COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

Parent Information Book

2015

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Welcome to Holy Spirit Community of Learners

We are delighted that you have chosen us to be partners in your child’s journey of lifelong learning. We take this partnership seriously and encourage you to be as involved as you can in our programme. The name “Community of Learners” we hope sends the message that we see everyone as being on the journey and actively involved as lifelong learners, constructing and reconstructing their knowledge and understandings of the world.

STAFF LIST

Principal/Director  Simon Duffy
Assistant Director  Adam Darcey
Coordinator COL  Bronwyn Tranter
Coordinator OSHC  Cherry Valenzuela
Early Childhood Educator  Wati Salam
Early Childhood Educator  Itabo Boitshwarelo
Early Childhood Assistant  Honghua Liu
Early Childhood Assistant  Alex Dwyer
Early Childhood Assistant  Felicity Gates
Early Childhood Assistant  Leah Middleton
Early Childhood Assistant  Luzia Oliveira Murdock
Library/Centrecalc  Kath Baylis
Finance Officer  Lee Mian Chong
Admin Officer  Yolanda Gray
Finance Officer  Alex Dwyer
Groundsperson  Yin Jongue
Canteen  Janine Wetherall
Being Belonging Becoming

The elements of Being, Belonging and Becoming are the foundations on which our philosophy rests. These three elements ensure that children are able to engage meaningfully in activities which enable them to fulfil their potential knowing that they are loved and valued for who they are.

We believe that as a staff we must work together, sharing knowledge and experience, for the best outcomes for our students.

We believe that children are confident, capable and encouraged learners, able to construct their own knowledge of the world around them.

We believe that learning is a lifelong process for everyone and that everyone has their own unique way of learning.

The rights of children as enshrined in the UN convention are important for all children. We work to ensure our children access their rights and we advocate and work for the rights of children everywhere, whenever possible.

We acknowledge the Larrakia people, past, present and future on whose land we play and learn together.

We believe in the importance of communication, teamwork and collaboration between staff and families and strive to form positive relationships.

Families

We believe families are the first and foremost educators of their children. We encourage families to be active participants in the centre. Through sharing of culture, ideas, knowledge, strengths and differences we develop a partnership which is critical and beneficial to the child's learning and development.

We believe that when we work alongside the children we are able to assist with the discovery of ideas and provide opportunities for learning and research with the children.

We believe that Educators, by being in the moment, are able to question, challenge and encourage children to explore meaning in what they do. Intentional teaching is then able to work well and are committed to undertaking professional development.

Working together

We believe that the environment acts as the third educator and what we provide reflects our beliefs about children and their learning. We strive to provide an environment which is inviting, inclusive, and rich in possibilities, one which reflects our family cultures, community and promotes respect whilst being challenging, safe and healthy.

We believe that nothing occurs in isolation, and the community in which we live and work has an important impact on our lives and those of the families and children. We strive to engage positively with our community.

Community
**Enrolment**

Long Day Care is available for children aged from two and a half to five years of age. Children attend on their specified days unless otherwise arranged with two-week warning period or in cases of emergency care. Permanent changes of enrolments may not be possible until vacancies occur. Public Holidays cannot be substituted for alternative days and are costed to the parent as the centre maintains only permanent bookings. An interview is conducted with each family (including the enrolling child) prior to admission at which time parents will complete all necessary documentation for enrolment.

### FEES

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fulltime</strong></td>
<td>$330.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Daily</strong></td>
<td>$75.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Fees are subject to change)

Payment policy requires that families pay a two weeks in advance amount. This serves as a bond and is cancelled out when a two week notice is given on cessation of the service. This requirement is a standard practice across childcare services.

All payments can be made at the front office of the school.

Please contact the Finance Officer as soon as possible if there are any difficulties meeting payment commitments.

**Hours of operation**

The Community of Learners operates from 7.00am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday excluding public holidays. The centre also closes for two weeks over the Christmas holiday period. Please see staff for details on these dates.

**Child Care Benefit:**

Everyone is entitled to some benefits. Please collect forms from the office or Centrelink.

