

Seascape Early Learning Centre



"Where tomorrow's learning starts today"

Parent Handbook

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WELCOME TO SEASCAPE EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

OUR MISSION

“Where tomorrow’s learning starts today”

Seascape Early Learning Centre is a privately owned childcare centre, which is owned and operated by a local Shell Cove Family. We aim to provide the highest quality education and care for children and families within the local area. We view that our families and children are part of our extended family. Our highly qualified team encourages children to grow, learn, and develop and to leave us to continue their journey into their schooling life feeling confident and prepared. We feel that our children at Seascape Early Learning Centre leave our service having tomorrow’s knowledge, today.

From the moment you enter our well-resourced service, you will be welcomed and feel a sense of confidence. We welcome parents and relatives to participate in our program and value a close relationship between the centre and home.

The centre caters for children aged between 2-5 years of age for 50 weeks of the year from 7:30am till 6:00pm. The centre is licensed for 40 children per day. The majority of children are from the local area, however, enrolments are also encouraged and welcomed from other locations within the Illawarra Area. We aim to create a caring, safe and supporting environment where children can choose from a wide and varied range of appropriate activities, which cater to individual needs and interests.

This handbook provides important information about the centre and its operation.

Please read carefully and keep for future reference.

Please feel free to approach the centre's Director or staff members with regards to any questions, concerns or enquiries that you may have. They will be more than happy to help.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

REMEMBER to please inform the Director in writing if:

- Someone different is picking up your child
- Your child is sick or is going on holidays
- Custody/access arrangement guidelines have changed
- You have changed your place of employment and contact details
- Emergency contacts have changed
- You need to terminate the booking
- Change in your employment necessitates a change in your booking
- You have difficulty paying
- Your child is having trouble at the centre
- Your child is diagnosed with an allergy or a specific medical condition not detailed in the Enrolment Form

LOCATION AND CONTACTING US

This service operates from a building, on the main thoroughfare within Shell Cove next to the local reserve across from Shell Cove Primary School.

Street/Postal Address:
32 Southern Cross Boulevard
Shell Cove, NSW 2529

Telephone: (02) 4297 1888
Fax Number: (02) 42971899

Emergency Mobile: 0412824441(Michelle)

Email Address:
info@seascapeelc.com.au

Web Address:
www.seascapeelc.com.au

Contacting the Licensees

Email Address:
seascapeelc@gmail.com

Find us and like us on Facebook

HOURS OF OPERATION

Operational Hours: 7:30am till 6:00pm

The centre is open 50 weeks of the year and closed 2 weeks over Christmas (dates will be notified by the Director prior to Christmas). The centre operates throughout the school terms and school holidays, except public holidays. The centre has an answering

machine for parent enquiries, bookings, notification of non-attendance, etc. A staff member will return messages as needed when the centre is open. The Director is available for discussion either by telephone, by appointment or in person (please check times that are suitable with the Director).

Under no circumstances should children arrive at the Centre prior to 7:30am or be picked up after 6:00pm (please refer to Late Collection Fee in this booklet)

SERVICE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The centre is owned and managed by Seaside Holdings Pty Ltd who is Joel and Kelly Coulton. Management decides matters of policy, fees, staffing and all matters relating to the running of the Centre. Management will meet at the end of each term or as required with Families and Staff of the centre at our PIE (Parent Information Evening) meetings. Parents with any problems, suggestions or queries are encouraged to present them in writing prior to the meeting and/or with the Director.

The Management is committed to managing the service according to the National Standards, Child Care Regulations and in line with relevant legislative requirements.

