

Kate, age 5

Bunya Childcare Centre

Handbook



Leisure by W. H. Davies (1911)

WHAT is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare?—

No time to stand beneath the boughs,
And stare as long as sheep and cows:

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass:

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night:

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance:

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began?

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare

“As adults, we have to make the time to ‘stand and stare’ with children, as they open up the endless possibilities of the world around them. It is in these instances that learning becomes child led, but not just that, it can be that times stands still as we hark back to those initial fascinations we had as a child. It can open our eyes to the amazing world around us and allow us to see it through a child’s eyes again”.

York, S. (2011). Foreword. In C.Warden (Ed.), *Fascination of Water*. Scotland, UK: Mindstretchers

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“The first years of life are the foundations for all later growth, development and learning”

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Family testimony:
“Bunya is absolutely excellent!
I couldn’t imagine finding a better centre and I’ve been into quite a few so I know that Bunya is outstanding”

S. Maddock

About Us

Bunya Child Care Centre is a non-profit community based organisation providing long day care for children from 6 weeks of age to 6 years. The service provides education and care for 54 children per day. Currently we operate three rooms: a 3-5 room (Echidna's), a 2-3 room (Dolphins) and a 0-2 room (Possums). As a not-for-profit organisation, we re-invest profits within the centre to maintain our high standards of care and education. Non-profit allows Bunya to employ educators above regulated standard ratios. The number of children each staff member is responsible for affects the capacity of educators to engage with children in individually and developmentally appropriate ways.

Our Ratios

Babies 0-2 years: one educator: three babies (regulations 1:4)

Toddlers 2-3 years: one educator: four toddlers (regulations 1:5)

Pre-schoolers 3-5 years: one educator: seven pre-schoolers (regulations 1:10)

Educators have a range of skills such as teaching qualifications and nursing backgrounds. This merges with knowledge, experience and a range of theories and research to inform early childhood pedagogical practices. Educators work together to think critically and reflectively on decisions for play-based programs in each age group. Play-based learning is described as “a context for learning through which children organise and make sense of their social worlds, as they engage actively with people, objects and representations” (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009, p. 49). See link below to gain a better understanding of what play-based learning is:

www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/every-child-magazine/every-child-index/every-child-vol-16-3-2010/play-based-learning-free-article/

Our Staffing

Educators bring unique qualities which enrich your child's experiences while at Bunya. For instance, educators have training and experience in a range of areas including additional needs, art, music, attachment (Circle of Security), parenting advice, cultural diversity.

Research in early childhood indicates that educators with higher qualifications can obtain improved outcomes for children.

Bunya's current staffing includes:

