CHILDREN’S CENTRE

Information for Parents and Community Members
Welcome to Woodcroft Heights Children’s Centre.
We hope the information in this booklet will provide a useful overview of our centre programs and routines.

Statements of Vision, Purpose and Philosophy

Our Vision

We are a welcoming, innovative and inclusive service where young children, families and community members wonder, explore, create and develop knowledge and skills so that children reach their full potential in learning, health and wellbeing.

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to support positive lifelong learning and wellbeing outcomes for children through, leading and delivering accessible high quality integrated health, education and family services which are derived from community needs, are built upon genuine family and community partnerships and are delivered in a welcoming, happy and safe environment which has children at the centre of all policies, practices and processes.

Our Philosophy

In relation to children we believe that:
Each child is unique and brings with them knowledge and life experiences as an active citizen in different family and community contexts
Each child is a competent learner with personal strengths
All children have a right to equity of access to services and an environment free of discrimination.

In relation to children’s learning and wellbeing we believe that:
Children have a right to play as a process and context for learning
Children’s learning is holistic and is best supported in a constructivist learning environment which builds on the knowledge and experiences of children, and allows time for extended exploration and problem solving
Children’s emotional development and learning dispositions, such as curiosity, resilience and optimism are important attributes for achieving optimal lifelong outcomes
Children have a right to safe, healthy environments which encourage engagement in learning, provide challenge, promote self worth and initiative and show respect for the contributions they bring
Children have a right to be happy and have fun
A continuous cycle of planning, implementation, reflection and review must inform program development.

In relation to families we believe that:
Families are a child’s first and most influential educators
Each family is unique and that differing family customs, structures, beliefs and cultures are worthy of understanding and respect
Positive relationships with families which promote open communication and mutual trust support children’s learning and wellbeing
Building learning communities which recognise and utilise the strengths and competencies of families promotes genuine partnerships and positive learning and wellbeing outcomes for individual and the community as a whole.
In relation to community we believe that:
We have a responsibility to develop knowledge of the context of our local community as this is critical to the development of responsive programs and services
Building positive partnerships and connections between professionals, community members, families and children supports the delivery of integrated service delivery to benefit children and families
A ‘no wrong door’ approach to our service delivery supports children’s right to access to services
Continuously seeking to build and enhance the capacity of the whole community is important to maximising learning and wellbeing outcomes for children.

In relation to colleagues we believe that:
All staff have a responsibility to build collaborative relationships through fostering open communication, a culture of respect, support and professionalism
Continual reflection, sharing of knowledge, experience and resources to build capacity of all service providers are critical to maximising opportunities for children
Taking time to celebrate, have fun and recognise achievements builds strong healthy teams to optimise service delivery.

In relation to professionalism we believe that:
All members of the community have a right to experience a welcoming environment in which staff interact with all in a positive ethical manner, present with a professional personal appearance, respect confidentiality, and demonstrate reliability
Organisational and our centre goals and policies should drive and be evident in our day to day practice
Grievances should be accepted and acted upon
Advocacy for high quality universally available early childhood programs and child friendly environments is a part of the role of our professional staff team.

In relation to Professional Learning and Development we believe that:
Building new knowledge and capacity amongst our whole community is at the heart of strengthening our service delivery and developing innovative practices to improve outcomes for children
Our staff team must demonstrate a commitment to expanding their knowledge and skills, participating in research, embracing and acting upon new learning and contributing to the expansion of knowledge amongst the broader early childhood community
All research and professional development must be undertaken in an ethical manner.
INTRODUCTION
Woodcroft Heights Children’s Centre is a dynamic, well resourced early childhood centre with an expanding range of education, care, family, community and health programs and services which support the needs of families and young children.

Our dedicated staff work in close partnership with families and a range of government, non-government and community agencies to provide programs which nurture and support healthy development and promote positive learning and life outcomes for all children. Our aim is to support children’s development by delivering programs built on strong relationships and in which the right of children to learn through play is paramount. Services available include preschool, occasional care, playgroups, and a range of health services and family and community programs.

