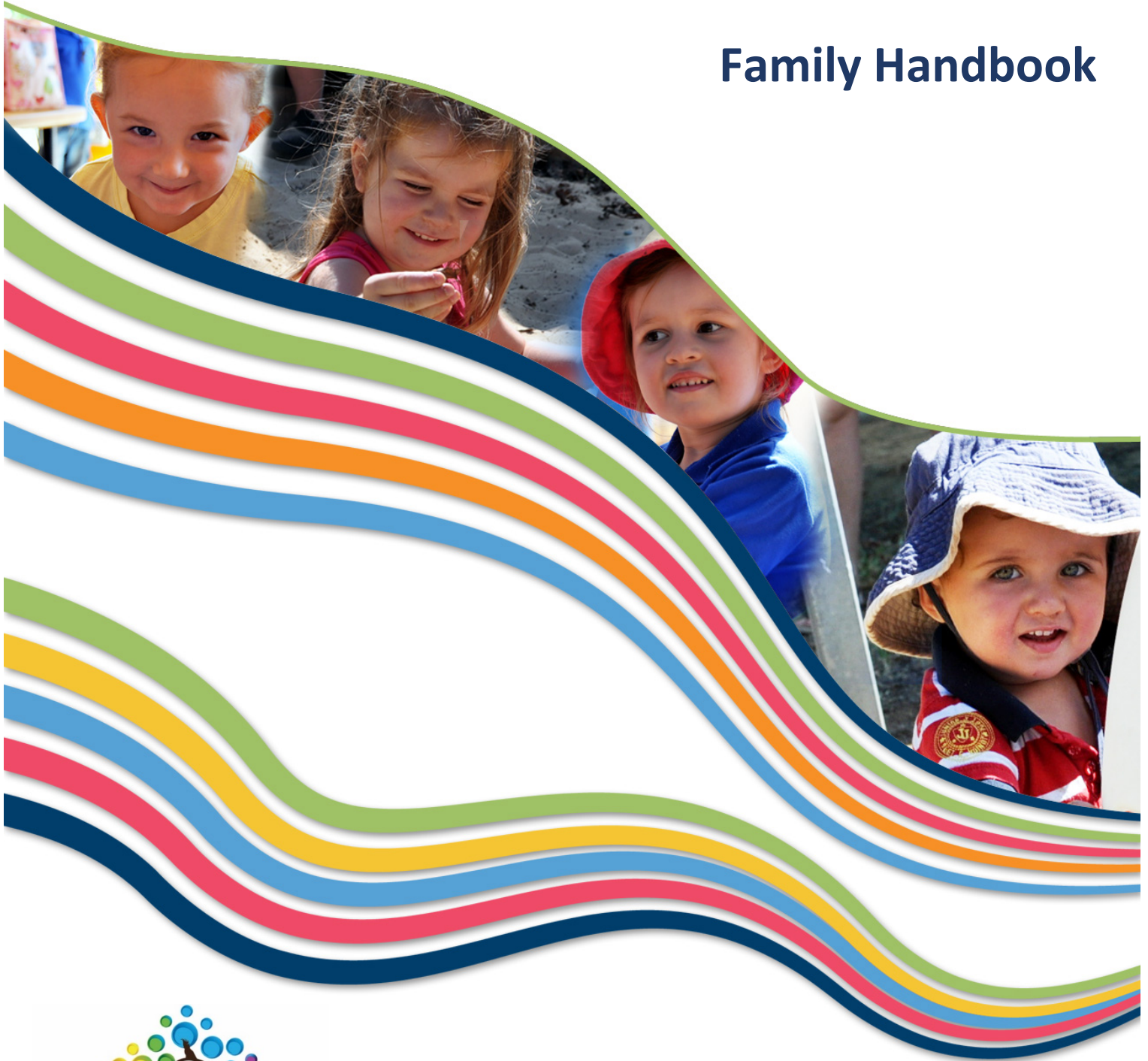


Bogan Shire Early Learning Centre

Family Handbook





“Children learn quicker during their early years than at any other time during their life. They need love and nurturing to develop a sense of trust and security that turns into confidence as they grow”.

