child.

In certain circumstances, we may also be able to apply for government funding to cater for an additional staff member to assist your child as well as others into the environment.

COVID-19 Provisions

COVID-19 requirements and procedures change from time to time in accordance with current Government Policy and Public Health Orders.

All Little Gumnuts Early Learning Group education and care educators and staff have been vaccinated in accordance with the Public Health Orders and COVID-19 vaccination requirements.

Mask usage, QR Code use, Social Distancing and Centre Access requirements will vary from time to time, and families will be advised of the current policies via email and other communication channels.

Grievances and Complaints

Concerns or grievances should first be discussed with the Centre Director or Educator in charge of your child's room.

If necessary, please follow the grievance procedure set out in the Little Gumnuts Complaints Policy.

Sun Safety

Our centre is registered with the NSW Cancer Council's SunSmart program. We implement a combination of sun protection measures to ensure the health and safety of our children. We monitor the UV Index levels daily and schedule outdoor activities when levels are safe. Our outdoor environment provides shade for play and we conduct regular risk assessments to ensure the play space and equipment is safe for children.

Children and staff must wear hats and sun appropriate clothing, including footwear, when playing outside. Children are required to wear at least SPF30+ sunscreen which is reapplied regularly. Consent to apply sunscreen is included in the application process.

Immunisation

It is a requirement that all children attending a Little Gumnuts Early learning Centre receive vaccinations as per the States Health Department's recommendations.

The Public Health Act 2010 requires all families to provide an Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) for their child prior to enrolment in an early childhood education and care service. The immunisation history statement must show that each enrolled child is up to date with immunisations for their age. This will help to ensure all children's well-being.

We are legally required to notify the Public Health Unit of any cases of vaccine preventable diseases occurring at our Service. For an up-to-date immunisation schedule, please refer to your family GP.

Medication

Educators are not permitted to give medication or treatments to children without written authorisation from the parents/guardians.

A medication Authorisation must be completed prior to any medication being administered. This Authorisation can be provided via the KinderM8 portal.

All medications must be in their original packaging. Please do not premeasure medicines as Educators need to complete documentation accurately. All prescription medicines should be labelled with your child's name and the amount and frequency of the medication to be given. Authority cannot be given for medications that have been prescribed for an adult or another child.

Non-prescribed or 'over the counter' medicines must have a pharmaceutical label attached. The pharmacist at your chemist can do this for you. Educators will only administer these medicines for the recommended time stated on the label before a doctor's certificate must be produced to continue. Non-prescribed medicines need to be sealed when brought into the Centre.

We suggest that when you bring a sealed non-prescription medicine in to the Centre that you leave it at the Centre for future use. This will prevent you having to provide a new sealed medication each time you arrive at the Centre. Staff will inform you of the approaching expiry date of the medication. If there is any doubt about a medication or treatment, the Centre Director reserves the right not to administer it.

Medications are not to be left in a Child's bag at any time.

Daily Requirements

Children do get messy as they participate in activities. It is recommended that comfortable, easy to wash play clothes are worn.

All items brought into the Centre should be clearly named and be recognisable by the child.

Parents are asked to check their child's belongings each afternoon. Lost and unnamed articles will be placed in a "Lost Property Box" in the front foyer. Please check this frequently.

Please provide each day:

- 2 changes (or more) of clothing including underwear;
- Your Child's drink bottle;
- Your Child's sun hat (if it was taken home).

We highly recommend that Sun Hat's remain at the Centre where they will be washed and maintained.

Health Considerations

The National Health and Medical Research Council have supplied the following information regarding minimum exclusion period for children from an early childhood education and care service. Please inform staff if your child has any of the following so that we can notify the Public Health Unit and other families of any infectious disease/illness. (Confidentiality is always maintained).

If your child has a serious or contagious illness, for the health and safety of other children and the staff, they will not be able to attend the Centre. All children will be sent home if their temperatures rise above 37.5 degrees Celsius, if they have vomited or had diarrhoea.

