



LARA COMMUNITY CENTRE INC

OCCASIONAL CARE

PARENT HANDBOOK

MARCH 2006

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

The following principles are aimed at protecting the privacy and confidentiality of staff, volunteers, participants and members:

1. Information which relates to an individual's personal affairs will be collected for lawful purposes only
2. Information will not be gained by unfair or illegal means. This means that the information will not be gained without the knowledge and consent of the person concerned.
3. When information is requested you have the right to know:
 - i. The reason it is required
 - ii. Whether it is required by law
 - iii. Who will have access to the information
4. Information will not be used for any purpose other than what it was intended, unless consent has been obtained to use the information for another purpose or it is believed to be essential to the life or health of the person concerned.
5. Only relevant, up to date information will be kept. Where collected information is required to be stored for mandatory periods, it will be stored in a secure manner.
6. Only those persons so authorised will have access to confidential information. Information that is required by law to be kept but is no longer used is store separately and securely.
7. It is a legal right of any person to have access to personal records kept about them.
8. It should be recorded whenever the information is used and for what purpose.

For more information contact: The Federal Privacy Commissioner, 133 Castlereagh St, Sydney. Telephone: (02) 9284 9600 or 1800 023 985)

**LARA COMMUNITY CENTRE INC.
OCCASIONAL CARE SERVICE**

PARENT HANDBOOK

SERVICE PHILOSOPHY

The Lara Community Centre Inc. Occasional Care Program Staff are dedicated to providing children with a supportive, caring, stimulating and educational environment. We recognize each child as unique, with individual needs and rights. We actively promote the importance of the early years of life as the basis for a sound future by:

- Building positive attitudes
- Developing a healthy self esteem
- Encouraging natural curiosity and exploration
- Providing experience in all areas of development based on individual and whole group needs
- Providing encouragement towards total independence, while highlighting cause and effect within relationships.

OUR AIMS

- To provide quality care and education for all children in our care
- To provide a safe, relaxed and stimulating learning environment with activities that reflect the children's interests
- Introduce the children to experiences they may not have had before
- Enhancing the children's social, communication and self-help skills
- To provide families with support for the care of their children
- To practice and promote environmentally friendly and SunSmart practices
- To promote free and interactive communication between staff and parents in regard to their child
- To encourage parent participation wherever possible

SERVICE LICENCING

This service operates on a Restricted Licence, issued by the Department of Human Services. The main restrictions are:

- The service may have a maximum of 20 children in the room at any one time, between the ages of 6 weeks and 6 years
- Each child may only attend the service for a maximum of 5 hours on any one day. The service currently operates for a maximum of 3 hours per day.
- Each child may only attend the service for a maximum of 15 hours per week (if the service is open for more than 15 hours in any one week)
- The Lara Community Centre Inc. Occasional Care Program must comply with all current regulations and the Children's Service Act 1998.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Centre is currently open from 9.15am until 12.15pm Monday to Friday during the school term. The Centre is closed during School Holidays. Christmas break usually begins in the third week of December and the room reopens in the last week of January.

STAFF

There is a minimum of two staff members on duty at all times, and at least one staff member trained in Level II First Aid. If child numbers exceed 15 at any time, a third staff member must be on hand. This position may be filled by a volunteer, however this position is filled by a third paid staff member.

The Centre is committed to employing suitably qualified and experienced staff to care for the children.

ENROLMENT PROCEDURE

Before your child starts in the Occasional Care Room, you are encouraged to meet with the Childcare Coordinator to discuss the needs of your child, your needs and existing vacancies. An enrolment form must be fully completed and returned to the Centre prior to your child's first stay with us. All sections of the enrolment form must be completed and a copy of your child's immunization record supplied. In addition, if there are any Court or Custody orders in place, we must have a copy of these attached to the Enrolment Form.

PRIORITY ACCESS

Under funding arrangements with ACFE and the Department of Human Services, we are required to give access to the service for the children of anyone participating in an ACFE (funded) class, under the age of six in addition to providing access to care for any member of the community who needs occasional care for a child under six. We do not restrict access to the service, except where restricted by staffing and availability of places.