**Allowable Absences:**

Each child is entitled to forty two allowable absences per year (inclusive of public holidays). These days can be used as holidays or just days off. Unlimited allowable absences exist for sick days with a doctor’s certificate. For more information please contact the Finance Officer or Centrelink.

**Sick Days:**

If your child is sick, please contact the Centre. A doctor’s certificate is required in order to use an unlimited allowable absence. Please bring this certificate in on the first day your child returns to care.
**Holidays:**
Written notification of holidays is required at least two (2) weeks in advance to assist us with staffing and food arrangements. Holidays may only be taken in a 1 (one) week block or more. Regular fees will apply if notice is late or not given, otherwise parents will be charged a holding fee of 75% for a maximum of 3 weeks. A holiday request form will need to be submitted.

**Change of Booking:**
Written notification is required at least two (2) weeks in advance. Families wishing to change their booked days must complete a Change of Bookings form. If this request is unable to be accommodated you will be notified.

**End of Care:**
Written notification is required at least two (2) weeks, or more, prior to the child’s last day. Families wishing to end care at the Community of Learners must complete an End of Care form. If your child is leaving the Service to attend Transition at Holy Spirit School, a school enrolment form must be completed and given to the school office before your child may begin the school year. You will still need to inform the Assistant Director in writing via email. Enrolment at the Community of Learners does not guarantee a place at the school. Normal interview processes will apply.

**Written Notification:**
Written notification is required 2 weeks in advance to change your booking, end care and request holidays. There are forms that families are required to submit which are available in the centre or on the school website. These can be submitted to the centre staff, front office or by email.

**Arrival and Pick Up:**
To ensure that children arrive and depart safely and happily we ask that:
1. Children are always escorted to a staff member on arrival.
2. Parents acknowledge the child’s arrival and departure with a staff member.
3. Parents must sign children in and out on the sign in/out register each day. (Failure to sign in and out may preclude you from accessing benefits of the service)

**Late Fees:**

Please note that if you are late picking up your child, the Centre reserves the right to charge a late fee.

**Flat Fee of $50 plus an additional $1 per minute**
POLICY STATEMENT ON PROFESSIONALISM

The quality of care for children, good relationships among educators, the confidence of parents and the reputation of the Service all depend on the professional attitude and behaviour of the educators and management. This policy aims to provide clear guidance to educators about the standards the Service requires as a condition of employment. (Refer to policy)

POLICY STATEMENT ON COMMUNICATION

All staff shall foster an atmosphere in which parents feel free to outline a grievance in the knowledge that they will be dealt with fairly and sympathetically. It is essential that matters be investigated until the complainant is satisfied with the outcome.

1. Discuss the problem with a staff member or the Assistant Director.
2. If this is unsatisfactory make an appointment to speak with the Director.
3. If the problem still hasn’t been resolved write the grievance down in letter form to the Director.
4. The complainant may also choose to contact Quality Education and Care NT (08) 8999 3541 (Refer to policy)

POLICY STATEMENT ON HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Holy Spirit Community of Learners aims to provide a healthy and safe environment in which children can play and explore their world free from harm. All people in the Community will follow relevant policies at all times.

Community of Learners does not have facilities for nappy changing. Children should be already toilet trained however we can easily accommodate the occasional accident or the requirements of children with special needs/circumstances. (Refer to policy)

Head Lice

Head Lice are tiny animals, smaller than fleas, which transfer easily from one person to another in situations where people are in close contact. The lice lay eggs (nits) which adhere to strands of hair, particularly hair on the back of the neck and behind the ears.

Some facts:

- Lice do not jump from one head to another.
- While occasional and infrequent episodes do not pose a health risk, recurrent or prolonged attacks may cause local skin and gland infection.
- Clean people get head lice.
- Children are not the only ones who become infested. If one family member is affected, others in the family are likely to be infested too.
- Hair does not need to be cut short to aid the eradication. All the action is on the scalp.
It is a parent responsibility to treat head lice. Due to the fact that Territory Health Services has now declared nit infestation to be health risk, Principals have the authority to exclude children with infestations from school until scalp treatment has taken place.