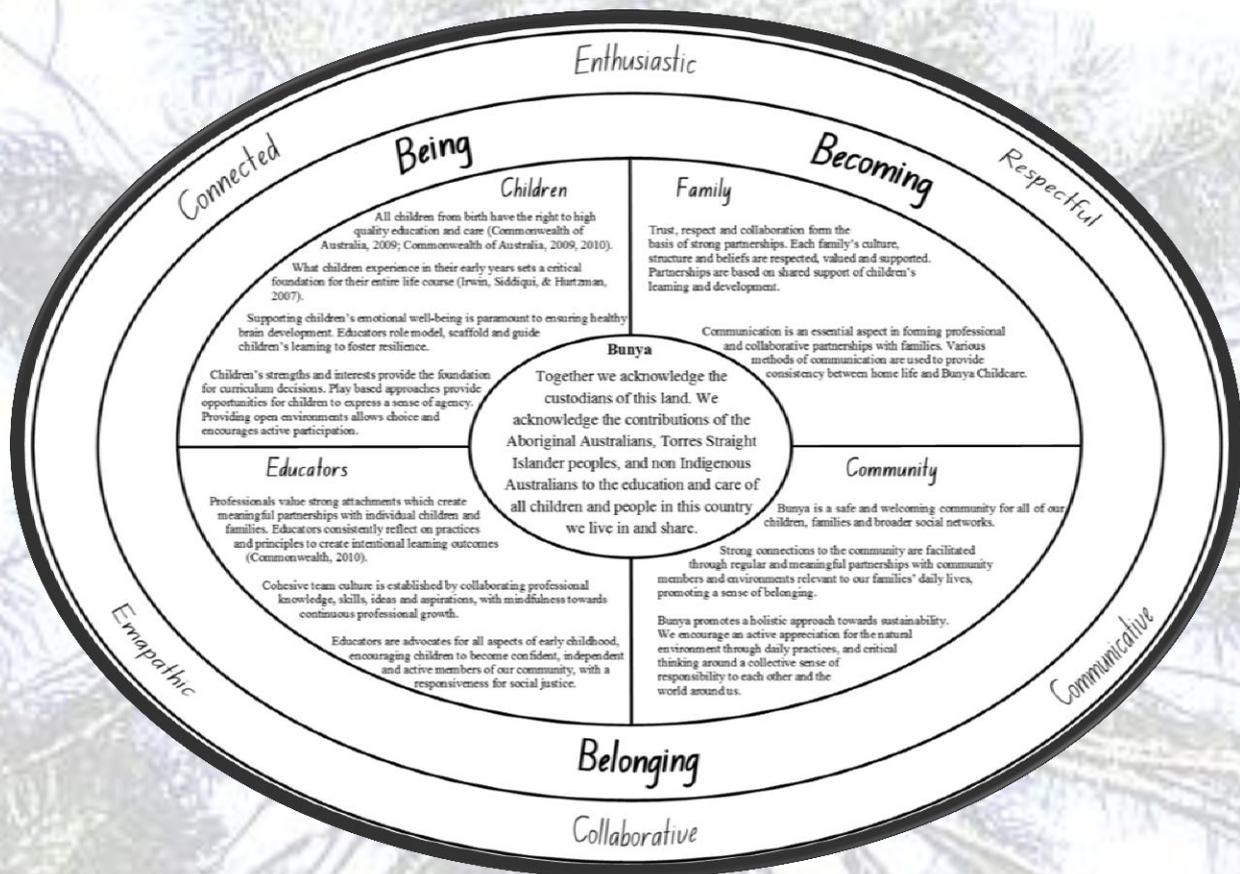
- A fulltime Director (Masters in Education - Leadership)
- A fulltime Teacher (Masters in Teaching)
- Three Teachers in training
- 9 Diploma Child Care Workers (TAFE Qualified)
- An Administrative Officer
- A cook
- A cleaner.

Highly qualified educators understand the links between research and early childhood pedagogy, inspiring us to construct authentic practices that meet children's future outcomes. (Pedagogy is concerned with what a teacher does to influence learning in others).

Educators draw on a national framework known as The Early Years Learning Framework (ELYF). It is used in partnership with families to develop learning programs responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities. It recognises that children learn through play. See link below:

www.coag.gov.au/sites/default/files/early_years_learning_framework_parents_guide.pdf

Our Philosophy



Glossary of Terms

Agency: being able to influence one's own world; making decisions and choices.

Curriculum: a written plan that includes: goals for children's development and learning; experiences through which they will achieve these goals; what staff and parents do to help children achieve these goals; and, the materials needed to support the implementation of the curriculum.

Resilience: the ability to deal with and succeed in difficult situations and events. Resilience is a mix of key skills and characteristics of a person and the social supports and environment in which they live.

References

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). 2013. Guide to National Quality Framework. Retrieved from: www.ACECQA.gov.au

Commonwealth of Australia. (2009, 2010). Belonging, being and becoming: The early years learning framework for Australia. Canberra, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia

National Association for the education of Young Children (NAEYC). n.d. Retrieved from www.cehd.umn.edu/ceed/publications/presentations/Hawley/CurriculumDefinitions.pdf

Continuity of Care

Consistency and continuity is a vital component of quality care. We achieve this through a thoughtful staff rostering system based on the belief that children need to feel safe and secure in their environment to explore and learn. Regular relief staff are sourced to replace staff when absent.

Working with Families

Bunya values working closely with families and other community organisations to provide multi-disciplinary quality care and education. In 2016 we mark 30 years of operating in the community. We acknowledge the custodians of the land on which the centre stands, and draw on the many connections with the people and the community within which we are based to underpin our curriculum.

Our philosophy underpins respectful supportive relationships with families. We believe it is essential for educators to support families in their parenting role and to respect families' beliefs and values about child rearing.

Partnerships involve establishing a sense of community, where both children and families know that they belong and make a valuable contribution.