Woodcroft Heights Children’s Centre is conveniently located next to Woodcroft Primary School. This location promotes easy access to our services for families and also supports professional collaborative relationships between staff, allowing for regular sharing of ideas and resources to support continuity of learning and development for children, families and staff.

Volunteers are very welcome and are highly valued in our centre. Parents, community members and local organisations are invited to share in all aspects of the life of our centre to enrich the programs and experiences available to children.

We warmly welcome you to our community and invite you to be involved with the ongoing development of our centre.

STAFF TEAM
Our staff team is led by our Director.

Our preschool team includes Early Childhood Teachers and Early Childhood Workers who work closely with preschool support staff to maximise learning opportunities for all children, including those with a range of additional needs. Bilingual workers also complement our regular preschool staffing entitlement and provide valuable support for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Our occasional care staff coordinate our vibrant occasional care program for children from birth to 4 years. Our Occasional Care team work in an integrated manner with our preschool team.

Our Community Development Coordinator provides leadership in the development and implementation of a range of health, family and community services to support the needs of children and families in the Woodcroft area.

Our Family Services Coordinator provides short term counselling to families and children, advocates for service provision based on identified community needs and facilitates a range of programs to support parents to build their confidence and skills in raising their children. The Family Services Coordinator works in close collaboration with staff and volunteers from a range of government and non-government agencies.

Allied health staff are also employed at the centre. A part-time Speech Pathologist and Occupational Therapist work to build the capacity of staff, parents and carers at the centre through:

- staff consultation and training on topics such as sensory processing and strategies for assisting children with behavioural, emotional and sensory regulation, resource development, screening, assessments and programming assistance

- parenting groups, parent consultation, referrals and distribution of resources to assist children with toileting, feeding, play, speech and language skills.

Our Administration Officer provides administration support across all centre programs.
NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK - POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Our preschool program is regulated by the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011. Under Regulation 168, all preschools must have a number of designated policies and procedures.

Some of these policies apply generally to all preschool settings across Australia. Others, whilst aligned to the nationally mandated policies, are specific for our local context (and are highlighted later in this booklet).

Policies required are listed below:

Health and safety policies and procedures – National Quality Area 2
- Nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements
- Sun protection
- Water safety
- Administration of first aid
- Incident, injury, trauma and illness
- Dealing with infectious diseases
- Dealing with medical conditions
- Emergency and evacuation
- Delivery and collection of children
- Excursions
- Child protection

Staffing arrangements – National Quality Area 4
- Code of conduct
- Determining the responsible person present
- Participation of volunteers and students

Relationships with children – National Quality Area 5
- Interactions with children (Behaviour support)

Service management – National Quality Area 7
- Enrolment
- Orientation
- Acceptance and refusal of authorisations
- Payment of fees
- Prescribed information to meet NQF requirements

INFORMATION PRIVACY AND INFORMATION SHARING STATEMENTS

The Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) is committed to respecting the confidentiality of information provided by children/students and parents.

There will be occasions where sharing information with others outside DECD will be important to your child’s educational progress, safety or wellbeing. In these circumstances, DECD follows the SA Government’s Information Sharing: Guidelines for promoting the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and families.

Details about these statements are outlined on the front page of our preschool enrolment form. Parents/Guardians are asked to sign this page as part of our enrolment process.
**PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM/PROGRAM**

The national Early Years Learning Framework, ‘Belonging, Being and Becoming’, which was developed as part of the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care is used by centre staff as a basis for curriculum delivery at our centre. This framework has a specific emphasis on play-based learning. When children play, they learn about themselves, other people and the world around them. They develop their ability to communicate, develop and practise physical skills, and they learn to solve a multitude of problems. The Early Years Learning Framework recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development for all young children. An outline of our centre program is always displayed in the centre.