If your child has head lice, a note will be sent home with your child. Please do not get embarrassed, this is normal procedure and when treatment is complete your child can return to school.

Keep your child/ren’s hair clean and tie long hair back while at school. (Refer to policy)

**POLICY STATEMENT ON POSITIVE GUIDANCE OF CHILDREN’S BEHAVIOUR**

Our basic approach to behaviour management is one of respect for the child. Positive encouragement, redirection and reasoning will be used to help develop appropriate behaviours. Correcting behaviour will always be appropriate to the developmental level of the child. Behaviour guidance and management strategies will be framed in positive language to enhance the child’s self esteem, encouraging the children to believe that acceptance does not depend on their behaviour.

The environment will be arranged so that behavioural problems can be minimised by:

- Ensuring that an adequate number of toys/equipment and stimulating experiences are available, to avoid misuses and conflict.
- Ensuring the activity is supervised adequately, and it is developmentally and age appropriate
- Ensuring that there is convenient storage available so that the children may easily assist with activity selection and packing up.
- Ensuring that there is a balance of quiet and active spaces for indoor and outdoor play.

Major incidents of inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with in consultation with the parents.

**Major incidents may include:**

- Inappropriate language behaviour or actions (includes biting)
- Bullying, harassment/teasing
- Damage to property
- Disrespecting staff
- Creating unsafe environment for self or others.

‘Time With’ is put in place for a short period of time to be specified by the staff member present. Children may be required to sit in a space away from the group with a staff member who assists them to find alternative and more acceptable actions. It may be appropriate for the child to decide when he/she is ready to return to the group.

If the safety of other children/staff is put at risk or if behaviours cannot be managed on the floor without disrupting and/or upsetting other children, a child may be referred for extra assistance. This step is a last resort and parents will be contacted to discuss the behaviours and to explore a positive way forward. (Refer to policy)
Changes to Information:
Please contact the front office if any personal details change so that our information data is correct.

Medicine Administration:
If your child requires medication, the medicine register must be completed and signed by the parent. Once the medication has been administered, the staff member doing so will sign to indicate that it has been carried through. A second staff member will check that the dosage is correct and also sign. This procedure is to be completed on a daily basis, even if medication is to be administered for more than one day. The medication must be in the original named container. If your child has an ongoing medical condition such as severe allergies, asthma or diabetes, then a medical management plan will need to be provided by your child’s doctor. Please ask staff for clarification as to whether this may apply to your child. If the medication is prescriptive, please ensure that the container is clearly marked with the doctor’s instructions. All medication is locked away from the children. (Refer to policy)

Accidents/Incidents:
Staff members record any accidents on an Accident/Incident form. If your child has been hurt during the day, you will be asked to sign this document at the end of the day, so that you are aware of any incident involving your child throughout the day. If necessary, you will be contacted to collect your child. If you cannot be contacted, your emergency contacts will be called. If they are unable to be contacted, we may seek medical attention for your child. If necessary any medical expenses incurred will be the parent/carer responsibility.

All major incidents will be reported to parents when they collect their child. As a courtesy we now phone all parents if their child has sustained a head injury.

Sick Children:
Please do not send your child to the centre if they are unwell. The Director reserves the right to send home or refuse attendance to any child who is considered too unwell to attend, or whose illness may affect the health of other children. In cases where a sudden illness occurs, or where the Director considers a child to be showing signs of infectious or contagious diseases (e.g. mumps, measles, chicken pox, impetigo etc) the parent will be notified immediately and asked to collect their child. (Please refer to guidelines for exclusion periods in back of this Handbook)These decisions are made reference to the relevant policy. (Refer to policy)

POLICY STATEMENT ON HEALTHY EATING

Healthy food is an important element of our care for your child/ren. Menus provided by the Community of Learner’s are scrutinised as part of our Assessment and Rating process by Quality Education and Care NT.