“The best experiences for children happen when there is a strong relationship between educators and the child’s family and this is evident in daily practice”

NQS PLP e-Newsletter No.35 2012

Special events occur throughout the year. These may include: morning or afternoon teas, picnics, Christmas parties, celebrations of cultural and religious events, excursions and incursions.

We encourage families to actively be involved in decisions that affect their child's care and education.

The relationship with each family will be unique in many ways, but all partnerships will share some features:

- Mutual trust.
- Open, respectful communication.
- Empathy.
- Openness to others' views, values and perspectives.
- Shared decision making.
- Clarity about roles and responsibilities.
- Appreciation of each other's knowledge and experience.
- Willingness to negotiate and compromise.
- Commitment to resolve tensions and conflicts.
- Shared aims or goals.

Reference

Commonwealth of Australia. (2009, 2010). *Belonging, being and becoming: The early years learning framework for Australia*. Canberra, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia

Family Involvement

Bunya recognises the need to establish a true partnership with families based on trust and respect. Involvement can be defined as engaged participation by families. It needs to be consistent, organised and meaningful in the consultation, planning, implementation and evaluation of programmes and activities that assist children's development. It includes regular two-way and meaningful communications between families and educators, involving them in decision making. It is essential that families play an integral role in their child's development and that they are encouraged to be full partners in their child's educational and social progress. Partnerships need to happen in all aspects of the setting.

This involves information sharing about the child, the setting and its goals, and outlining approaches to curricular and activities, policy and planning. Building partnerships is a daily process based on ongoing communications.

Families decide their level of their involvement. Sharing information about your child's family life, routines etc are encouraged. Volunteering through committee involvement (see The Committee on page 23), offering educators feedback on observations and programming, and being part of program decision-making and policy developing are all ways families can be involved. Opportunities for involvement are endless and are based on mutual respect and understanding.

Reference

Banardos' National Children's Resource Centre (2006). Parental Involvement - A Handbook For Childcare Providers.
Retrieved from www.laoischildcare.ie/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Parental-Involvement-A-Handbook-for-Childcare-Providers.pdf.

Orientation, Transition

Relationships are the foundation and beginnings for a positive transition to centre-based care. Bunya wants families to feel secure in the knowledge their children receive the highest quality care and education. That means spending time in the days and weeks before children arrive to familiarise yourself with the centre, the staff, the surrounds, the routines. Families will receive an orientation pack to introduce these aspects and answer some questions. Educators need a good understanding of who the child is within the context of their home and their family life and the wider community. Then they can provide an environment where children feel safe, secure and respected.

Parents as well as children can experience emotional reactions during times of transitions. As adults, we use strategies to help reassure ourselves and regulate these emotions. Children of all ages need adult support to do this. Children experience a range of transitions each day: playtime to mealtimes, indoor to outdoors, sleeping to waking, going to school for example. An understanding and responsive, individualised approach which considers the changes helps educators manage these impacts on children's well-being.

“When children feel safe, secure and supported, they grow in confidence to explore and learn”

(Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), p. 20)

Settling In

Settling in to a new situation can be upsetting for some children and families. To make this transition as positive as possible we:

- Ask families to make a time to talk with educators to clarify expectations and answer questions.
 - Encourage families to spend time in Bunya with their child during the first week or two to help to settle their child and become familiar with the educators and the program.
 - Each family will have their own preferred method of familiarisation. Many choose to do this in person. Most importantly, it is about finding a balance... “between supporting and reassuring children, and allowing children to have opportunities to practise managing their own emotions. By being emotionally available and showing understanding about children’s fears, you help to manage children’s distress when it is too big for them to manage on their own”.
- www.kidsmatter.edu.au/sites/default/files/public/03_KM-11-200-Understanding-and-managing-separation-distress2.pdf
- Parents are welcome to stay as long as they feel it is necessary, and should say good-bye to their child and reassure them that they will be kept safe until their return. Parents may telephone, email or visit Bunya at any time.

Separation anxiety is a “normal” stage in a child’s life. Adults can help reduce children’s fear of separation by reassuring and comforting them.

Fee Information

Our daily fees are determined by the Management Committee and are announced at the end of the financial year. The daily fee can be reduced if you are entitled to Child Care Benefit (CCB) and /or Child Care Rebate (CCR).