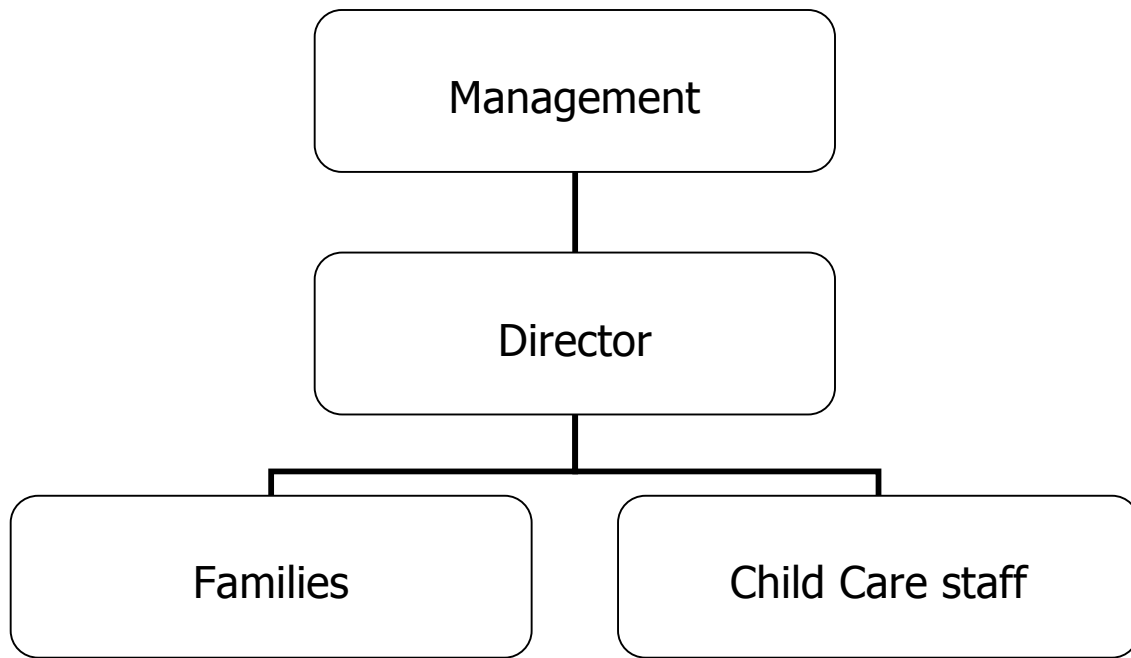
Parents are encouraged to become actively involved in the centre and are free to visit at any time, participate in activities or volunteer their help at any time, as family input and practices are highly valued as an essential part of our service (a Working with Children Check would apply).

The centre is a well-established service with excellent facilities and exceptional staff. Both Staff and Management believe in being advocates for the rights of the child, and always acting in the children's best interests, in all that they do.

We encourage parents to attend meetings to liaise with Management or place in writing any concerns or suggestions addressed to "Management" and place in the fees box.

The Director is responsible for the day-to-day running of the centre and all administrative tasks and to handle all financial matters and to liaise between the Management, Staff and Parents.

The service has made a commitment to providing quality care and has received a quality decision from the Accreditation Council, which we continually maintain. The organisation structure of the centre is shown in Figure 1.



NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD/ NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK (NQF)

Seascope Early Learning Centre complies with the National Quality Standards, which are the national benchmark for the quality of education and care services. The National Quality Standard is a key aspect of the National Quality Framework.

“The National Quality Standard is about best practice and the way in which high quality education and care contributes to positive outcomes for children. It comprises quality areas, standards and elements. The seven quality areas in the National Quality Standard 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.

The National Quality Standard is linked to national learning frameworks that recognise children learn from birth and outline practices to support and promote children's learning. These are:

- Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia ('Early Years Learning Framework')

Ref: ACECQA <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/home>, last accessed October 2011)

The Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) ensures that our centre continually strives to maintain and improve all aspects of the service. Our centre is committed to this high standard of care. Please refer to our ACECQA information section at the centre or borrow some of the publications about the system for further information. For Further information please head to their website <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/home>

STAFF

At Seascope Early Learning Centre we strive to provide a safe, secure and supportive environment, where children can explore their full potential with encouragement and guidance from high quality staff. It is for this reason that there is a strong focus on the professional development of the staff at the centre. All staff have experience and/or qualifications relating to early-to-middle childhood development.

Staff at the centre must attend in-services to update their knowledge and skills. The centre has regular staff meetings to ensure that staff are well informed and are providing a quality program.

The staffing team consists of:

- A Director- University qualified or TAFE qualified (Diploma of Children's Services or equivalent) who is responsible for the overall management of the centre
- Assistant Director – TAFE qualified/Trained (Child Care Certificate; Certificate in Child Care Studies; Associate Diploma or Diploma, Social Science Child Studies; Diploma in Community Services Children's Services. This position is occupied when necessary).
- Advanced Child Care Educators- trained and/or training in a traineeship (TAFE) in a recognised child care course and a current First Aid certificate
- Child Care Assistants (with experience and differing levels of training) including trainees
- Cook

All staff at the centre possess a First Aid Certificate

Please see the staff photos at the front entrance for current staff names and profiles

Relief Staff:

C:\parenthandbookFEB2014.doc
18/02/2014

From time to time you may notice that regular staff members may be away. At Seascope Early Learning Centre we believe that the continuity of care is important for children, and therefore make every endeavour to use the same relief staff so that the children get to know them.