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Mission Statement

*Nurturing our future through the
provision of quality education
and care.*



Philosophy

Our Philosophy is underpinned by the National Quality Framework. We believe the quality of the service we provide is enhanced by a focus on reflective practice and continual improvement.

We Believe

- The first 5 years of a child's life are critical to children's learning and development and form the foundation of lifelong learning, we support this through using the Early Years Learning Framework (Belonging, Being & Becoming) and Framework for School Aged Children (My Time, Our Place).
- Qualified and professional educators will inspire learning with intentional teaching that is open and responsive to the need for change with children's natural curiosity, understanding and fascinations.
- By providing a friendly and inviting atmosphere within a caring, secure and stimulating environment, the individual strengths and interests of each child, family and staff member are valued and respected.
- The family is the most important and powerful influence on children's learning and behaviour.
- Supporting and developing partnerships with families and the local community, is vital to the nurturing and care of young children.
- Being a member of a diverse rural community, we have a responsibility to our children and families to establish and maintain a sense of belonging to the local community.
- Play is essential to children's learning and that children learn most effectively with meaningful, authentic experiences, within a natural environment.
- Children develop to their full potential as competent and confident learners when provided with rich play opportunities and are encouraged to think, act and create.
- It is important to provide an inclusive environment that promotes the children's personal growth and develops their positive self-esteem, confidence and resilience.
- Play should be fun, hands-on, child-centred, stimulating and challenging, providing opportunities for children to experiment, discover, explore, create, investigate, practice skills, take risks, learn through achievements and mistakes, problem solve, make choices and express ideas with the support of their peers and staff.

We Recognise

- The traditional custodians of the land on which our centre is built - The Wongaibon People. We commit to seeking a united Australia, walking together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to enrich our learning experiences as we honour their unique cultural and spiritual connection to this land.
- Our service operates under the governance and values of the Bogan Shire Council. Our identified Children's Services values of: Teamwork, Respect, Customer Service, Taking Pride and Accountability, guide our practice.
- Our educators as individuals and respect the knowledge, skills and experience they bring to their role and the importance of investing in ongoing professional development.
- The importance of engaging with other early childhood professionals to support our journey of continuous quality improvement.
- Our educators play an important role in supporting families and sharing the child's learning and development.

We Provide

- Children with opportunities to discover and learn about themselves, their peers and the environment in an atmosphere that encourages harmonious and meaningful life enhancing relationships.
- Experiences and approaches that reflect and celebrate cultural competency, acceptance, respect and compassion for all people.
- A welcoming environment and opportunities for each family to be involved in the service community. We ensure families with additional needs have extra support, guidance and assistance as needed.
- Advocacy for children, by supporting their rights and helping the community understand early childhood education and care.



Introduction

Welcome to the Bogan Shire Early Learning Centre (ELC). This service has been developed in response to our community's needs, and is dedicated to providing a service of the highest standard to our children. This family handbook is designed to give an overview of the Centre and provide information to you and your child in preparation for starting care. Thank you for your interest and taking the time to familiarise yourself with how we operate. We look forward to a long and happy partnership with you and your family.

Contact Information

Physical address: 32 Dandaloo Street, Nyngan, NSW

Postal address: PO Box 221, Nyngan, NSW, 2825

Contact No: 02 6835 9038

Email: earlylearning@bogan.nsw.gov.au

Website: bogan.nsw.gov.au

Enrolment: <http://boganshireELC.hubworks.com.au>

Orientation

We understand that each child settles in to a new environment in their own unique way and introducing your child to care can be an emotional time. Orientation is the foundation for strong relationships between families and educators and promotes a quality experience of education and care for children. There are a number of things you can do to make the transition positive and successful.

- We encourage you to talk about the centre, the educators and the activities with your child and family in a positive way.
- We invite you to take time to have a guided tour of the facility and get to know our friendly team and nurturing environment so your child feels comfortable and safe when they attend.
- On your child's first day please stay as long as you wish to ensure their wellbeing.
- We also encourage you to call the Centre throughout the day to see how your child is going.

Operating Hours

The hours of operation are 7am until 6pm Monday to Friday.

The Centre will be closed on all public holidays (including local gazetted public holidays) and between 2 and 3 weeks over the Christmas and New Year period (duration varies from year to year depending on when the Public Holidays fall).

