



# Parent Handbook

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### **PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT**

We are a 70 place long day education and care service with an integrated sessional kindergarten program. We are managed by a committee of parents and operate as a not for profit organisation.

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation as the traditional custodians of the land we learn and work on today. We extend our respect to Elders past, present and future and extend that respect to all the diverse cultures whose heritage enriches our community today.

Our safe, secure learning environments are based on an indoor/outdoor program with specialist classes in music and physical education available.

We have been endorsed by the Victorian Government's Healthy Together program, including Sunsmart practices and a seasonal menu with a focus on locally sourced ingredients.

Brenbeal's approach to Early Childhood education is underpinned by the Early Years Learning Framework, the National Quality Standards, Code of Ethics and contemporary early childhood theorists. Our vision is to provide children with the opportunities for learning in all areas of development, to foster a love of learning and to achieve their full potential.

Brenbeal strives to support children in the ways they connect with the natural environment to promote sustainable practices and broaden their understanding of the world and their place in it.

We understand that nurturing, trusting relationships are crucial to children's development and we actively support children's emerging and ongoing friendships both with educators and other children alike.

High quality learning is crafted with care by our educators to teach problem solving, reflective thinking and to explore diverse ways of becoming, being and belonging. We recognise the importance of the outdoor teacher and children's own learning styles and stages of development, as we view children as active participants in their own education.

Children's learning is made visible through reflective journals, individual and group observations and twice yearly assessments. Rich learning experiences are provided in areas of language and literature, visual arts, music and movement, dramatic and imaginative play, positive mental health, emotional and spiritual wellbeing. This is balanced with the children's right to childhood and having the time to just 'be'.

At Brenbeal the children, families and educators work in partnerships as a learning community. Unique family values and culture are respected to provide everyone with a sense of belonging.

We support families in their parenting and thread the wider community together through connections with other local families, specialist services and transitioning to other schools.

### **HISTORY**

Brenbeal is a Koori word meaning "rainbow". The name was adopted in 1993 when the service opened providing care and education for 35 long day care places with Sessional Kindergarten. The Service is now licensed for 70 places.

### **A WORD FROM THE SERVICE MANAGER/ASSISTANT MANAGER**

Welcome to Brenbeal! Our Service takes pride in providing 'hands on' experiences where children are encouraged to explore, take initiatives and are involved in decision making about their own learning.

We are unique and our management is determined to fulfill its obligation as a high quality service in early childhood. We promote and evaluate the holistic development of children using our Service.

We consider it a privilege to manage a staff team who share our passion in building and developing partnerships with our families. In choosing Brenbeal, you entrust your child to us and therefore have a right to know about and to influence the kind of care that your child receives.

We would like to encourage families to ask questions and raise concerns about the service's practices with staff and/or management.

We look forward to your association, support and contribution to our service.

***Krystyna Soprun***  
**MANAGER**

***Maggie Zhao***  
**ASSISTANT MANAGER**

### **OUR TEAM**

Our most valuable resource within the service is the team of dedicated professionals who have a range of qualifications and experience in working with young children.

Our staff value and respect all children. They are able to identify and respond to individual children's developmental and learning needs.

The required adult/child ratio as per the Children's Services Regulations will always be maintained, often above ratio.

Regular relief staff are employed to provide continuity and stability for children, staff and families.

Many of our staff members speak other languages as well as English.

These languages may include Chinese, Vietnamese, Polish, Japanese,  
Please check with the Manager/Assistant Manager.

### **MANAGEMENT OF BRENBEAL CHILDREN'S CENTRE**

The building and grounds are owned by the City of Maribyrnong, with Brenbeal leasing the facilities. The day to day operations are managed by the Management Committee who consist of parent volunteers.

Our Service is managed by the community, meaning the families and educators share the responsibility for the quality of care we provide for the children and management of the Service. The Management Committee meets monthly at the Service (after hours).

We also have various subcommittees which oversee matters relating to the Service. Our current subcommittees include:-

- Communications
- Health and Wellbeing
- Facilities and Sustainability
- Fundraising and Social

There are four office bearers elected from the main committee. These positions are Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.

The committee is elected each year at the Annual General Meeting.

## **MANAGEMENT OF BRENBEAL CHILDREN'S CENTRE (cont)**

The Management Committee is:-

- Responsible for the effective implementation of quality child care for the community
- Responsible and accountable to the parents, families and children using this service
- Accountable to the Regulatory Authority, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to ensure that licensing standards and regulations are being met
- Responsible to the staff team to ensure that fair and consistent employment practices are being met, including awards and legislations.

All families are encouraged to join the Management Committee or any of our subcommittees. Becoming involved within the Committee of Management or subcommittees can be a very rewarding job. Not only do you get to network with other parents, you also get to have your say in the day to day running of your child's care and education service.

If you think you may be interested in joining our Committee or would like more information, please speak to the Manager/ Assistant Manager or Chairperson of the Committee.

***(Please see Governance and Management of the Service Policy included in Enrolment Pack)***

### **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Brenbeal Children's Centre is open Monday to Friday 7.30am to 6.30pm. We close for 1-2 weeks over Christmas / New Year.

There is a closure for an additional 2 days per year for Professional Development Days for the staff team.