FEES

Fees are structured as follows:

1 st child	\$15.00 per session (3 hours)
2 nd child	\$ 9.00 per session (3 hours)
3 rd child	\$ 7.50 per session (3 hours)

Children must be from the same family for this structure to apply.

If you are attending a class at the Community Centre while your child is in care, the following fees apply:

\$ 3.00 per hour (or part thereof)

If you are Volunteering in the Community Centre while your child is in care, no fees will apply. This can only be done where a vacancy exists in the room on a day mutually convenient to both the Volunteer and the Community Centre Coordinator.

PLEASE NOTE: While this service is licenced to operate by the Department of Human Services, we are not registered to receive Federal Government Child Care Benefits. We cannot offer fee reductions through the Childcare Benefits Scheme to any family.

CANCELLATION FEE

In line with industry standards, if you have made a permanent booking for your child in the room and your child is unable to attend, the normal fees will be applied to your account. If you make a casual booking and do not attend for that session normal fees will be applied to your account for that session. Fees do not have to be paid where the room is not open due to Public Holidays or School Holidays.

LATE FEES

If you are late in picking up your child, a fee of \$10 per 10 minutes or part thereof will be applied to your account, payable immediately. This is to cover the cost of the two staff members, who must be paid to stay with the children until they are picked up.

PAYMENT OF FEES

Fees must be paid on the day they are incurred. Fees can be paid in cash, cheque or credit card at the front office of the Community Centre. Receipts will be issued through the Qikkids computer system for all payments received. We cannot issue receipts for CCB purposes for the Occasional Care Centre., although Registered Carers receipts will be

issued at the end of each term and posted to each family with a Registered Carers Claim form. It is the responsibility of each family to place a claim with the Family Assistance Office. The Family Assistance Office will determine each families eligibility to claim and we make no guarantees or promises that a refund or rebate will be paid through this system.

BOOKINGS

In line with industry standards, if you have a permanent booking for your child at this service and your child does not attend, normal fees will be applied to your account for the duration of the booking.

If you do not have a permanent booking, we cannot guarantee a place for your child on any given day. If a place is required you will need to call the Centre in advance to book a place. If you do not use any booked place, normal fees will apply.

If you are in a class at the Community Centre, you must make a permanent booking for your child if you want their place to be guaranteed while you are in the class. If you do not use a booked place, normal fees will apply.

Permanent bookings run for the entire year. All bookings are cleared at the end of the forth term and a new booking for the following year must be completed.

Bookings can be made through the Childcare Coordinator either in person or by phoning 5282 2725.

SIGNING IN/SIGNING OUT

It is a Government regulation to sign your child in and out of care each time you attend. A separate entry must be recorded for each child attending.

To ensure the security of your child, please let staff know and make a note in the sign in book if someone other than yourself will be collecting your child.

Please note that the government regulations mandate that staff are not to allow children to go home with anyone other than the usual caregiver unless we are notified, either in person or by a phone call (from the usual caregiver) of a change of pick up arrangements. Only those persons authorized on a child's enrolment form will be able to collect the child from the Centre. To avoid embarrassment, please supply the names of at least two people on this section of the form.

ILLNESS

The Centre cannot care for sick children, so please do not bring them in if you know they are feeling unwell. If your child becomes ill during their stay with us, you will be notified as soon as possible and your child will need to be collected by yourself or one of your emergency persons.

If a child needs to go home or to the doctor, parents or emergency contact people will be contacted immediately. In the case of none of these being available, the Childcare staff or Community Centre staff may need to take emergency action for the well being of the child. A clause permitting this needs to be signed by the parent/guardian when completing enrolment forms.

MEDICATION

Medication Procedure

If children require medication while at the centre, parents must

- Advise staff of their child's needs in relation to the medication
- Provide the medicine in the **original container** with the child's name printed clearly on the container

- Personally hand the medicine to a staff member for safe keeping out of the reach of children. Under no circumstances is medication to be left in your child's bag.
- Fill in the details of dosage, time of administration, etc on the Medication form and sign. Please make sure that each dose to be administered is entered individually and signed.
- NOTE: Staff will only administer dose as defined on the bottle. On collection of children, parents must check the Medication form, sign and ask staff for the medication.