**LIBRARY VISITS**

As part of our preschool programme children visit the Woodcroft Primary School Resource centre on a weekly basis. Children are able to borrow books during these visits. Books can be borrowed for one week at a time. Children who wish to borrow books need a cloth library bag separate from their regular kindergarten bag to ensure that books are well protected.

**PRESCHOOL FEES**

Fees per term (2016)

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Fees can be paid by cash, cheque or direct credit into the centre bank account

Preschool sessions are run as follows:

**GROUP 1**

- Monday 8.50 – 3.00pm
- Tuesday 8.50 – 3.00pm
- Wednesday 12.20 – 3.00pm

**GROUP 2**

- Wednesday 8.50 – 11.30am
- Thursday 8.50 – 3.00pm
- Friday 8.50 – 3.00pm

**NOTICEBOARDS**

A range of pamphlets on a diverse range of topics are available in the main entry foyer of our centre. A Pin-up board located at the close main entry door to the preschool also contains information about a wide variety of courses, events and services available within the centre and local community. Parents are encouraged to take time to read these regularly. General reminders and information about current and up coming events is often posted on main entry doors. If you are looking for information on a topic that is not displayed on these boards, please ask the staff.

**SUNSMART**

The Centre has adopted a ‘sunsmart’ policy. All kindergarten and occasional care children need a ‘sunsmart’ legionnaire style, ‘bucket’ or wide brimmed hat for outdoor play. If children do not have a hat as recommended by the Cancer Council, they are asked to play inside or under the verandah areas.

The Cancer Council SA recommends that people protect their skin at times when UV radiation level is 3 and above. For much of South Australia, UV radiation levels are 3 and above every day from September to April. Parents/guardians are encouraged to apply sunscreen to children before bringing them to preschool sessions. When children attend a preschool program for more than half a day staff will support and assist them to apply sunscreen (to their face, neck and limbs) in terms 1, 3 and 4 during the day and as indicated in term 2. All sunscreen made available for children by the Children’s Centre is recommended by the Cancer Council SA (generally ‘Kids Sunscreen SPF50+’ – a gentle fragrance free product)
PRESCHOOL SNACKS, LUNCH AND DRINKS
Children need to bring two healthy snacks (e.g. fruit, cheese or a healthy sandwich) and a packed lunch during their full day sessions. Children need one healthy snack on their half day preschool session or occasional care session. A healthy snack is also encouraged for those attending playgroup, with a shared ‘fruit time’ occurring in each group. A number of foods including all barlins, yoghurts, custards, canned fruits, lollies, chocolate, cakes or sweet biscuits are ‘non recommended’ for snack time. Parents are requested not to send food containing nuts or eggs to ensure the safety of children who have anaphylactic reactions to these foods.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT
Parents bring a wide variety of skills to our centre and we are always eager for you to share your talents with us. If you are able to undertake a task at home (e.g. preparing craft activities) or you would like to assist in the centre during the day – perhaps while your child is attending a preschool session - please talk with the staff at any time. If you are interested in being a part of our Governing Council please come along to one of our monthly meetings. The Governing Council plays a key role in the development and implementation of strategic directions and general management of the Centre. Parent volunteers provide leadership and coordination of all of our family playgroups and a number of specialist support groups. We are always welcome to new ideas from families about groups which could provide support and be beneficial to them and the wider community.

ADDITIONAL NEEDS
As a DECD service, the preschool is able to access assessment and support services for children with a range of additional needs (e.g. Speech Pathology). Although there may be a waiting period for these services, they are offered at no cost, so please speak with staff if you have concerns at any time about your child’s development. Our Family Services Coordinator can provide immediate counselling support to families if needed.