***During the closures and Public Holidays, there is no charge to families.***

### **STRUCTURE OF THE ROOMS**

Brenbeal Children's Centre provides Long Day Care. The children are cared for in different age groupings:-

3 months – 2 years	<b>Wallert Room</b>	10 children (3 educators)
18 months – 2 ½ years	<b>Bunjil Room</b>	10 children (3 educators)
2 years – 3 ½ years	<b>Bullen Bullen Room</b>	15 children (3 educators)
3 ½ – 5 years educators)	<b>Barraimal Room</b>	up to 30 children (3 educators)

### **VACANCIES**

The government provides a set of priority access guidelines for families who want to access childcare and we must adhere to them at all times.

Category 1	Child at risk of abuse or neglect Families in crisis should also have support and assistance
Category 2	Children of parents working, seeking employment, studying or training
Category 3	Children of families not identified in any of the above categories

As we are owned by Maribyrnong Council, the Centralised Waiting Register is managed by them. Our vacancies are then filled from this register.

***(Please see Priority of Access Policy included in the Enrolment Pack)***

***FEES***

The budget is prepared in October and families are given at least one month's notice of changes to the fee structure.

***Fees are to be maintained two weeks in advance***, and can be paid by EFTPOS, internet banking, cheque or money order. Fees paid by credit card will incur a 2% surcharge. ***NO CASH PAYMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.***

***Late fees*** will apply for payments not received by the due date; ie \$5 for the first week, \$10 for the second week equalling \$15 in total. Families that are more than two weeks in arrears may have their care cancelled.

***If you have any difficulties with payment, it is important for you to discuss your circumstances with the Manager/Assistant Manager.***

Families are advised that if they are ***late collecting their child/ren***, the Manager has the discretion to charge a late fee of \$1.00 per minute to pay staffing costs for that period.

Accounts are issued fortnightly on Mondays and will be emailed to you, providing you have given an email address upon enrolment. If you would prefer to have your invoice printed and left in your child's '***Communication Pocket***', please let us know.

Full fees are required for all absences including sickness and holidays. If you are going on holidays we can assist you in placing your ***days up for sale***. However, we cannot guarantee that someone will take your day. If another family uses your vacant day, you will not be charged for that day.

In school holidays, we have many families who may take leave, so we are not always successful in selling your day.

If you wish to use an extra day on a casual basis, the fee is the same.

***Please note that when the Service is closed over Christmas/New Year as well as Public Holidays/Professional Development Days (2 per year), families are not charged fees.***

***(Please see Fees Policy included in the Enrolment Pack)***

***BOOKINGS***

The Service requires 3 (three) weeks notice if you are wanting to change your current booking or cancel your enrolment. We can only offer a change of days if there are any vacancies in your child's room.

***LATE COLLECTIONS***

Please be punctual to collect your child/ren at the end of the day. Children become stressed and staff also have commitments and appreciate being able to leave work on time. Parents may be required to show cause to the Committee of Management why their enrolment should not be cancelled after two late collections.

***From 6.31pm a LATE FEE will be charged, \$25.00 for 15 minutes or part thereof will be charged to the parent or guardian.***

***It is very important that the parents/guardians inform the centre if they are going to arrive later than 6.30pm to avoid the following procedure taking place. However, this does not exempt the paying of the late fine.***

**LATE COLLECTIONS (cont)**

*The Procedure for Late Collections is as follows:-*

1. At 6.30pm, staff will attempt to ring the parent/guardians on their mobile, home or work phone numbers.
2. Contact any of the emergency contact person if the parent cannot be reached.
3. At 6.45pm, contact the Manager and one member of the Committee to inform them of the situation.
4. Continue to ring the parent/guardian's numbers. If no answer, ring the emergency contact number again. Continue the above process until 7.15pm.
5. If parents/guardians cannot be contacted by 7.15pm, the educators will contact the Child Protection Office (131278) or the local police (8398 9800 – 24 hour service)

***It is extremely important that you notify and keep the Service up to date with your emergency contacts and or any changes to your home, work and mobile numbers.***

**CHILD CARE BENEFIT**

Child Care Benefit (CCB) is an entitlement for all families to reduce the cost of child care. You are able to apply for CCB by contacting your local Family Assistance Office (FAO), situated in Centrelink, or by phoning **136 150**. If this isn't organised prior to enrolment, full fees will apply.

***The onus is on the family to notify Family Assistance Office of any changes to the household income.***

CCB is paid for up to 42 **charged allowable absences** for each child per financial year. Allowable absences can be taken for any reason. The number of allowable absences is printed on your fortnightly childcare account.

CCB is also payable for absences known as **approved absences**. These may include illness with a medical certificate, rostered days off, pupil free days.

There is no limit on the number of approved absence days a family may claim provided they are taken for the specified reasons. Once the child has reached 42 allowable absence days, CCB is not paid for any further absences, unless the absences are taken for an approved absence reason.

If you have other children in care at an approved CCB child care service, eg. Out of School Hours Care or Family Day Care, please advise the Manager so that we can apply the '**Multiple Child Count**' to make your fees cheaper.

The other children do not have to attend care on the same day but must be within care some time within the same week.

If you are a grandparent raising your grandchild and receiving a Centrelink benefit, you are entitled to Special CCB called Grandparent Childcare Benefit (GCB). GCB enables you to receive **FREE** care for your grandchild. You will need to notify FAO when you ring **136 150** to arrange your CCB.

## ***ENROLLING AND SETTLING IN***

The aim is to minimise anxiety for the children and parents when commencing care at our Service.

We believe it is important to plan some orientation visits to familiarise both parent and child with their new environment, caregivers and routine. The process will also assist in the care and on-going communication.