The general guidelines for exclusion from attending childcare are:

CONDITION	EXCLUSION PERIOD
Hand, foot and mouth disease	Until all blisters have dried
HIB	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received
Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness
Herpes- Cold sores	Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing, where possible
Influenzas and flu-like illnesses	Exclude until well
Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash
Meningitis (Bacterial)	Exclude until well
Meningococcal Infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed
Mumps	Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner)
Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	Exclude the child for 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment
Rubella (German measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least 4 days after the onset of rash
Salmonella	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases
Streptococcal Infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well
Tuberculosis	Exclude until a medical certificate from an appropriate health authority is received
Worms (intestinal)	Exclude if diarrhoea present
Diarrhoea, Vomiting or Fever	Exclude until well

Priority for Placement

Childcare places are in high demand, and in accordance with Government guidelines, placement priorities will be applied as follows:

- **First Priority:** a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect;
- **Second Priority:** a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under Section 14 of the 'A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999';
- **Third Priority:** any other child.

Within these main categories priority should also be given to the following children:

- children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families;
- children in families which include a disabled person;
- children in families with low-income thresholds as defined by the Australian Taxation Office;
- children in families from a non-English speaking background;
- children in socially isolated families;
- children of single parents.

Parent Participation

Our centre has an Open-Door Policy and actively seeks and encourages families to be involved in the Service. This can range from evaluating and adding input to your child's program and observations, volunteering within the Service, sharing skills and experiences that the children and the program will benefit from, and providing feedback.

You could also be involved in our Little Gumnuts Review Committee. Your involvement can be as formal or active as you like, and as your time permits. We respect that time is limited for most families and we ask that you inform us as to your preferred way of communication. We can arrange meetings with your child's educator at a time that suits you throughout the year and we also communicate daily through the KinderM8 Parent portal. We regularly seek input from families on aspects of the Service but in particular, your child's goals, observations and program.

If, for any reason you question or do not understand any aspect of the Service or your child's experience we have a Grievance Policy that supports all stakeholders in our community and like all policies, is available for families to consult and implement at any time. Copies of our policies are available in the Centre Operations Manual which is available on our website, and in the reception area of the service.

Breastfeeding and Formula Feeding

We are a breastfeeding friendly service. Mothers who are breastfeeding are welcome to attend the Service during the day to feed their infant. We have a private, clean and quiet area for mothers to breastfeed their infants or express breastmilk.

Families that are formula feeding should consult our Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person to be aware on how we need the formula prepared and stored. Regular communication is encouraged to ensure your infant's needs are met as they grow.

Incident, Injury or Trauma

We aim to minimise the risk of accidents and injury as much as possible however, through play, exploration and adventure, children sometimes have accidents. We always have an educator with a First Aid, emergency asthma, anaphylaxis management and CPR qualification on shift at all times we provide education and care to children. First Aid kits are located throughout the Service.

In the event of a minor injury, first aid will be provided as required. An Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record will be completed and you will be notified about the injury through the Parent Portal. If your child injures their head, even if it is a small bump, you will be contacted to advise you of the injury. Our educators will continue to monitor your child closely and advise if you should come and collect them.

If an injury or incident is serious and we believe urgent medical attention is required, the Nominated Supervisor will contact you immediately. If we cannot contact a parent or guardian, we will attempt to contact an authorised nominee for consent. Where you or your authorised nominee cannot be contacted, we may call an ambulance. If you are unable to meet the ambulance at the Service, we will send one of our educators/staff members to accompany your child in the ambulance. Please note that Ambulance cover is the responsibility of each family.

An Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record will be completed, and a parent will be required to acknowledge this record. A copy of any documentation from the hospital or treating doctor will also be requested. Our Service will also be required to notify the Regulatory Authority in the event of any serious incident or injury. In these circumstances, you may be contacted by our Approved Provider and the Regulatory Authority to follow up the incident and actions taken by our Service.

Appropriate authorisations for emergency care of your child are sought during the enrolment process.

Regulatory Authority

Our Service is regulated by the national body for early education and care – the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) as well as the state licensing department of the NSW Department of Education.

To contact our Regulatory Authority, please refer to the contact details below:

Early Childhood Education Directorate

NSW Department of Education

Phone: 1800 619 113

Email: ececd@det.nsw.edu.au

Locked Bag 5107 PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

www.education.nsw.gov.au