Nominated Supervisor:

A Nominated Supervisor is in charge of the day to day running of the centre, overseeing that numbers and groupings are correct; the routine is being followed; the children and staff are happy throughout the day and any questions, queries or suggestions that parents may have are met directly through the Nominated Supervisor. This therefore creates a smooth and happy environment, as all other staff are able to focus mainly on creating a happy and calm environment for the children, without having to deal with the day-to-day running of the centre. Children need a safe, secure childcare environment, which is effectively supervised.

At Seascope Early Learning Centre Michelle Donnelly is the Nominated Supervisor. She holds a Diploma in Children's Services and a certificate in child protection. If Michelle is away for any reason, i.e. sick or holiday leave, or RDO, then the Certified Supervisor will be in charge of the day to day running and responsibility of the centre for that particular day. Please see Staff photos in the foyer for who is the Certified Supervisor for that particular day.

Certified Supervisor:

A Certified Supervisor is a person that is placed in day-to-day charge of an Approved Service in the absence of another responsible person. A responsible person is an Approved Provider, a Nominated Supervisor or a Certified Supervisor place in day-to-day charged of the approved service. The Certified Supervisor is only in charge when the Nominated Supervisor or the Approved Provider is absent from the centre, however the Approved Provider is still responsible for the Service even when they are absent.

Students / Volunteers:

All volunteers and students are required to complete a Working with Children Check. It is a pre-employment check for child-related employment. We accept students from training institutions. They may be required to take photos and observe children. Parent permission is given before this can take place. Any written work done on your child will be given to you at the end of the student's placement.

WHAT TO BRING AND WHAT NOT TO BRING

What Your Child Must Bring

Each child should bring the following items to Seascope Early Learning Centre.

A sun smart hat and a complete change of clothes (e.g. underwear, shorts, 'T' shirt and socks). This is in case of spilling, toilet accidents, sickness, etc. If used, dirty clothes will be sent home in a bag and a new set of spare clothing should then be sent in. Staff will inform parents if an accident does occur and the nature of the incident.

An extra jumper for the winter months.

2-3 year old children need to bring sleeping sheets/pillow, comforter and 3 nappies/pull-ups.

T-Shirts, bucket hats and jumpers are available for purchase at the office. Please see one of the staff if you wish to purchase.

What your child should not bring:

Please avoid sending sweets or other items of food into Seascape Early Learning Centre (unless they are special food requirements). Nutritious snacks and meals are provided. It is unfair to other children if one child has treats that the others do not have.

PRIORITY OF ACCESS GUIDELINES

Under agreement with the Commonwealth Government the main priority for a place in the centre will be given to:

- A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- A child of a single parent
- Working parents
- Parents seeking work
- Parents studying for work purposes

Other places will be available if not filled by the above priorities.

To ensure the legislation is enforced, some non-working parents may be required to change their child's enrolled days.

A waiting list will be developed and updated regularly which identifies priority of access eligibility, date placed on list and required days of care.

Placement from the waiting list is determined by priority of access guidelines, siblings of children already in care and date of placement on the waiting list. (Please refer to policy folder for 'Service Access Policy' in detail)

REGISTRATION

Enrolments:

Enrolments for the following year are conducted during September/October each year. Parents must fulfil the following procedure in order to ensure their child is registered:

1. Complete, in full an enrolment form (please attach a photocopy of immunisation record, CCB details and a photo)
2. A. For continuing families for the following year an annual registration fee applies of \$16.00 per child per year
B. For new families for the following year a registration fee of \$75.00 (which includes 1 bucket hat and T-shirt) and two weeks of full fees (if more than one child is enrolled and additional \$41.00 per child is required [this is to

cover for online portfolios and uniform package] and a uniform package is available for purchase)

3. Parents must notify the centre in writing of any change to the information on the registration form (i.e. telephone numbers, address, permanent change in days etc.). The Director can provide a form for this purpose.

Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR):

Families may be eligible to receive Child Care Benefit and/or Child Care Rebate, Families will be able to receive CCB and CCR in fee reductions through Seascope Early Learning Centre or alternatively, receive them as an end of financial year lump-sum payment through the Family Assistance Office (FAO). Claim forms can be obtained from the FAO. Families who want fee reductions will be charged full fees until they have contacted the FAO to claim CCB.

Families can contact the FAO regarding CCB and CCR by visiting any Centrelink or phoning:

13 61 50

Immunisation is linked to CCB:

The Family Assistance Office will check the immunisation status of children when families apply for CCB.

Allowable Absences:

Families using Child Care Benefit are entitled to 42 allowable absences per financial year. Allowable absences are considered non-approved absences i.e. those without supporting documentation as approved by the Commonwealth.

Families are allowed unlimited “Approved” absences (After the 42 absences have been used) with the following supporting documentation:

- Medical Certificate - Illness/non-immunisation
- Letter from employer - Parents work related absences (RDO’s, Shift work, etc.)
- Copy of Court Order - Shared Custody arrangements

Your receipt and statement will provide a current record of our allowable absences Please contact Family Assistance Office or Centrelink on 13 61 50 for further information.

SCHEDULE OF FEES

Fees:

The Following rates apply (fees may change from time to time, please see Director for current pricing):

Sessions	2 Year Olds	3-5 year olds
Daily Fee	\$72	\$69
Half day fee (9am – 2pm)	\$65.00	\$59.00

Half-day sessions please see “Enrolments/Bookings” section for more information

Payment of Fees:

Attendance Fees must be paid two weeks in advance or by written agreement from Management.

It is the responsibility of Parents to keep their accounts up to date.

Method of Payment:

Statements are emailed every Monday to families. It is important for accurate record keeping that these are checked thoroughly by ALL parents regularly.

Parents can pay via Internet banking or EZI Debit direct debit: (forms included in enrolment package)

If paying via Internet banking, funds should be transferred to:

Bank Name: Westpac (Wollongong)
Account Name: Seaside Holdings Pty Ltd
BSB No.: 032 605
Account: 224 628

You *must include your surname and child's initials* as the reference on your Internet transferring payment in order for the funds to be allocated to your account.

Late Fees:

If there is reoccurring offence of late payment of fees, \$10 per week from the first offence will occur until the account is up to date.

Late Fee Policy:

1. You will receive a friendly fee reminder stating the amount that is owed.
2. If no payment is made then a letter will be sent asking for payment within 7 days.
3. If still no payment is made a **final notice** asking for payment within 7days will be sent, otherwise resulting in your child's/children's position being lost.
4. If no payment is made after child's/children's position is lost then it will be referred to Management, who will refer the matter to a Debt Collection Agency.
5. Any issues regarding payment of fees should be submitted to Management in writing.
6. All matters will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Late Collection Fee:

The Centre closes at 6:00pm and any child/children collected after 6:00pm will incur a fee of \$20 for the first 10 minutes and \$10 for every 5 minutes or part thereof per the centre clock. If a child/children are not collected by 7:00pm and no contact can be made with parents or emergency contacts then the staff have no option but to contact the police and/or DOCS and place the child under their supervision. A phone call will also be made to Management to inform them of the situation.

ENROLMENTS/BOOKINGS

A non-refundable enrolment fee is required to secure your child/ren's position at the centre as well as a 2-week bond (this will be used when fee's fall behind and the position has been cancelled, or can be used to finalise your account if you are leaving the centre).

If you are placed on a waiting list, as soon as a position becomes available within the centre, the child's parent/carer will be notified. Upon submission of an enrolment form, a current photograph of the child will need to be provided and attached to the enrolment form. Photos are used for identification purposes only. Photos will not be used for advertisement purposes or placed on the Internet.

If your child is subject to any form of court order, it is in the best interests of the child to supply a copy of that order to the centre upon enrolment. Please see the Director if you have any concerns regarding access to your child.

NB: Changes to your enrolment details must be provided to the Director in writing.

(Fees may be changed at any time)

If you have any outstanding fees by the end of the year, you will not be accepted to attend the following year until all debt is paid.

Permanent Bookings:

If a child is to attend the centre on a regular basis a permanent booking is required. A permanent booking must be paid for whether or not the child attends.

If bookings fall on a public holiday, parents will be entitled to a "make up day" (please see the "Make up day" section for more information).