***Parents are welcome to visit the Service at any time.***

The first visit is an ideal opportunity to discuss the room's routine and familiarise yourself with the educators and environment. Primary educators will help with the settling process, as each room has permanent educators employed.

By completing the Child's profile, you will be helping the educators and your child as the information contained is specific to your child's special routines, comforters, food preferences etc.

There is no charge for our orientation visits and these visits assist with the separation anxiety and settling into the new environment.

Educators will provide feedback on how the settling process is progressing and what strategies are being implemented to assist your child as needed. You are encouraged to ask questions and raise any concerns you may have during the settling process.

Should your child not respond to the educator's attempts to settle him/her into the service, you will be contacted and feedback given. This is to allow you to have input into the next step to be taken in trying to alleviate your child's anxiety.

***You are encouraged and welcome to phone the Service at any time to find out how your child's day is progressing and how your child is adjusting to care.***

***(Please see Enrolment and Orientation Policy included in the Enrolment Pack)***

## ***ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES***

***Children will not be released to unauthorised people.***

On arrival, we ask you to bring your child to an educator in your child's room so that we can greet you. Please say "Goodbye" to your child even if this is difficult for you.

***It is important that your child knows that you are leaving and that you will return. We are here to assist you should you need help at separation time.***

All parents must complete the Sign In / Sign Out Forms located in each of your child/ren's rooms, on arrival and departure. It is a record of your child's attendance in the event of a fire or emergency at the Service.

The Sign In/Sign Out forms are linked to Child Care Benefit and therefore you must sign your child in and sign out for every session of child care. ***Failure to do so may result in full fees being charged.***

**Please:**

- Help your child to place their belongings including a change of clothes in their locker
- Ensure all belongings are labelled
- Make sure that all doors and gates are closed securely when entering or leaving.

**ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES (cont)**

On leaving we ask you to:

- Help your child collect their day's work and their belongings
- Take your child to farewell a staff member

The safety of children in our Service is of paramount importance to parents, children and the staff.

Only parents and authorised persons nominated on the enrolment form may collect your child, unless you have advised an educator beforehand.

If we are unsure about an unfamiliar person collecting a child, identification such as a driver's license, will be requested.

***(Please see Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation Policy / Delivery and Collection of Children Policy included in the Enrolment Pack)***

**CUSTODIAL CONFLICT**

A certified copy of any Court Orders or parenting plan concerning your child must be provided to the Service (stamped with an official seal) upon enrolment, or immediately following issue by a law enforcement agency.

The Service is obligated to comply with a court order and must keep evidence of such relating to the guardianship of, and access to the child.

If the parents are currently separated then the parents must make that fact known at the time of enrolment of the child.

Educators will respect and adhere to the restrictions as set out by the order, whilst respecting each individual's right to privacy.

***In the event of a breach, educators will endeavour to secure the safety of all children, parents, staff team and visitors to the Service.***

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

The primary purpose for which our Service collects information is to provide your child with an individual developmentally appropriate program. The Service requires certain information to be collected in accordance with administration of Child Care Benefit, regulations or legislation that directly relates to the operation of a children's service.

The Service will obtain parent/guardian permission before disclosing a child's personal and sensitive information to a professional attending the Service for the specific purpose of providing a service for your child. On occasions information collected about children's personal achievements, child portfolios and photos are displayed within the boundaries of our building.

Parents/guardians have the right to access personal information collected about them or their child. However, there may be times when access is denied. This could be where there is a breach of the Service's duty of care to the child or where children have provided information in confidence.

The Service takes all reasonable precautions to ensure personal information that we collect, use and disclose is accurate, complete and up to date.

***Please ensure we are notified of any changes as soon as possible.***

## ***WHAT SHOULD MY CHILD BRING/WEAR TO CHILD CARE?***

Parents are asked to provide at least two sets of clothing for your child in care, especially for the younger age group, and those children who are toilet training. Clothes that are **labelled** make it easier for all items to be returned to the appropriate child.

Parents will need to expect their child's clothing will often tell what activities they have been involved in throughout their day. Child care is the perfect opportunity for children to explore activities and themselves ***so clothing needs to reflect these opportunities.***

Clothes need to be appropriate for child care :-

- easy for the child to be removed to encourage independence and self help skills appropriate for indoor and outdoor activities
- be weather appropriate so children can gain the benefits of outdoor play and still ensure they are either warmly dressed for the cooler weather, or appropriately dressed for warm weather
- be safe clothing for sleeping – no choking hazards. Children will be more comfortable if the clothing is free from zips e.g. around the collar. Braces, body suits, belts and buckles are unsuitable to wear
- suitable for messy play – such as painting, water and sand play
- appropriate footwear to be worn. Thongs are not to be worn due to safety aspects

## ***SPECIAL EVENTS***

### Cultural and Religious Celebrations

Australia is a multicultural society and this will be reflected throughout the year. We will take the opportunity to experience the many diverse celebrations available. At all times we will be sensitive to the families attending our Service. Resources from families to help in these experiences are always welcome.

### Celebrations

Celebrations are an important part of our communities, families and therefore children's lives. They promote a sense of belonging and positive self esteem and can be celebrated in a variety of ways.

Food is often a focus of cultural and family celebrations and has enormous learning potential, but the Service will always promote nutritious food and a healthy diet.

## ***BIRTHDAYS***

A Birthday is a very special event in most children's lives, therefore the staff try to make it a special and enjoyable occasion. Due to allergies, we provide the cake for your child to share with other children and staff. The cake is required to be ordered at least one week in advance to ensure your child does not miss out.