ACCIDENTS

If your child has an accident, the accident will be recorded in the accident book, citing details of the injury, how the accident occurred and what action was taken to treat your child. You will be required to sign this book to verify that you have been notified of the accident.

If your child needs to go home or to the doctor, parents or emergency contact people will be contacted immediately. In the case of none of these being available, the Childcare staff or Community Centre staff may need to take emergency action for the well being of the child. A clause permitting this needs to be signed by the parent/guardian when completing enrolment forms.

CLOTHING

Protective smocks are provided for the children to wear during messy activities such as painting and finger painting, however children will sometimes get dirty while participating in some activities. We suggest that the best clothing for your child to wear is comfortable to wear, clothes they can manage when they need to go to the toilet and can be washed easily.

If your child is at the stage where they are becoming independent in toilet training, please provide a change of clothing to cater for 'little accidents'.

If your child is in nappies, please ensure they have a clean nappy on when they arrive and enough nappies to use throughout their stay with us.

We encourage SunSmart behaviour for all staff and children alike. With this in mind, children should have a sunhat at all times and sunscreen in their bags in the warmer months. Children are encouraged to play outside whenever weather permits, so please remember to pack a warm hat and coat in the cooler months.

Please ensure all items of clothing are clearly marked with your child's name.

FOOD

Due to regulations governing the preparation of food, we are unable to provide meals or snacks for the children. Children are requested to bring a snack for morning tea as well as a drink if they prefer anything other than water. The children are encouraged to all sit down at the same time and spend a social and quiet time eating as a group, with the staff. Please be mindful of what you pack in your child's snack box, and that containers are clearly marked with your child's name.

DUE TO THE INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH SEVERE ALLERGIES, NO PEANUTS OR FOODS CONTAINING PEANUTS OR TRACES OF PEANUTS ARE TO BE BROUGHT INTO THE CHILDREN'S ROOM AT ANY TIME. THIS INCLUDES SUCH THINGS AS PEANUT BUTTER AND NUTELLA SPREADS.

CELEBRATIONS

If your child is celebrating a special occasion, such as a birthday or the arrival of a new sibling, we welcome the opportunity for the children to celebrate together. You can bring

along a cake or something for the children to share at morning tea and the staff will organise to sing "Happy Birthday" or whatever is appropriate.

Please remember that we can only accept store bought products and things without cream. A good example of suitable treats is a Swiss Jam Log, which is readily available and does not have any cream.

TOYS/GAMES

Unless stated otherwise it is advised that children do not bring toys and games from home as they may be damaged or lost. The centre will not be responsible if toys are broken or misplaced.

WAR TOY POLICY

War toys are toys and equipment that promote violence or aggressive behaviour. Such toys are:

- Guns and water pistols
- Action hero dress ups and figurines
- Power Rangers
- Cowboys and Indians
- Swords, plastic knives and laser swords

Toys of this nature are not permitted. Please discourage your child from bringing these to the program. Should your child have such toys, they will be made inaccessible to the children and returned to *parents at the end of the day*.

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS OR CONCERNS

It is our aim to provide a service that is of the highest standard and one that provides satisfaction to both child and parents. If you have ideas or would like to offer us any help, such as sharing a skill with the children, please speak to the Childcare Coordinator.

If you wish to discuss your child's progress in detail, please organize a time to speak to the Childcare Coordinator which is convenient to all concerned.

COMPLAINTS

If you have concerns about a situation in the Occasional Care Room, please speak to the Childcare Coordinator in the first instance. If you feel unable to approach the Childcare Coordinator, you should speak to the Centre Coordinator. Any and all concerns raised with the Childcare Coordinator or the Centre Coordinator will be:

- Recorded on a written proforma
- Dealt with as soon as practicable after the complaint/concern is raised
- and managed in a way that deals with the complaint/concern, while protecting the privacy of those involved.

All proformas will be signed off by the Committee of Management Childcare Liaison Officer.

If a resolution cannot be reached, or you are dissatisfied with the outcome, please feel free to contact the Lara Community Centre Committee of Management in writing at the address listed at the end of this document. All letters received by the Committee of Management must be dealt with in a timely manner and will be responded to in writing.