All cancellations must be in writing two weeks prior to finishing and all fees must be paid up to your finishing date, even if your child/ren have not attended days.

Bookings cannot be transferred to another day if you need to have a 'one off' day - this will be an added booking. Transferring days permanently requires two weeks written notice (if the day/s are available).

Half-Day Bookings:

We accept requests for half-day services (9am to 2pm). They will be considered on an individual basis (a special form is required to be filled in), if a position is vacant and if your child/ren are currently booked in for more than 2 full days.

Half-Day Bookings are only given in 4 and 8-week blocks and **does not** attract the "make up days".

If children are dropped off prior to 9am and/or picked up after 2pm full fee will be charged (per centre clock)

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Two weeks notice must be given if cancelling the booking and all fees must be paid prior to finishing.

Make up days:

If a child is going to be away, a 'make up day' will only be granted:

- If the parent of the child contacts the centre prior to 8:30am on the day that their child is going to be away
- Make up days are given if your permanent booking falls on a public holiday
- And if there is room available to allow a 'make up day' (due to staff: child ratios or if another child is away)

Only 10 'make up days' will be given a year and will not roll over to the following year.

Make up days will only be charged a half-day fee if you have exceeded your 10-day's and have not provided a Doctors certificate.

Make up days cannot be taken in December, as this is a very busy time at the centre, so please use them up before then.

Located in the front entrance is a wide variety of community services and information. If you would like some information regarding community referral agencies, etc. Please feel free to browse through the information or ask a staff member for assistance.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

1. If a parent has a complaint or comment about Seascope Early Learning Centre, they will be encouraged to talk to the Director who will arrange a time to discuss their concern and come to a resolution to address the issue.
2. If the complaint is not handled to the parent's satisfaction at this level they should discuss the issue with Management, in writing then verbally.
3. Management will discuss the issue with the Director and develop a strategy for resolving the problem. This would be discussed further with the parent or if necessary a meeting will be organised with the Director and parent to resolve the problem (Please refer to the Complaints Procedures in more detail in the Policy Folder).

SIGN IN/OUT PROCEDURE

Morning sign in: Parents must accompany their child/ren onto the premises and sign in digitally on the sign in desk

Afternoon/Evening sign out: Parents must come into the centre to collect their child/ren and sign out digitally on the sign in desk

Please note: It is a Departmental regulation that you sign your child/ren in and out of the centre and note the times. Failure to do so may jeopardise the safety of your child/ren and also stop your CCB.

If the child/ren is to be collected by anyone different than the names on the enrolment form, parents must have personally informed a staff member prior to picking up. This change will need to be confirmed in writing if possible, and the person picking up the child/ren will need to bring identification.

If the centre has not been notified and someone other than the parent or authorised person comes to collect the child/ren, the centre will ring the parent to get his or her authorisation. The child/ren will not be released from the centre until proper authorisation has been received.

NOTIFICATION OF ABSENT CHILDREN

Parents must notify the centre of their child/ren's absence before 8:30am by telephoning the centre on 4297 1888. An answering machine operates overnight if you are unable to contact staff during centre hours.

Where a child is absent due to illness a Medical Certificate should be obtained and supplied to the centre. This will prevent the time off being recorded under the allowable absences.

Please note: If your child/ren is absent, please be sure to notify staff as soon as possible.

SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency evacuation procedures in case of an emergency e.g. fire emergency are displayed in the room and throughout the centre.

Seascope Early Learning Centre's staff are trained to deal with such emergencies and at least 4 times per year emergency evacuation drills are practised with the children. The Staff at the centre have first aid training and are equipped to handle emergency First Aid situations.

MEDICATION

If a child has a condition that requires medication, parents must complete and sign a medication form detailing the child's name, date, type of medication, dosage, time to be administered and prescribing doctor's details or medication will not be administered. Medication must be provided in the original container – showing name, dosage, doctor's name and expiry date. All medications will be checked by a staff member and then

double-checked by a second staff member before administering to ensure dosages are given correctly.

ALL MEDICATIONS WILL BE LOCKED AWAY AT ALL TIMES

Non-prescription medicines (e.g. Panadol, herbal remedies) must have an accompanying note from the parent stating time and dosage.

A member of staff who has a senior first aid certificate will give the medication.