Fee and Payment Information

It is our policy that families pay an enrolment fee and their scheduled fees two weeks in advance at all times from your child's commencement date. This includes days that the child is absent and public holidays, for which your child is enrolled. No fees will be levied for the Centre scheduled closure period.

The enrolment fee of \$55.00 is payable for each child, this includes administration charges associated with the processing of the application and a wide brimmed hat for your child.

Two weeks written notice must be given for cancellation of your child's enrolment. Changes to fee sets occur occasionally and parents will be given a minimum two weeks written notification.

Current unsubsidised daily fees are:

Children aged 0-24 months - \$105.00

Children aged 24 months – 36 months - \$102.00

Children aged 36 months – 5 years - \$99.00

All casual bookings - \$120.00

All meals, snacks and nappies are included in this charge.

Fees may be paid via direct credit, EFTPOS, Ipay, cheque or cash.

Government Assistance

Depending on your circumstances you may be eligible for Child Care Subsidy (CCS). This subsidy is based on combined family income, activity test and the type of service you access – ELC is a centre-based long day care service. It is your responsibility to contact Centrelink for an assessment and maintain accurate records with the Dept. of Human Services (DHS). Families not entitled to any subsidy or who fail to contact DHS - Centrelink to request an assessment for CCS will be required to pay the full unsubsidised fee.

Overdue Fees

Parents with overdue fees are encouraged to speak with the Manager about any difficulties they may have in making payments and negotiate suitable arrangements to pay, including the option of a payment plan. If this is not done, or the agreed arrangements are not kept, the matter may be referred to a debt collector and may result in cancellation of the child's enrolment.

Late Collection Charge

Our service reserves the right to implement a late collection charge when parents have not collected their child from the service before 6pm. This charge will be set at \$10.00 per 5 minute periods and this fee is set to cover staff overtime wages.

Communication and Interaction

We want to involve parents and families in the development their children and we aim to do this through excellent communication. We actively work on developing secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships between children and families as we believe learning outcomes are best met when Early Childhood Educators work in partnership with families. Our Educators recognise that families are a child's first and most influential teachers.

We welcome input from our community and encourage you to utilise the full range of communication methods to enhance your child's learning experience and develop positive relationships within the community, including:

- Telephone calls
- Email
- Face to face feedback at drop offs and pick ups
- Day sheet for each room – displayed at centre and posted to *StoryPark*
- Newsletters and updates – shared through *StoryPark* community posts
- Meetings
- Parent surveys
- Policy and Procedure review folder
- Notice board in the foyer
- *StoryPark* - an electronic developmental portfolio for observations and communication. By using your unique login you have the ability to share photos, videos, and plans to support your child in our learning community.

Casual places

When parents are looking for a casual position for their child, parents must understand that we can only book casual places if the positions are available at that time, and we have the staff available to cover ratios for extra children.





Families

We may be related at birth, adoption, or invitation.

We may belong to the same race or we may be of different races.

We may look like each other or different from each other.

The important thing is we belong to each other.

We care for each other.

We agree, disagree, love, fight, and work together.

We belong to each other.

Rooms and Routines

Each day all children need to be signed in and out at the beginning and end of the session by an adult. The person collecting your child each day must be listed and authorised on your child's enrolment forms. You must provide written permission for unlisted persons to collect your child prior to collection and photo ID must be provided for those persons staff are unfamiliar with.

Each child will have their own pigeon hole allocated in their room to place belongings in. Please ensure all articles of clothing, including shoes, are labelled with their name. You should ensure you have packed a complete change of clothes and additional underpants/bottoms if your child is toilet training.

We recommend that your child does not bring any personal toys unless it is a special comfort toy or blanket. ELC cannot be responsible for items lost or broken that your child brings into the Centre.

Wide brimmed hats are issued to children at enrolment and are labelled and kept at the Centre for your child's use.

At the Bogan Shire Early Learning Centre your child will be fully catered for. Milk and water will be provided at all meal times and they will have access to cool drinking water throughout the day. Children will enjoy a healthy morning tea, a nutritious hot lunch, afternoon tea and a late snack if required. The weekly menu will be on display in the foyer and posted through StoryPark at the beginning of each week.