The cost (\$8) will be added to your account. These cakes are made in line with the guidelines from the Healthy Together Program.

## ***NUTRITION***

Our Team believes good nutrition is vital for the well-being of children. Our Service will provide each child with nourishing healthy meals and snacks throughout the day.

***The Service does not provide nuts or peanut paste to children in care.***

A sample of the menu is displayed in the foyer. We provide morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and a late snack. Water will be accessible throughout the day and milk will be provided with morning and afternoon teas.

The Service's menu will be based on the Healthy Together Program, Get up and Grow as well as the Australian Dietary Guidelines. Our menu is nutritionally adequate to meet at least 50% of a child's recommended daily intake.

Main meals can include red meat/white meat or a vegetarian meal, together with iron containing foods such as wholemeal bread, broccoli, cauliflower, baked beans or lentils.

The daily menu will include at least 1 serve of vegetables, 1 serve of fruit, at least 2 serves of bread, cereals, rice, pasta or cooked noodles. It will also include at least 3 serves of dairy foods.

A positive image of eating and food is provided at all times. Our Team will participate in meal times with your child/ren to provide positive role models.

We also ask for parents ***not to supply*** their child with food containing these items, while in care. Many children have allergies, some quite severe, to nuts and products containing nuts. Often it is not known a child has an allergy to nuts and therefore it is a precaution to minimise any allergic reactions that may occur.

***(Please see Nutrition, Food and Beverages Policy / Sample Menu included in the Enrolment Pack)***

## ***GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR***

The dignity and rights of each child are respected at all times. We believe that children need guidance and assistance in a caring way to help them learn to become responsible for their own behaviour and realise the consequences of their actions.

Each child will be supported by appropriate and positive guidance with clear, consistent and realistic limits and boundaries. Positive guidance is used to assist children to substitute inappropriate behaviours for more acceptable ones.

This is achieved by an explanation of what is acceptable for the safety and consideration of all concerned and by removing potentially stressful situations before they occur.

Educators approach discipline in a manner that is individually and developmentally appropriate for each child. Educators work with children to develop self-discipline and achieve positive behaviour. Guidance and discipline of children revolves around 3 important aspects:-respect for others; respect for self and respect for equipment and the environment.

***GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR (cont)***

Educators support children during conflicts by effective listening and giving them appropriate language to use. Children are helped into resolving conflict by:-

- helping the child state the problem
- helping children become aware of their own feelings and those of others
- helping the child understanding the consequence of his or her actions
- helping children think about alternative solutions which they can accept in order to solve their difficulties

***This Service DOES NOT use child management techniques such as physical, verbal or emotional punishment that may humiliate, frighten or threaten the child.***

Parents are consulted about any issues or problems regarding their child's behaviour and their input is sought where possible for a mutual solution to guiding the child. Where necessary, parents are referred to specialist agencies to gain further information into handling a child's inappropriate behaviours.

***(Please see Relationships with Children Policy included in the Enrolment Pack)***

***EXCURSIONS/INCURSIONS***

Excursions and neighbourhood walks are an important way to extend children's experiences. They provide variety, fun and interesting opportunities for learning and are planned as part of the developmental program.

There are prescribed guidelines for excursions to ensure excellent supervision for young children. You will be asked to sign a general consent form for us to take your child on spontaneous local walks. If you do not want your child to participate on these walks, you will need to advise us.

You will be given details of any other excursions and your written consent must be given for each excursion. The excursions are planned only if the educator / child ratios meet regulation requirements.

The service will ensure that no child will be taken on an excursion or outside of the service by educators without the parent or guardian's written authorisation giving full details of the date, proposed destination, and method of transport, activities and number of adults to accompany and supervise the children.

Throughout the year, educators will incorporate into the program, events to stimulate and encourage children's curiosity and creativity.

***INJURY***

A child may only be enrolled when the parent has authorised the Service to seek emergency, medical, hospital and ambulance service.

If a child sustains an injury, first aid is delivered immediately. All incidents are recorded and parents are asked to sign these forms upon collection of your child.

A parent will be notified as soon as possible after the incident, whether the incident is serious and/or requires parent or medical assistance.

If the parent or designated emergency contact cannot be reached, the Manager or Assistant Manager will have the authority to take the child to the local doctor, medical centre or hospital.

An educator will accompany the child to the hospital and stay until the parent arrives. All records are maintained by the Service in accordance with National law and Regulations. ***The Service will not be liable for any medical or transport fees that may occur.***

***(Please see Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy included in the Enrolment Pack)***

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## ***EMERGENCY INCIDENT PROCEDURES***

Our Service has a detailed Policy that sets out procedures in the event of an accident or emergency. Please take the time to read the information for emergency procedures.

***It is extremely important and YOUR RESPONSIBILITY that you notify us immediately if there are any changes to your telephone numbers or emergency contacts***

### Evacuations / Lockdowns

Evacuation procedures are displayed in prominent places throughout the Service. Fire drills are practised on a regular basis and children will experience a variety of emergency procedures. The fire evacuation procedure is displayed in each room along with an emergency evacuation map.

Families are asked to familiarise themselves with the procedure and if they are in the Service when a fire drill takes place, they are urged to cooperate with staff and follow the necessary directions.

Fire extinguishers are located throughout the Service together with a fire blanket and hose. Maribyrnong Council regularly checks our emergency equipment to ensure compliance in health and safety regulations.