If your child requires ongoing medication, then an updated medical practitioner's letter is required every 3 months.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS:

Upon enrolment of children into the centre and subsequent re-enrolment, parents/carers are asked to provide details of any existing medical conditions. If your child is diagnosed with a medical condition in the intervening period, e.g. asthma, allergies, etc., please advise the Director as soon as possible.

SUN SAFETY

As part of our Sun Protection Policy at Seascope Early Learning Centre, we would like to remind our families of our Sun Smart procedures: All children are required to wear Sun Smart hats and clothing. (These are available to purchase from the office)

Sun Smart hats are:

- Broad rimmed hats with a brim size of at least 6cm for children and 7.5cm for adults
- Bucket-style hats with a brim size of at least 5cm for children and 6cm for adults and a deep crown
- Legionnaire hats

-Baseball caps/sun visors **are not** recommended, as they do not protect the neck, ears and cheeks.

Sun Smart clothing includes:

- Loose fitting shirts, trousers or longer style skirts and shorts and dresses with collars and sleeves, which cover the shoulders and chest.
- No midriff or singlet tops.

Please see our full Sun Protection Policy, which is displayed in the foyer for further information.

CHILD BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

The staff at Seascope Early Learning Centre use positive guidance and reinforcement techniques to ensure an environment that encourages co-operation and positive interactions between all persons. A staff member listens to children and encourages

them to discuss problems in order to help them determine solutions for themselves. When a child displays inappropriate behaviour, staff will discuss the situation with the child and together decide on alternative behaviour choices that could be adopted in the future.

No bad language or behaviour will be tolerated at any time. Consistent bad behaviour or language will result in parent being contacted and possible cancellation of booking.

The Centre has a behaviour management policy in place. All parents are to read and acknowledge their understanding of this document.

Children at Seascope Early Learning Centre are treated with care and understanding. Kind and considerate behaviour is encouraged. Staff will act as role models to guide children into appropriate behaviour. Staff should deal with behaviour management firmly but fairly. It is important that children are involved in setting the rules.

Staff should remind children regularly of our rules such as:

We are gentle to others and ourselves.

We care about our own, other people's and the centre's belongings and equipment.

We move safely and considerately in the centre and outdoors.

We care about our own health and other people's health.

In extreme cases parents may be contacted by the Nominated Supervisor and given advice on relevant support agencies that can offer help with behaviour management. Staff must inform the Nominated Supervisor of inappropriate behaviour which will be dealt with immediately.

Behaviour management should be aimed at teaching children to respect themselves and others as well as their surroundings. Staff must ensure that children are guided towards socially accepted behaviour. Staff must also ensure that no child feels threatened or intimidated and that no child is ever publicly humiliated. No form of physical punishment should ever be used.

POSITIVE GUIDANCE

At Seascope Early Learning Centre, our service aims to provide an environment, which is safe, secure and consistent for Early Childhood aged children. As behavioural expectations and child rearing practices vary greatly among different cultures and social grouping, our service takes into consideration the families using the service. We aim to use a positive approach to discipline so that it does not impair their self-esteem, but allows children to feel capable and competent, encouraging their independence and abilities to interact with others. It praises and acknowledges caring, cooperative and desirable behaviour.

CENTRE ROUTINES

Nipper's Routine (2-3 year old room)	Time	Surfers Routine (4-5 year old room)
Centre opens Family grouping inside play	7:30am 8:45am	Centre opens Family grouping inside play (Nippers room) Surfer Children move to their room Inside play
Music/Movement – Sunscreen applied Hats on and outside time	<-9:15am 9:30am	Language/Story Time – Sunscreen applied
Physical Activity time	<- 9:45am 9:50am ->	Wash hands
Nappies and toilet time Progressive morning tea	10:00am	Progressive morning tea Outside play
Inside time – creative/construction/ dramatic/cognitive activity time	10:45am	N/A
N/A	11:00am	Physical Activity time
Tidy up, language/story time	11:15am -> <-11:30am	Inside time – transition to school group time Computer time/writing time
Wash hand - Lunch outside	11:45am	N/A
Nappies/toilet Settle sleepers on their beds Non sleepers supervised on carpet with quiet activities / Basic Skills program	<-12:15pm 12:20pm-> 12:30pm->	News time (Talking, showing, our weekend) Wash hands and lunch outside
N/A	1:00pm -> 1:30pm -> 1.55pm->	Rest time (Video) Quiet Activities – Sunscreen applied Pack away time
Nappies/toilet time. Apply sunscreen pack away	2:00pm ->	Music/Movement time
Hats on, outside play Wash hands for Progressive afternoon tea	2:20pm 2:30pm	Hats on, outside play Wash hands for Progressive afternoon tea
Pack away time	3:50pm	Pack away time
Inside time. Toilet/nappy time	4:00pm	Inside time free play
Late Afternoon tea Quiet activities	4:30pm	Late Afternoon tea Quiet activities inside
Centre Closes	6:00pm	Centre Closes

This is a guide only. Times and routines may vary due to day-to-day activities as well as weather.