Please remember we operate a nut free environment for the safety of our children.

For children who require sleep/rest time we provide clean linen for each individual. Linen is laundered daily and beds/cots sanitised to maintain hygiene standards. All nappies and wipes will also be provided.

We encourage parents to apply sunscreen prior to drop off in summer months, sunscreen will be available at the Centre and will be applied throughout the day before outdoor play.

Children will be grouped according to their age and development to deliver an appropriate level of care for your children.

Children aged 0-36 months will attend the Puggles room.

Children aged 3-5 years will attend the Joey's room.

The Centre will operate to a flexible but regulated routine to ensure meals are served at appropriate times. We view meal time as a time for connection and socialisation with peers and educators. This structure also allows for seasonal variances to the indoor and outdoor play times.

Educational Program

A diverse range of learning experiences are provided for children on a daily basis. The content of these programs will reflect on the individual needs and interests of each child attending the Centre.

Children will have the opportunity to engage in a curriculum which offers a wide range of stimulating and educationally challenging experiences, developing dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity.

Areas of development your child will experience as they continue to grow at the Centre will include:

Social – learning to respect others and interact appropriately. Enhancing individual self-esteem and awareness and the ability to cope independently throughout the day.

Physical – extending on gross motor skills and hand eye coordination through jumping, running, catching, throwing and climbing. Developing fine motor skills through threading, cutting with scissors, drawing and construction activities.

Cognitive – focus on problem solving and decision making skills, enhancing through processing and developing their skills required to match, sort, classify, sequence, predict and ask questions.

Emotional – assisting children to recognise their own strengths and talents by offering opportunities to enhance self-esteem. Early development of peer relationships, leadership and responsibilities.

Language – assisting language development by participating in group activities, storytelling and basic language recognition. Children are encouraged to communicate with peers and staff and verbalise their needs, wants and feelings.





“Play provides opportunities for children to learn as they discover, create, improvise and imagine”.

Sun Protection

Sun protection is critically important in the Nyngan climate. We have developed a policy to ensure children can enjoy the outdoors safely. This includes the application of SPF30+ broad spectrum sunscreen twenty minutes prior to outdoor play and reapplication every 2 hours. During the warmer months (September to April) extra protection is required between 10am-6pm. Children will wear a broad brimmed hat at all times outdoors and it is preferable that they wear collared polo shirts. Singlet tops are discouraged.

Immunisation

All children must have up to date immunisation status to attend the ELC. Medicare issued immunisation history must be provided before commencement and can be obtained from the Dept. Human Services.

Illness, Medication and Accidents

The ELC is not equipped to provide care for sick children. If your child becomes ill during the day you will be notified and required to collect them. Educators may administer prescribed medications provided you have completed the necessary form and discussed this with staff. All medications have to be handed to Educators on arrival and are to be securely stored away from children.

We understand children have the innate desire to explore and test their growing capabilities and the ELC will take every measure to provide a safe environment. All incidents and accidents will be recorded on the Incident, Trauma and Illness Record. Parents will be notified as soon as possible and will need to sign the form.

Asthma and Anaphylaxis

Children diagnosed with Asthma or risk of Anaphylaxis will need to inform the centre upon enrolment or diagnosis and will be required to provide us with a current management plan for their condition and a risk minimisation plan will also be completed at this time with administration.

Emergency

Emergency procedures are in place within the Centre and staff are trained to deal with these situations. Children will be able to practise these procedures on an ongoing basis through emergency evacuation drills, with the aim of raising awareness amongst children of how to react in the event of an emergency. The centre is equipped with smoke alarms in all areas.

Complaints and Feedback

The Bogan Shire Early Learning Centre values the feedback of staff, families and the wider community. We aim to be open and responsive in relation to feedback. You may lodge complaints directly with educators and where practicable they will be dealt with immediately. Alternatively you may submit complaints and feedback via email to: earlylearning@bogan.nsw.gov.au or in writing to:

The General Manager
Bogan Shire Council
PO Box 221
Nyngan NSW 2825



In the early childhood setting curriculum means all the interaction, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children's learning and development.