### Safety

Our Service has strict access guidelines. A 'Visitor Protocol' is in place to ensure the safety of all children and families.

All visitors to the Service are to serve as a role model for the children and respect the privacy and property of others. All visitors are to sign in upon arrival and out upon departure and show an acceptable form of identification.

### Other issues relating to security of children

Parents are reminded to ensure doors and gates are securely closed.

Parents are also reminded of the legal requirement to have children restrained in an approved safety harness whilst travelling in a vehicle. Information regarding child restraints is available at the Service

***It is vital you do not leave your child unattended in your vehicle.***

## ***SUNSAFE ENVIRONMENT***

Brenbeal Children's Centre has a duty of care to the children. We ensure we develop and implement appropriate sun protection policies and practices to adequately protect children from damage caused by the sun.

As part of the Sun Smart Policy, children and staff are required to wear sun screen plus a suitable hat and clothing that protects their heads and shoulders whilst outside throughout the year.

The Service will provide sunscreen to all children and staff. However, if your child has sensitive skin we ask that you supply an appropriate alternative that will not irritate your child/ren's skin.

***(Please see Sun Protection Policy included in the Enrolment Pack)***

**ARTICLES AND TOYS FROM HOME**

Children should not bring toys or treasures from home into the Service as they are easily lost, broken or damaged and this often causes stress for the child.

***An exception to this is a special item for comfort or security. The Service will not be responsible for these items going missing or being lost.***

**HYGIENE AND INFECTION CONTROL**

Maintaining a healthy community in child care is a joint responsibility between parents and staff. For the well being of the child and staff, any child entering Brenbeal must be well enough to participate in all day activities.

The potential exists in any setting involving a group of children for the cross infection of transmittable diseases. We take a great deal of care to prevent cross infection and our ongoing hygiene program will assist with this management.

Our hygiene practices include:-

- strict hand washing before and after changing nappies, wiping children's noses, serving food, administering medication and cleaning equipment
- rubber gloves worn when changing nappies, if a child is bleeding and when serving food
- daily disinfecting of equipment used by the children, particularly infants and toddlers who are still putting toys in their mouths
- the use of separate sheets, beds, cups, plates, cutlery, flannels and tissues for each child
- the cleaning of the bathrooms
- encouraging children into hand washing at appropriate times of the day e.g before and after eating, after toileting, in handling equipment
- children are encouraged to assist in keeping the environment clean and tidy

***(Please see Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy included in the Enrolment Pack)***

**REST TIME**

Rest times are as important as other activities. The individual needs of the children and consultation with families is the focus of the educators. Rest times occur between 12pm - 2pm depending on the age of the child. We have flexible routines in all rooms which enable children to rest when they need to.

***All children are encouraged to rest. This does not mean that all children must sleep. Children who do not sleep will be provided with quiet activities.***

Brenbeal provides a mattress, blanket and sheets for each child. Sleep/rest time is often the most difficult time for new children and we like to work together with parents to meet the child's needs. Parents need to remember that their child's routine may not match what happens at home because it is a very different environment. The educators will always provide the child with the opportunity to rest at any time throughout the day, based on the child's needs and requests.

***(Please see Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Policy included in the Enrolment Pack)***

### **TOILET TRAINING AND NAPPY CHANGING PROCEDURES**

There are strict procedures in place in relation to hygienic nappy changing, to protect children and staff from the risk of cross infection. Usually this will involve hand washing procedures, use of protective gloves and cleaning the nappy change area after each child has been changed.

***When parents are changing nappies, it is important that these procedures are respected for the protection of all concerned.***

Educators guide each child's developing toileting abilities, fostering and developing each child's sense of competence. Toileting procedures are an opportunity for educators to interact with children and should be used to sing and talk with the child.

Toileting times are flexible and individualised to meet children's changing needs. Most children are ready for toilet training between 2 years and 3 years. Often boys are later than girls. If the child is not developmentally ready to be toilet training, the child will not succeed.

Educators will always consult with families on the method to be used to ensure a mutual approach takes place. Educators will attempt to teach children toileting habits that are developmentally appropriate, non threatening, consistent and positive and encourage self esteem.

Communication will take place between parents and educators as to progress being made by the child in terms of their toilet training.

Parents are asked to supply many changes of clothing (from top to bottom, including socks) to ensure the procedure is successful.

### **DENTAL PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES**

The Service believes it is important to establish and reinforce good dental health practices for each child. We will provide a learning environment that raises dental health awareness, and supports the development of valuable life skills and habits for children and families. Educators will be aware of dental first aid.

Water will be the preferred drink at lunch time for children over two years of age which will ensure their mouths are rinsed prior to rest time.

We will discuss dental hygiene with the children regularly and provide families with information on oral care through newsletters and pamphlets as available.

We attempt to organise an annual visit by the local dental services for the screening of preschool children.

### **MEDICATIONS**

We realise from time to time that it will be necessary to give your child medication. However, medicine will only be given to your child if

- A letter has been presented from the prescribing Medical Practitioner, and
- the label clearly shows the child's name, correct dosage and use by date

If your child needs Panadol or ANY over the counter medications, you must provide a letter of authority from your Medical Practitioner stipulating the dosage and the reason it can be administered.