MEALS/MENUS

Seascope Early Learning Centre provides meals and snacks that are nutritionally balanced. Cooked meals will be provided for lunch each day. We aim to provide meals/snacks that are in line with Australian Dietary Requirement guidelines, which encompass all of the food groups. Meal/snack times are seen as a social occasion as well as a time to promote healthy eating habits and self-help skills. When programming the menu, cultural considerations as well as individual allergy requirements are taken into account as much as possible. Parents are free to discuss all nutritional requirements with the Director.

If a child cannot eat a particular meal that has been served, we will provide an alternative, such as a sandwich. Parents' requests are also considered. Additional food requirements should be listed on the enrolment form. We have a '**NO NUT POLICY**' at our centre. All Allergies and food requirements are taken into consideration so please notify staff if your child has an allergy or food requirement.

Each day we will provide

- Morning Tea
- Lunch, including dessert
- Afternoon Tea
- Late Afternoon Tea
- Water is available for the children to access all day.

A copy of the menu is available for you to view in the reception area for each week. A food chart is available for you to view what your child has eaten throughout the day, on the lockers in each room.

REST AND SLEEP POLICY

We will not force any child to sleep but there is a 'quiet' time each afternoon when the children can rest, share a book, or take part in other set activities, quietly. Whether or not a child sleeps is discussed with the parents individually (Further details are available in our policy folder). Children are treated individually and their needs are respected and met to the best of our ability. If your child does require a sleep, please pack a fitted cot sheet set and a pillow in a drawstring bag.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs offer us a way to record the day-to-day activities of the children, and to share them with other family members. Staff will often take photographs of the children to put on display, or to use as evidence for accreditation purposes and for developmental purposes. No photographs will be used for publicity purposes without extra permission of all parents whose children are in the pictures.

FAMILY/STAFF COMMUNICATION

Parents are the primary caregivers of their children. Communication between parents and staff is very important, as we are here to compliment what you already do at home. There are a number of ways in which communication between the centre and families can occur. These include:

- Conversations – both formal and informal
- Parent committee meetings
- Suggestion box
- Notice boards
- Daily program
- Signs
- Newsletters by email
- Communication book
- Email

Various community information and articles of interests will be placed on the sign in desk, shelves and on the walls. The centre aims to have positive relationships between parents and staff. Our aim is to support families in caring for their children. The best way for this to happen is if parents share information with staff about individual children's needs, family care giving practices and cultural values. Talk with staff and establish a pattern of conversation and exchange of information. Staff may be busy at certain times, so sometimes it may be necessary to set up a time to discuss specific issues.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Our centre recognises the importance of parent involvement within the program. We realise that for many working parents time is limited and therefore we aim to provide a variety of opportunities for parents to participate according to their availability. The staff values your input, and would be delighted to share stories about your child's time at the centre.

Some of the ways in which you can become involved:

- Completing surveys
- Fundraising
- PIE (Parent Information Evening) meetings
- Spending time with the children at the centre
- Sharing a special skill with the children e.g. favourite family recipe
- Input into the weekly program, menu, policies and procedures

Hints for maintaining a successful partnership:

Open and honest communication is essential in maintaining a successful and ongoing relationship. Discuss any concerns you have with the centre staff quickly to minimise stress and misunderstandings. The Director will assist both parents and staff if required.

Children are very perceptive so avoid discussing them or concerns where they can hear you. It is a good idea to make an appointment to discuss issues, which may take time to resolve.

After these steps have been taken please contact the Director who will endeavour to solve the issue promptly and to the liking of all parties involved.

Feedback on your child is continual throughout the year with verbal feedback exchanged daily; Individual parent meetings can be arranged at any time.