If you feel you need a more immediate response, you can request that a member of the Committee of Management contact you directly. In most instances this will be either the Childcare Liaison Officer or the Chairperson. You will need to give the Centre written

consent to provide your name and number to the Committee of Management on the appropriate form. These can be supplied by either the Child Coordinator or the Community Centre Coordinator.

Lara Community Centre Committee of Management must notify the Department of Human Services within 48 hours after a complaint is made to the service if the complaint alleges that:

- the health, safety or well being of any child within the children's service may have been compromised; or
- there may have been a contravention of the Act or the Regulations.

IMMUNISATION POLICY

Families are encouraged to keep their child's immunization up to date. If you are a conscientious objector to immunization, you will need to supply us with a letter stating this. Under all circumstances, any notifiable illness reported to staff will be reported to parents via notices on the entry door.

If your child has not been immunized against a particular disease that occurs at the centre, you will be required to keep your child at home to reduce the risk of them contracting the disease. Please see the table below.

In accordance with the Health Department regulations, children must also be excluded if they have any of the following infectious diseases:

Condition	Exclusion Of Cases	Exclusion Of Contacts
Amoebiasis (<i>Entamoeba histolytica</i>)	Exclude until diarrhoea has ceased	Not excluded
Campylobacter	Exclude until diarrhoea has ceased	Not excluded
Chicken Pox	Exclude until fully recovered or at least 5 days after the eruption first appears. <i>Note: Some remaining scabs are not an indication for continued exclusion</i>	Any child with an immune deficiency (eg leukaemia or receiving chemotherapy) should be excluded for their own protection, otherwise not excluded.
Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased.	Not excluded.
Diarrhoea	Exclude until diarrhoea has ceased or until medical certificate of recovery is produced.	Not excluded.
Diphtheria	Exclude until medical certificate of recover following at least 2 negative throat swabs, the first not less than 24 hours after cessation of antibiotic treatment and the other 48 hours later.	Exclude family household contacts until cleared to return by an appropriate health authority
Haemophilus type b (Hib)	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received	Not excluded
Hand, Foot and Mouth disease	Until all blisters have dried	Not excluded
Hepatitis A	Exclude until receipt of a medical certificate but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness.	Not excluded.
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.	Not excluded
Human Immunodeficiency Virus Infection (HIV/AIDS virus)	Exclusion is not necessary unless the child has secondary infection	Not excluded.
Impetigo (School sores)	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces are covered with a watertight dressing.	Not excluded.
Influenza and influenza like illnesses	Exclude until well	Not excluded
Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Secretary	Not excluded.
Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of the rash	Immunized contacts not excluded. Non-immunized contacts should be excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case. If non-immunized contacts are vaccinated with 72 hours of their first contact with the index case, they may return to school.
Meningitis (bacteria)	Exclude until well.	Not excluded.
Meningococcal infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed.	Not excluded if receiving carrier eradication therapy
Mumps	Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner)	Not excluded.
Poliomyelitis	Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Re-admit after receiving medical certificate of recovery	Not excluded.
Ringworm, Scabies, Pediculosis (head lice), Trachoma	Re-admit the day after appropriate treatment has commenced	Not excluded.
Rubella (German Measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least 4 days after the onset of rash.	Not excluded.
Salmonella, Shigella	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)	Exclude until medical certificate is produced	Not excluded unless considered appropriate by the Secretary.
Streptococcal infection (including Scarlet Fever)	Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well.	Not excluded.
Trachoma	Readmit the day after appropriate treatment has commenced	Not excluded
Tuberculosis	Exclude until receipt of a medical certificate from the treating physician stating that the child is not considered to be infectious	Not excluded
Typhoid fever (including Paratyphoid Fever)	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Secretary	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary
Verotoxin producing <i>Escherichian coli</i>	Exclude if required by the Secretary and only for the period specified by the Secretary	Not excluded
Whooping Cough (Pertussis)	Exclude for 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment.	Exclude unimmunized household contacts aged less than 7 years and close child care contacts for 14 days after the last exposure to infection or until they have taken 5 days of a 10 day course of antibiotics.
Worms (intestinal)	Exclude if diarrhoea present	Not excluded

Exclusion of cases and contacts is NOT required for Cytomegalovirus Infection, Glandular Fever (mononucleosis), Hepatitis B or C, Hookworm, Molluscum contagiosum or Parvovirus (erythema infectiosum fifth disease).