CCB is a means tested payment managed by the Family Assistance Office (FAO). CCR is not means tested, it is paid by FAO to parents who meet the work/study eligibility criteria and is paid at 50% of out of pocket costs for approved child care. CCR has a capped annual limit. You need to be assessed for CCB to establish eligibility for CCR. Parents can choose to have CCR paid directly to the centre as a fee reduction, quarterly into your bank account or annually when you do your tax return. For more information, visit: <https://docs.education.gov.au/collections/information-families-using-child-care-fact-sheets>

Holding Deposit

A deposit equivalent to one week's fees at full rates is required on enrolment. This is held and refunded once notice has been given of the child leaving Bunya. If notice is not given, the deposit is forfeited.

Immunisation

Prior to commencement at Bunya families must provide an Australian Immunisation Statement, as required under the NSW Public Health Act 2010. A Statement will show that the child is up to date with their immunisation, shows a child is on a catch-up schedule or shows that the child has an immunisation exemption form in place. These statements are available from: The Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809 or by emailing acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au or by visiting the local Department of Human Services Centre Medicare Office or Centrelink Office. Links to these organisations are as follows:

www.humanservices.gov.au/./australian-childhood-immunisation-register

www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/online

<https://my.gov.au>

More information can be found at:

www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation

www.immunise.health.gov.au

Hours of Attendance

Bunya is open for 11 hours per day (7.00am to 6.00pm) for which a daily fee is charged. The Centre is closed on all Public Holidays and has a shutdown period over Christmas. This is for 2-3 weeks annually, based on the needs of the community. Bunya does NOT charge fees for Public Holidays or over the Christmas Holiday closure period. To enable Bunya to operate legally within the National Education and Care Regulations and to provide well for the needs of all children, it is necessary to ensure that there is a correct educator to child ratio in the Centre at all times. For this purpose, families are asked to indicate on the sign-in sheets the hours they plan to drop-off and pick-up as a way to monitor child attendances and ratios. The attendance sheet must be signed with accurate arrival and departure times and signatures. This is a mandatory requirement of our licensing body.

Absence

Your child's place is reserved even when they are absent. Every financial year the FAO will pay CCB and CCR entitlements for the first 42 absence days, the 42 days can be used for any purpose. Beyond the 42 day limit a doctor's certificate is required or the FAO will not pay CCB or CCR and full fees for care will apply.

Additional Permanent & Occasional Days

Permanent additional days can be requested at any time. If there are available spaces additional days can be allocated straight away. If there are no available positions your name can be added to the waiting list.

For an enrolled child a one off extra day can be requested by email. If there is a vacancy on the requested day your child can attend and a fee is charged.

Late Fee

The Centre's closing time is 6.00pm. A late fee of \$20.00 for any part of the first 20 minutes and \$5.00 for every 5 minutes thereafter is charged after the services' closing time of 6.00pm to offset staff overtime costs.

Changing Days and Withdrawal

We will do everything possible to support the changing needs of families. Two weeks' notice is required for changing or cancelling your child's regular booked days. If your child does not attend their last sessions of care, you will be charged full fees for the days they were absent. There is no CCB or CCR entitlement for absences immediately prior to withdrawal from care.

Arrival and Departure

Educators work to ensure that arrival and departures to and from the centre are not only safe and secure for the children, but also a valuable means of exchanging information.

We ask that you consider the following when arriving and departing from the centre:

- Ensure that the attendance records are signed on both arrival and departure.
- Leave your child in the direct care of a staff member.
- Let staff know that you are taking your child home.
- You are welcome to spend time with your child both upon arrival and departure from the centre.
- Stick to the stated arrival and departure times to ensure staff/child ratios are maintained.

If you are going to collect your child outside of the stated departure time, please phone the centre in advance to advise of the revised time.

If parents want to discuss any matters at length, they are encouraged to make an appointment (unfortunately staff are not available for lengthy discussions without an appointment as supervision of children is a key priority and educators need to be actively observing children at all times).

Centre Security and Access

Parents identified on the enrolment form are able to collect and have access to their child whilst attending the service, the exception being where we have been provided with a copy of a court order which denies a parent access to their child.