All medication must be left in the designated areas for medication and an educator informed. ***Under no circumstances is medication to be left in the child's bag. Parents are responsible and required to supply ALL medications. The Service WILL NOT provide any medications for your child.***

In each room, there is a medication folder. Details of any medication to be given MUST be entered on a medication form and signed by the parent/guardian/caregiver. All details will be checked and confirmed by an educator.

***MEDICATIONS (cont)***

If medication has been administered to the child prior to attending the Service, please ensure the time that it was last given is recorded on the Medication Form.

Medication will be administered by an educator and checked by a second educator prior to administration. This procedure **MUST** be repeated on each and every day that medication is to be administered. ***Times for the medication to be administered must agree with the instructions on the label of the medication, or educators WILL NOT administer it. Medication of any type will not be administered if the expiry date has elapsed.***

Dosage of any medication, whether prescription or not, will only be administered according to the label. Any alterations to the prescription must be made by the Chemist from the Doctor's instructions, not hand written.

Prescription medication will only be administered if the child's actual Full Name is printed on the Chemist label. Non-prescription medication must also have the child's full name clearly marked on the bottle or tube.

Cough medicine for children under two ***WILL NOT*** be given unless accompanied by a doctor's letter.

All perishable medication must be stored in the fridge in the kitchen.

***If for any reason medication cannot be administered by educators, parents will be notified.***

***(Please see Administration of Authorised Medication Policy included in the Enrolment Pack)***

***SICK CHILDREN***

On enrolment, families will receive details of Immunisations, Medications, Infection Control and Exclusions. Sickness and infectious diseases is always a concern where so many children are in contact with each other. If your child becomes ill at Brenbeal, educators will contact you immediately and ask for you to make immediate arrangements to collect your child.

The Service must be notified of any contagious illnesses and your child will be required to remain away until the infection period has passed.

We may ask for a letter from your child's doctor advising the child is well enough to attend and free from any contagious illness.

***If a contagious illness occurs in the Service, all families will be notified through a display on the front door advising signs, symptoms, incubation periods and exclusion details.***

The National Health and Medical Research Council and Victorian Department of Health provide early childhood settings with recommended minimum periods of exclusion. Details of common diseases and conditions have been provided as per our Staying Healthy in Childcare Guidelines.

Excluding sick children and staff is one way of limiting the spread of infection. The exclusion procedure is to identify when symptoms or a medical diagnosis fit a condition with an exclusion period. Parents will be advised when their child may return to Brenbeal.

***(Please see Dealing with Medications Policy included in the Enrolment Pack)***

***AMBULANCE***

The Service **does not** maintain a subscription to cover emergency ambulance travel for children attending Brenbeal. Parents will, therefore, be responsible for the cost of ambulance transportation.

Once first aid has been administered, should an ambulance be required, every effort will be made to contact the parents or guardian. The destination of the ambulance may not be to Brenbeal Children's Centre local hospital.

## ***IMMUNISATIONS***

The Service recommends all children be immunised and parents are encouraged to immunise their child against all diseases appropriate to their age. Parents will be required to submit immunisation details upon enrolment and will be required to provide updated information after immunisations are updated.

All parents who apply for Child Care Benefit will need to disclose the immunisation status of their child/children to the Family Assistance Office with proof of their child's vaccination schedule.

As part of your enrolment, we are required to see copies of the following: An Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register can be used as evidence of up to date vaccination; An Immunisation Status Certificate from a medical doctor or a local council immunisation service may also be used.

Other immunisation records, such as 'homeopathic immunisation' or a statutory declaration from you are not acceptable.

Immunisation History Statements are available on request at any time by contacting Medicare:

- By telephone on 1800 653 809
- By email on [acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au](mailto:acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au)
- Online at [www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare)
- In person at your local Medicare service centre.

## ***ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION PERIODS***

<b>Disease</b>	<b>Period of Exclusion from Centre</b>
Thrush (Candidiasis)	Not excluded
Vomiting	The Service reserves the right to exclude a child that has vomited once. Vomiting can lead to the spread of infection and dehydration.
Whooping Cough (Pertussis)	Exclude until 5 days after commencing treatment or for 21 days from onset of coughing
Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease	Exclude until symptoms disappear.
Chicken Pox (Varicella)	Exclude until all blisters have dried
Diarrhoea	The Service reserves the right to ask that a child can be removed immediately after 2 consecutive diarrhoea motions. Exclude for 24 hours after return of normal bowel motion.
Head Lice (Pediculosis)	Not excluded if effective treatment begins before next day at Service. Child does not need to be sent home immediately.
Impetigo (Sores)	Exclude until appropriate antibiotic treatment has commenced
Infectious Hepatitis	Excluded until production of Medical Certificate.
Measles	Excluded at least 7 days from appearance of rash.
Meningococcal infection	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced
Mumps	Exclude for 9 days or until swelling has gone down
Rubella (German Measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least 4 days after onset of rash
Scabies	Exclude until day after starting appropriate treatment
Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes has stopped, unless a doctor has diagnosed non-infectious conjunctivitis

## **COMMUNICATION**

General information and a regular newsletter will be distributed to all families using the Service. If you have any concerns with or about any aspects, please see the Manager or Assistant Manager. Open communication between parents and staff facilitates positive home/child care relationships based on trust and positive co-operation. When discussion is needed it may be necessary to make an appointment to speak with the educator, to ensure correct ratios are maintained for supervision of children.

We always welcome parents and caregivers highlighting their talents throughout the Service, whether it be playing a musical instrument, handy with crafts or simply wanting to read stories to the children. We also like to hear about things that we do well so please feel free to stop and have a chat! We treat all information regarding children and their families with the utmost confidentiality. In order for your child's interests being met, it is important for you to let us know of any changes to your child's routine or home situation.