The above list is published by the Communicable Diseases Section, Victorian Government Department of Human Services – February 2004

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

In case of the need for the room to be evacuated in an emergency, emergency procedures are practiced and enacted by staff and children from time to time. This involves the safe evacuation of the room to designated areas. A copy of the Emergency Evacuation Procedure is posted on the wall in the Occasional Care Room.

HYGIENE PRACTICES AND POLICY

Staff and children's hands are washed after toileting, nappy changes, wiping noses, after contact with body fluids and before eating food and drinking. Disposable latex gloves will be available and are to be used when changing nappies, dealing with blood (from cuts, bleeding noses etc) and dealing with other bodily fluids. Change benches and mats will be cleaned with disinfectant after each use. Toilets, basins, door handles, taps, floors and table tops will be checked during the day and cleaned as necessary and always at the end of each session.

SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

Children with special needs, whether they are physical, intellectual, behavioural or of a different cultural background, will be warmly welcomed into the Occasional Care Room.

TOILET TRAINING

In consultation with individual families, children will be supported toward toilet training as they become developmentally able. Please discuss your child's needs with the staff.

CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

In accordance with Victorian law, qualified childcare workers are required by law to report cases of suspected child abuse/neglect to the relevant authorities. Our staff will make written notes of suspected child abuse/neglect and notify the Committee of Management. If a pattern emerges that causes concern for the child's welfare, the centre will seek advice from Child Protection Victoria.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

General:

All children will display behaviours that are not acceptable from time to time and it is the role of parents and caregivers to guide the children into acceptable behaviour patterns. Being 'naughty' is a normal part of learning and growing as children experiment and test limits. It is up to adults to make children aware of where those limits are and that what they are doing is not acceptable behaviour in a clear, consistent manner that does not give undue attention to a negative situation. As it is the nature of young children to crave attention, we must be aware of what we give attention for. If attention is always given to negative behaviour, but never to positive behaviour, negative behaviours will increase. However, if positive attention is given to 'good behaviour' on a regular basis, these behaviours will increase and the child's self esteem and wish to please will grow.

We understand that different families have different values and different ways of disciplining their children. The values that we have for children and the manner in which these will be promoted are based on our knowledge of child development theory and what is legally acceptable (eg: physical punishment of children is not legally acceptable).

Parents using the centre need to be aware of these values and guidance methods so that they feel happy to leave their children with us. This is not flexible and will be adhered to by Centre staff and management so that the safety and rights of all families and children are respected in a way that is consistent with theoretically sound practice in relation to young children and babies.

Unacceptable behaviours:

- Physically hurting other children or adults (eg: hitting, kicking, scratching, biting etc)
- Speaking to children or adults in an inappropriate manner (eg: swearing, demanding)
- Not following directions needed for smooth functioning of the group
- Being disruptive to other children's play

Methods of behaviour modification

- Positive guidance – phrasing remarks in terms of what we expect, rather than what we don't want. (eg: "I would like the sand to stay in the sand pit please", rather than "Don't throw sand out of the sand pit")
- Positive reinforcement of acceptable behaviour (eg: "I really like the way you are sitting quietly")
- Redirection of children displaying disruptive behaviour to another activity (eg: "come and try the blocks, do you think you can build me a big tower?")
- Firmly stating the limits
- Time out – If all else fails the child is removed from the group for a limited time, not as a punishment but as a means to help the child learn that their behaviour was not acceptable.

SOME USEFUL CONTACTS AND EMERGENCY NUMBERS

The Department of Human Services
Barwon- South Western Region
2nd Floor, State Government Offices
Cnr Lt Malop and Fenwick Streets
Geelong, 3220
P O Box 760, Geelong 3220

Telephone: 03 5226 4540
Facsimilie: 03 5226 4550

Lara Community Centre Inc.
P O Box 49
Lara, 3212
Telephone: 03 5282 2725
Facsimilie: 03 5282 4860

To be filed securely to ensure confidentiality is maintained.