As we have a number of children with severe food allergies, it is important that children do not bring food into the centre. If your child requires breakfast please ensure that a staff member knows so they may assist your child. Breakfast sets the tone for your child’s day so please ensure it is low in sugar and is consistent with our healthy eating model.
It is important that as a provider of long-day care that we model for the students healthy eating. All food during the day is provided by our canteen. Additional snacks will not be required.

**Special celebrations:**
Celebration food can be sent in on the day of your child/ren's birthday or other special event. Parents of children with food allergies are welcome to provide alternative food which will be frozen so that these children do not miss out on special occasions.

**Sleep/Rest Times:**
Sleep times are scheduled for children who still require an afternoon sleep. If a child requests a sleep it will be allowed. Please advise the staff of your child’s needs in this regard. (Refer to policy)

**Assessment and Reporting to Parents:**
Reporting to parents is an ongoing process and you are welcome to talk to the staff at any time about your child/ren’s progress. Folios of work are kept as an ongoing process and you are welcome to peruse these at any time. Parent Information evenings are held 2 times a year which provides a more formal opportunity for you to discuss your child/ren’s progress. These may be arranged at any stage by making an appointment to speak to the Assistant Director.

**POLICY STATEMENT ON CLOTHING**
Uniforms are available at the front office but these are an optional item and are not compulsory. A spare change of clothes, hat and shoes need to be provided each day. It is important that your child wears comfortable clothing that offers sun protection when outside. Ideally this clothing will allow your child to participate in climbing and running activities as well as getting messy. Hats are compulsory when the children are playing outside. Safe footwear is important. (See below) Remember to mark all clothing and shoes with your child’s name. (Refer to policy)

**Safe Footwear**
Children need to wear suitable footwear whilst attending the Community of Learners. Thongs, slip on shoes or shoes that have a heel are not suitable for the type of activities that our children engage in. The children participate in activities where they are running, balancing, jumping etc. Please check the shoes, sandals that your child currently uses and ensure that they arrive in footwear that will allow them to participate in the range of activities that may occur on any particular day. If footwear is unsafe staff will be required to ring you and request immediate provision of appropriate footwear. Remember to mark footwear with your child’s name.

**CHILD PROTECTION/ MANDATORY REPORTING. CONFIDENTIALITY**
Any person who believes, on reasonable grounds, that a child is suffering (or has suffered) maltreatment is required to report this fact to either an officer from Family and Children’s Services (FACS) or a member of the Police Force. Failure to comply with these provisions of the Community Welfare Act can result in a penalty. This service refers to the Catholic Education Council Policy Statement Policy and procedures for the identification and notification of child abuse and neglect.
Every employee, management committee member and member of the operating body is provided with clear written guidelines/legislation detailing what information is to be kept confidential, what confidential information they may have in order to fulfil their responsibilities, how this information may be accessed and who has a legal right to know particular information.

Confidential conversations that educators have with parents, or the Director/Coordinator has with educators, will be conducted quietly away from others. (Refer to policy)

**POLICY STATEMENT ON CHILDREN'S PROGRAM**

All children attending Holy Spirit Community of Learners will be given first hand experiences to actively explore and learn. The routines and activities will be based on each individual child's interests, abilities and needs. The Community of Learners Centre provides a safe and stimulating environment, where children learn through play. A balanced, developmentally appropriate and challenging program focusing on the areas of physical, intellectual, creative, social and emotional potential will be available for every child's participation daily. Children will be actively involved in program planning, implementation and evaluation processes when appropriate. (Refer to policy)

**EMERGENCY OR DISASTER POLICY**

Emergency evacuation procedures will be clearly displayed near the telephone and are to be followed in the event of fire, natural disaster or other emergency. You are welcome to make yourself familiar with them.

Safety and evacuation drills involving educators and children will be at least once every three months when most children are present. If you are present please follow the direction of the senior staff member. All alarms must be treated as real and responded to immediately. (Refer to policy)

**Sign in and out sheets**

Signing children in and out of the Centre is a daily requirement. Accurate attendance records need to be kept and checked each day. Your child must be signed in at the beginning of the day and then signed out when they are collected. The sign in book is used in case of emergencies and staff are not accountable for children who have not been signed in. It is also used for record keeping purposes, to ensure that your entitlements are kept up to date.