Information about what is happening is readily available throughout the Service, in a variety of ways. **Phone contact is available to all parents at any time.** The Manager /Assistant Manager is available at most times and educators will also return your call as soon as convenient. Each family has a "pocket" for newsletters and other information.

The "pockets" are located in the hallway between the Bunjil and Wallert rooms. The Barraimal pockets are located outside Barraimal Room. Depending on the number of pockets available in each room siblings may share one single pocket. We will often email memos, newsletters and notices emailed; however, families can request to receive a hard copy that will be left in your family's pocket.

***(Please see Parent Interaction and Involvement in the Service Policy included in the Enrolment Pack)***

## **NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS**

The National Quality Standard (NQS) is designed to help children's services provide the best possible level of childhood education and care by outlining the factors that best support a child's development. It outlines what a service can do to provide the highest quality education and care for a child. The National Quality Standard is divided into seven areas. These areas have been identified as being the most important to get right to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children attending education and care services as well as improving their educational and developmental outcomes.

The Standard consists of guiding principles, quality areas, standards and elements. The seven quality areas 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. Leadership and service management.

Services are assessed against the National Quality Standard by a Regulatory Authority in Victoria. Our service will undertake a self assessment and then prepare a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) – outlining the quality areas of the National Quality Standard we will be improving.

The Service will have an authorised officer make a visit to observe typical practice here to determine a rating against each quality area and an overall rating.

**NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS (cont)**

The QIP will assist authorised officers to undertake the assessment and rating of services against the National Quality Framework, including the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (National Law) and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (National Regulations) which incorporates the National Quality Standard.

***Further information is available in the foyer of the Service. Please feel free to ask any staff for assistance.***

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

The Grievance Procedure is a means for all grievances, regardless of the level of complaints, to be investigated and addressed in a prompt manner.

The key responsibility of the Management is to ensure fairness and equity. It will endeavour to be prompt as well as fair, avoid malice or the improper exercise of powers, observe the various legal requirements and take the necessary steps to establish the facts relevant to any grievance prior to any consequential action. The Management recognises that staff are entitled to a workplace free from personal harassment or the adverse effects of stress. Verbal abuse or any form of harassment will not be tolerated.

If you have any concerns regarding the care your child/ren is receiving or any other aspect of the Service's operations, please see the Manager or Assistant Manager. You are able to contact the Department directly regarding the operation of a children's service at any time. In this situation a children's services adviser from

- your local regional office will assess how serious the complaint is and then take further action.
- A children's services adviser will always investigate any complaints that allege a child's health, safety or wellbeing has been compromised or there has been a Contravention of the Children's Services Act 2010 or the Children's Services Regulations 2012.

Department of Early Childhood Services

Western Metropolitan Region Early Childhood Services

Postal Address: P O Box 2141,  
Footscray 3011

**Location:** Level 9/1 McNabb Street,  
Footscray 3011

Phone: (03) 8397 0246

Email: [wmr.qar@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:wmr.qar@edumail.vic.gov.au)

***(Please see Dealing with Complaints Policy included in the Enrolment Pack)***

**WATER PLAY**

We believe that water play is a valuable part of a child's learning and should be offered regularly on days when the temperature allows for it. There is to be at least one educator supervising the water play AT ALL TIMES.

When the water play is finished the vessel containing the water is to be emptied immediately and stored appropriately.

### **PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM**

We believe that children learn through play. We believe it is the experience the child has whilst engaging in play that is the important factor in promoting development. The product of these learning experiences is of secondary importance, for it is the process and not the product that provides the learning. In our programs, the equipment is a tool to enable the child to explore the process.

In each room and within the program, there is a predictable routine to the day. This enhances the child's sense of security. You will also find certain materials are always available for the children to choose. For example, paints, musical instruments, blocks and equipment for imaginative play. In addition, there are new experiences planned to challenge and stimulate your child in becoming an effective learner. The educators encourage children to see themselves as successful learners and to empower them through positive guidance techniques, to accept responsibility for their own actions.

The Team meets regularly to discuss and plan for each individual child and for their group. Developmental records are kept for each child and families have access to these records and are welcome to make a time with the educators of the section to share these with the child's parent/s. These are updated regularly to assess areas for improvement and areas of strength for your child. Educators welcome any suggestions you may have regarding the content, practices and procedures within the program.

Programs will be flexible enough to allow for spontaneity and the unexpected, and the emerging interests of the children. Routines include times for large and small group play, individual play, eating, sleeping/resting, toileting and setting out the environment and packing away the environment. Educators will display a written program detailing activities planned for your child.

We encourage parents/guardians to read the program to be aware of the activities being implemented for your child and for the group of children your child is involved with. ***Parents are encouraged to have input into the program development and the extent to which parents wish to be involved will be respected.***

***(Please see Education, Curriculum and Learning Policy included in the Enrolment Pack)***

### **EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK**

The framework ensures your child receives quality education programs in our early childhood setting. It is a guide used by our educators to create a learning program that build's on your child's interests and abilities and keeps you in touch with your child's progress.

This 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.

***EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK (cont)******There are five learning outcomes.***

<b>Children have a strong sense of identity</b>	<b>Children are connected with and contribute to their world</b>	<b>Children have a strong sense of well being</b>	<b>Children are confident and involved learners</b>	<b>Children are effective communicators</b>
Children feel safe, secure and supported	Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation	Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing	Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity	Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes
Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency	Children respond to diversity with respect	Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing	Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating	Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts
Children develop knowledgeable and confident self identities	Children become aware of fairness		Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another	Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media
Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect	Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment		Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials	Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work
				Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking

**MANDATORY REPORTING**

The safety and security of the children come first and our Service is committed to the prevention of child abuse and neglect. All staff at the Centre are mandated notifiers and are obliged by law to report any suspicions of child abuse and/or neglect.

You are encouraged to come and discuss any concerns or questions you may have with the Manager or Assistant Manager.

***(Please see information included regarding a Child Safe Organisation)***

**ANTI DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Brenbeal Children's Centre makes every effort to meet the individual needs of the children and families. We believe that all children and families have a basic right to access the facilities, services and receive support and care without prejudice.

Where possible or necessary we will seek assistance or support from outside of our Service to provide help, guidance, resources and professional training.

Children who have a disability will not be discriminated against and will be afforded access to the Service where a place exists; they meet the required priority of access and the Service's resources are able to adequately care for the child. These may include children who are hearing impaired, visually impaired, learning disabled, physically disabled or children with behavioural difficulties.

Staff will be supported with appropriate support services to cater for the needs of the child. The parent is required to permit the Manager or Assistant Manager to contact the medical and support service that the child attends, to access information which will assist and support the child's inclusion.

The Service recognises and respects all cultures within our community, and endeavour to involve families into the Service's program. We endeavour to be responsive and sensitive to any cultural or religious practices.

Should there be any events or special cultural days that your family would like to share with Brenbeal, please discuss this with staff.

We also endeavour to employ staff from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

**PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Staff recognise the important role played by parents in the education of their child and value parent participation, at a level appropriate to their personal circumstances and commitments.

Parents/caregivers and family members are welcome to involve themselves in a way they feel comfortable. It could be:

- sharing information about your culture with the children and staff
- attending and supporting any social functions at the Service
- participating with questionnaires/surveys and offering suggestions which may improve the service
- sharing skills in story telling, woodwork, cooking, gardening, etc
- joining sub-committees offered by the Centre

***(Please see Policy included in Enrolment Pack)***

### **STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The Management actively supports the ongoing professional development of all staff members through their attendance at courses, seminars, workshops and conferences. Each staff member is encouraged to develop an ongoing approach to his or her professional development.

### **STUDENT PLACEMENT AND WORK EXPERIENCE**

**All Students MUST have undertaken a Working with Children Check and an orientation of the Service before interacting with the children.** They are unable to answer questions about your child/ren as they are on work experience only.

The Service is committed to their involvement with ongoing training and development of high quality children's services staff, through student placements.

Students are constantly supervised during their placement and are not permitted to be alone with children at any time.

### **OTHER POLICIES**

The Service has a number of policies and are located in the foyer. Please see the Manager, Assistant Manager or a staff member if you require any clarification or have any concerns regarding the content of the policies.

### **CAR PARKING**

Families need to observe the 15 minute drop off zone. The Permit area is to be available for staff parking only.

**Please ensure you DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CHILD UNATTENDED IN YOUR VEHICLE.**

### **VACATION CARE**

The service may offer a holiday program for 1 week in January of each year.

This is **based on demand** by families and **will only be offered** if there are **15 children booked** in on any day of that week.

**There is NO GUARANTEE any days will be offered as Vacation Care.**

The conditions for offering this include:

- **written notice** by the family by November of each year for required days of vacation care. You will be required to complete the Vacation Care Form detailing days required.
- payment of 2 weeks **in advance for the vacation care days.**
- **15 children** booked in for the day to be available . If there are not 15 children, **the day will not be offered and the service will be closed on the day.**
- A charge **WILL APPLY** for the booking even if a cancellation occurs by the family. If your child is sick **YOU WILL BE CHARGED. If your child does not attend, YOU WILL BE CHARGED.**
- The day **cannot be cancelled and swapped for another day** in the week.
- The Management reserves the right to **cancel Vacation care**, if the required number of bookings is less than 15 on any day. This will be provided to the family **in writing, in the month of November of each year.**

**VACATION CARE (CONT)**

**WE WILL NOT ACCEPT ANY LATE ADDITIONS TO ANY DAYS. YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO RING THE SERVICE TO REQUEST A DAY IN VACATION CARE.**

The reason for these conditions is

- the service arranges for educators to work on the days based on the regulation ratios of educators to children.
- If a family cancels the day and is not charged, we still have to pay for the educators to be at the service.
- There are operation costs involved in offering Vacation Care. If the children do not attend when booked, we are paying unnecessary costs.
- We rely on educators making themselves available to work during vacation care. They also have personal commitments.

**SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

- to pay fees regularly, aiming to keep the account at a nil balance
- to alert the Service of any changes in contact numbers and addresses of parents and emergency contact details
- to complete and lodge the child care benefit application form within seven days of commencing care
- to complete all details on the enrolment form
- to sign or initial attendance records daily and provide any supporting documentation for any allowable absences
- to advise the Service if they have any other children in another long day care service, a family day care scheme or before/after school care
- to notify the Service in advance when taking annual leave
- to provide three weeks notice, in writing, when withdrawing your child from care

**CONCLUSION**

***Thank you for selecting Brenbeal Children's Centre as the education and care service that will assist and support you and your family to achieve your goals for your child/ren.***