SCHOOL DENTAL SERVICE
Dental services are available to preschool children through the school dental service. The closest clinic to Woodcroft Heights Children’s Centre is currently located at the GP Plus Super Clinic.
SA Dental Service Noarlunga
2 Alexander Kelly Drive
Noarlunga Centre, SA 5168
Ph: 83849244
Open Monday - Friday: 8.30am - 4.30pm
After hours emergency advice: Health Care Direct 1800 022 222
Services are provided at no cost to toddler and preschool children and to school age children who are dependants of, or holders of Health Care Cards, Pension Concession Cards or School Cards. A fee is charged for each course of care for all other primary school children.

OCCASIONAL CARE
DECD Occasional Care services are child care services for children under school age in community-based locations, including DECD preschools. Occasional Care provides ‘now and then’ child care to enable parents/caregivers to participate in activities, fulfil work commitments, keep appointments, or have a break from their child/ren on an occasional basis rather than as a regular booking in a long day care centre. Occasional Care sessions operate alongside of regular preschool sessions. All fees MUST be paid on entry to each session. There are two fee structures: $1.50 for the first child for families who have a current Health Care Concession Card and $5.00 for families not eligible for concession. Second and subsequent children attending in the same week are charged at half the cost for the first child.

Sessions are currently offered on Monday and Tuesday afternoons; and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings for children over 2 years of age. Sessions are offered for children under 2 years Tuesday mornings.

Sessions are currently offered:

Children Over 2 years of age

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<tr>
<td>Mondays</td>
<td>12.10 – 03.10pm</td>
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<td>Thursdays</td>
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PLAYGROUPS
Family playgroups are held at the centre on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays. A small fee is payable each week; $3.50. These programs are coordinated by parent volunteers. Targeted playgroups for children and families with additional support needs are also held at the Centre.

CaFHS HEALTH CHECKS AND PARENT SUPPORT
CaFHS staff provide regular clinics at our centre to enable families to access breast feeding support and developmental health checks for their children. For more information or to book an appointment please ring 1300 733 606 between 9.00am – 4.30pm Monday – Friday. Self weigh facilities are available at the centre during preschool hours. A six week ‘Getting to Know Your Baby’ program is regularly held at the centre for new parents and their babies. Please ring 8392 8900 if you would like further information or would like to book into a course.

PARENT SUPPORT AND PARENTING PROGRAMS
A range of family support services and programs and courses are offered each term. Information is available at the centre about programs currently available. Programs including Circle of Security, Bringing Up Great Kids and Tuning into Kids are regularly offered at the centre.

QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS
We all expect quality and expert family support, care and teaching for your child/ren in order that they achieve their potential. Working together will give us the best chance of solving a problem that may arise during the time you and child/ren attend programs at our centre.
We recognise that at times things may go wrong. If you have a concern or a complaint, we want you to let us know. It’s important to learn from mistakes or misunderstandings so that we can improve experiences and learning opportunities for your family and your child/ren and also improve processes where possible.
The first step in working through a complaint is to talk to one of our teaching staff or program coordinators (if an issue relates to one of our community programs (eg Playgroup), and then the Director if you still are not happy.
A copy of our Parent Guide to Raising a Concern or Complaint brochure is available in our New Parent Information pack or from the Director. Steps guiding how complaints should be made are explained in the brochure. Use this guide to help you think through what you are concerned about and how to resolve the matter respectfully and effectively.

About complaints or concerns
This information may be helpful in explaining what a complaint is:

- A complaint may be made by a parent if they think that the centre has, for example: done something wrong or failed to do something it should have done or acted unfairly or impolitely.
- Your concern or complaint may be about: the type, level or quality of services or the behaviour and decisions of staff or a policy, procedure or practice.

Sometimes a complaint is about something we have to do because of state or federal law. In such cases we are able to talk to you about the matter and help you understand the requirements and why they exist.

If you’d like more information please ring the centre on 8381 8005 or come and ask to speak with the Director. You can also visit the department’s website at www.decd.sa.gov.au/parentcomplaint or email DECD.parentcomplaint@sa.gov.au. There is also a Freecall number 1800 677 435.