Failure to sign in may jeopardise your enrolment at the service. Failure to sign out will necessitate a staff member ringing to confirm the child has been taken by a parent as this has now been mandated by Children's Services. (Refer to policy)

**Daily Routine**

Our Community of Learners day has three breaks, morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. At these times children are expected to gather, prepare for and participate in the social interaction offered by meal times.

Planned activities are offered and supervised in keeping with children’s current interest or to maybe provoke an interest. Areas of interest inside may include the library area, home corner/dramatic play area, transport, block construction and quiet, soft areas. Outside areas also provide opportunities for creative and dramatic play as well as art and physical activities. These areas are changed regularly for variety or to follow programme themes.
There is opportunity for children who need a rest to sleep after lunch. For these children mattresses, a quiet area and supervision are provided. (Refer to policy)

**Sun Smart Policies**
All children will apply sunscreen 20 minutes before they go out to morning play and it will be reapplied in the afternoon. Many thanks to all those parents who are applying the sunscreen before their child come to the centre. If your child has an allergy to sunscreen or you do not want sunscreen applied, please advise us in writing so that your child/ren’s file can be updated with this information. (Refer to policy)

**Sick room**
Children who are unwell and whose parents are unable to be contacted may taken to the sick room. Office staff will monitor and supervise the child, until parents are contacted. (Refer to policy)

**Cyclone Procedure**
In the event of an official announcement of school closure due to imminent cyclone threat, children must be collected by parents. Children must be ‘signed out’ when picked up. Children not collected within 60 mins will be supervised in the staff room for a further period of time and if parents are still not contactable they will be taken to the nearest shelter, which is at Dripstone High School. (Refer to policy)

**Community of Learners Operating Plan**
The Community has an Operating Plan available for your perusal in the School Office and the Centre. It is a large document and some of the policy statements are already in the booklet. Please feel free to look through this or take it home to read. If you can’t see it, ask a staff member and they will locate a copy for you.
### Infectious Diseases (time out or not)

The following table will give an indication of the exclusion period for common infectious diseases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease or Condition</th>
<th>Exclusion from school</th>
<th>Exclusion of people in contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bronchitis</strong></td>
<td>Exclude until the person has been treated and feels well</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chickenpox and Shingles</strong></td>
<td>Exclude until all lesions have crusted, there are not moist sores and the person feel well.</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Common cold</strong></td>
<td>Exclusion is not necessary</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conjunctivitis</strong></td>
<td>Exclude during the acute stage of the infection readmit when discharge has ceased.</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glandular Fever</strong></td>
<td>Exclusion not necessary</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Head lice</strong></td>
<td>Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced.</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impetigo (school sores)</strong></td>
<td>Readmit when sores fully healed or treatment is applied and exposed sore are fully covered with occlusive dressings</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measles</strong></td>
<td>Exclude from non-immunised persons for at least four days after the onset of the rash or until a medical certificate or recover is produced. A modifiable disease, suspected cases must be seen by a doctor to confirm diagnosis.</td>
<td>Immunised contacts should be excluded appearance of rash. If non-immunised contacts after seventy -two hours may return to school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meningococcal meningitis</strong></td>
<td>Exclude until well</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mumps</strong></td>
<td>Exclude for nine days or until selling goes down (whichever is sooner)</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>Exclusion Policy</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ringworm</td>
<td>Readmit when exposed areas are treated and covered with dressing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rubella (German measles)</td>
<td>Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of the rash.</td>
<td>Not excluded. Female staff of child-bearing age should ensure that their immune status against rubella is adequate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whooping cough</td>
<td>Should be excluded for two weeks from onset of illness or after taking antibiotics for five days and until medical certificate stating that the child is no longer infectious.</td>
<td>Exclude non-immunised contact under five years from school for fourteen days or until they have been on antibiotic treatment for at least five days of a minimum fourteen-day course of antibiotics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worms</td>
<td>Exclusion not necessary</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

This list is not comprehensive. If you require additional information contact the Office.