Authorised adults are also able to collect children. Authorised adults are those listed under the Emergency Contact/ Authority section of the enrolment form. Please notify educators if an alternative person (Emergency Contact) is collecting your child. Photo identification will be required.

Please carry photo identification every time you visit the centre; educators have the right to ask for photo identification before allowing access to any of our enrolled children.

Educators have the right to refuse entry to the premises if they feel the safety of occupants may be in jeopardy.

Meals

Bunya encourages healthy and nutritious eating through our program and menu planning. Meals are based on the recommendations from the Australian Dietary Guidelines. When the children gather together at meal times it gives the opening for discussion around food sources and gives the opportunity for open conversation that increases children's social skills. Educators sit and eat with the children to both role model healthy eating habits and to participate in the conversation. Children are always encouraged to try all foods on the menu.

Meals are altered to cater for children with medical and cultural requirements. Please ensure that you communicate with the Centre Director and educators about your child's dietary requirements. The centre menu is on display outside the kitchen door and the Dolphin Room gate. For further information, visit:

www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au

www.eatforhealth.gov.au

[www.healthpromotion.com.au/Munch and Move/Munch&Move_home.htm](http://www.healthpromotion.com.au/Munch_and_Move/Munch&Move_home.htm)

Birthdays

Birthdays are celebrated with friends, with a cake provided by the centre.

What to Bring Each Day

- Bag labelled with the child's name.
- Changes of clothes to accommodate accidents, messy play, weather.
- Labelled water bottle.
- A comforter if required.
- A piece of fruit for the communal fruit platters.
- Nappies (talk with staff about quantities).

Clothing and Footwear

Clothing should be comfortable, durable and allow the child to move freely. Footwear should allow for active play ie enclosed shoes not thongs or slip-ons without backs. Please provide clothing appropriate to weather conditions keeping in mind that we are a **Sun Safe Centre** and require children to wear sleeved dresses or shirts. Painting aprons are provided, but we do encourage clothing that allows them to freely participate in all activities offered, especially the messy ones. Please label all clothing, footwear and belongings. Our rooms provide lockers for bags and belongings. Please ensure all belongings are taken home daily. For further information, see:

www.sunsmartnsw.com.au

Toilet Training

Our educators are here to support families through the toilet training stage. It is important to ensure consistency for the child between the home and care environments. Talk to the educators about the steps you are taking to toilet train your child so that we can support you.

We understand that children will have toileting accidents and that this is a normal part of the process. **Please pack plenty of spare clothes and underwear for your child during the toilet training stage.**

Rest and Sleep

Children require rest or sleep to recharge their bodies to ensure they have an active mind for the afternoon's educational experiences. We are happy to adapt to your child's particular needs. For children that do not have sleeps during the day, we provide relaxation time. Calming experiences such as yoga are provided during rest time.

Sickness and Infectious Disease

Due to the close contact between children and Educators, infectious diseases such as respiratory and diarrhoeal infections occur more frequently. Excluding sick children and staff is an effective way of limiting the spread of infection. Bunya will contact you and exclude children and/or staff who are:

- Showing symptoms or signs of a possible infectious illness.
- Needing extra supervision to the detriment of the care and safety of children.
- Too ill to participate in normal duties or activities of the service.
- Acutely ill and needing to see a medical practitioner.

Please do not send your child into care if they are unwell. At Bunya we follow the recommendations of the “Staying Healthy in Child Care”. When children are sick, they need more attention. They also need rest and quietness. It is impossible to give a child who is part of a group this type of care. For clarification please see:

www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch55_staying_healthy_childcare_5th_edition_0.pdf

If your child is confirmed as having an infectious disease, please notify Bunya as soon as possible. This ensures the safety and well-being of all children, families and staff. If visiting a doctor Bunya encourages you to get a doctor’s certificate. It is always good practice to obtain a doctor’s certificate as it provides evidence to confirm when the condition is not contagious and it is safe to be in care.

The main ways to break the chain of infection and stop the spread of diseases are:

- Effective hand hygiene (soap and water).
- Exclusion of ill children, educators and staff.
- Immunisation.
- Cough and sneeze etiquette (including covering mouth and washing hands).
- Appropriate use of gloves.
- Effective environmental cleaning.

Hand hygiene is one very effective way to control the spread of infection. Hand sanitizer is available in Bunya’s foyer when entering and leaving the premises.

Medication

If your child requires prescribed medication you will need to complete a medication authority form. Please see an educator in the room for assistance. Forms can also be accessed via our website.

We cannot administer any medication that is not prescribed by a medical practitioner. Panadol can only be administered at Bunya if the child's temperature is 38 degrees or above or if a doctor's letter has been provided. **Please note that all medication must be handed to an educator for safe storage.**

All educators hold current approved first aid certificates that are updated every 3 years, the resuscitation component is renewed annually. In the event of a minor accident, educators will administer first aid, and you will be notified. If your child is injured or becomes ill while in care, you will be contacted as soon as possible. In an emergency we will seek appropriate medical treatment for your child. If your child does require medical treatment due to an incident/accident that has occurred at Bunya, we are required to notify the NSW Department of Education and Communities.

Child Protection

Educators at Bunya are mandatory reporters. By law we are required to report suspected child abuse and or neglect and or serious risk of harm to the NSW Department of Education and Communities. To understand this better please see: www.community.nsw.gov.au/for-agencies-that-work-with-us/child-protection-services

Reference

The Education and Care Services National Regulation 2010 Under the Children and Young Person (Care and Protection) Act 1998

Emergencies and Evacuation

An emergency includes any situation or event that poses an imminent or severe risk to the persons at the education and care service premises (*Education and Care Services National Regulations*, p 5). During situations such as fire, severe weather conditions, lengthy blackouts and accidents/ serious injuries you may be required to pick up or organise an alternative emergency contact for the collection of children.

Bunya has plans for managing emergency situations that assists educators to handle these situations calmly and effectively, reducing the risk of further harm or damage (*Guide to the National Quality Standard*, p.78). For further information, please refer to Bunya's policies and procedures.

The Committee

The Committee is responsible for managing the service in regard to employing staff, receiving Government subsidies, reviewing policies and final accountability. However, the day to day running of the Centre is delegated to the Director and staff including all accounting procedures and program records.

The Committee and the Director meet once a month at a General Meeting. The day on which these meetings are held is nominated each year by the Management Committee. Any parent, staff member or member of the community is welcome to attend the monthly meetings.

The Committee is responsible for any fundraising events that take place throughout the year.

All families are required to be members of the association with a one off \$1.00 joining fee and \$2.00 subscription per annum, payable to the Management Committee. This is paid at time of enrolment and annually prior to the AGM.

The Management Committee consists of a Chairperson, Assistant Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and any number of Committee Members.

Grievance

Both positive and negative feedback is important to us in maintaining and improving the quality of the service. We welcome your ideas and suggestions and encourage you to express any concerns or if there is anything we can help you with. Families may like to make a time to talk with their child's focus teacher or room leader in a more private setting, when neither party is required to attend to the needs of other children or families. If you would like to see someone about your child's development, please ask us for an appointment. Feedback assists us in evaluating, maintaining and improving our practices. This takes the form of Parent Surveys, exit surveys and day to day communication.

If you are concerned about anything, please discuss it with the Director or Team Leader. All concerns raised are discussed with the Management Committee during the monthly meeting. If a matter is not resolved to your satisfaction, you can contact the Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate of the NSW Department of Education

www.dec.nsw.gov.au/what-we-offer/regulation-and-accreditation/early-childhood-education-care/contact-us

Policies and Procedures

The state regulations require that families have access to practices and policies. A copy of our centre's policy and procedures manual can be found in the front foyer.

Things to Remember

- Immunisation History Statement is required before commencing at Bunya.
- You need to be assessed for Child Care Benefit.
- Sign your child in and out each day.
- Let us know if someone, other than the regular carer, will be picking up your child. Ensure that they are on Bunya's pick-up list and have photo ID available. If changes occur during the day, Bunya should be notified by a phone call in the first instance and followed up with an email notification.
- Enrolment and agreement forms need to be filled in correctly and updated as soon as any changes occur (including email and mobile phone numbers). Change of details forms are located in the foyer or as a link on the web site.
- Always close the gates and doors after entering and leaving.
- Send your child in comfortable play clothes which are easy to take on and off. Remember, clothing can get dirty with paint, clay, dirt etc.
- Bunya is a "nut-free" environment.