Open Door Policy

Our centre doors are always open
Parents are welcome to visit at any time
Education and quality care is our aim
New skills and child development is fostered
Different levels of ability are catered for
Our staff are qualified experienced and talented
Our friendly environment treats everyone equally
Rather than take our word for it visit us
See for yourself

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Seascope Early Learning Centre has developed a confidentiality policy, which explains how the centre protects your privacy and confidentiality. A copy of this policy is located in the policy folder.

The Centre encourages staff to ensure the guidelines and requirements in relation to confidentiality at the Centre are maintained at all times and that family and Centre information is kept in a professional and confidential manner.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

It is extremely important to keep the lines of communication between the centre staff and yourself open at all times. You are encouraged to discuss any issues you have regarding either your child, events at the centre, or concerns over procedural matters at the service. Discussion will lead to a better understanding by both parents and the staff. Please be assured all matters concerning the grievance are kept confidential.

If you feel at any time that your rights are not being respected, or you have a complaint or concern, feel free to contact the Director for a private meeting. Alternatively, Management will be available to discuss any matters.

INCLUSION POLICY

At Seascope Early Learning Centre, *Inclusion* is a large part of the day-to-day experiences of the children and staff. To ensure the inclusion of all children and to ensure they achieve their full potential, we accept all values and interest of any individuals whilst including into the daily activities experiences that relate to all social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Explanation:

Inclusion of children means sharing part of and participating in their environment. Inclusion means being with, learning with, playing with, communicating with and socialising with peers. Inclusion means “belonging”.

A full copy of the Inclusion Policy is available from the Director.

ADDITIONAL NEEDS

We aim to cater for any special needs of children under our care. In order to do so it is essential that parents inform us of any additional needs that their child may have so that we can offer the best possible support.

If parents have any records or reports regarding additional needs (speech therapy for example) we would be grateful of a copy, as it will help us to cater for your child better. All reports are kept in your child’s file and remain strictly confidential.

VEHICLE ACCESS

Parents can park and access the centre via the main road (Southern Cross Blvd) and can park either in the car spots or on the road. If parking on the road, please make sure you keep an eye on your children and please use the lower gate entrance as this is safer than walking up the drive way. You can also access the centre via our rear gate (Solander Ave) and again please make sure you keep an eye on your child/ren so that they do not run onto the road.

Please make sure that all gates and doors in the centre are closed behind you, as we do not want children running out of the centre. Thank you

CENTRE PROGRAM/ACTIVITIES/PORTFOLIOS

The council of Australian Governments has developed a new national ‘Early Years Learning Framework’ to assist educators in providing children with opportunities to maximize their potential and develop a foundation for future success in learning’. We will program for your child based on their interests and abilities.

You can view your child’s progress through our online portfolio system and on each room’s T.V. Below is the list of Learning Outcomes, which your child will progress towards during their time at the centre. 1) Children have a strong sense of identity. 2) Children are connected with and contribute to their world. 3) Children have a strong sense of wellbeing. 4) Children are confident and involved learners. 5) Children are effective communicators. All children’s learning is ongoing and they will progress towards these outcomes in different and equally meaningful ways

The program is diversified and caters for all children's interests and needs. Our program recognises the unique individuality of children and caters for their overall needs, likes and dislikes with an emphasis on play and social skills. All staff are responsible for planning for a child's individual interests and needs. The centre program is displayed in each room and the room's daily evaluation of the program is located on the lockers in each room, we ask for parents input as well.

The daily routine of the centre caters for individual activities, small and large group experiences in both the indoor and outdoor environment and is evaluated on a regular basis. The daily routine has been developed to support children and their families.

The centre will provide equipment, although donations of any outdoor or indoor equipment/craft items such as paper, paint or other suitable craft items are greatly appreciated as long as they are in very good condition and not broken.

Portfolios

All children will have their own individual portfolio, which is provided online. Parents will have their own login and can access this information whenever they want. Portfolios contain photos, stories, interests, special events and developmental summaries/checklists on your child. If you do not have online access a printed version will be available.

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL PROGRAM

In our Surfers Room (4-5 year old room) children will be involved in our Transition to School Program. Our Early Childhood Teacher develops this program. It involves a writing, reading, maths, science and orientation to school program. Please see staff for further information in regards to the program.

Throughout the year our Early Childhood Teacher will conduct 'Parent/Teacher' meetings to assist in the ongoing communication about your child/ren's development. These are normally held in Term 2 and late term 3/early term 4 to help determine if your child/ren are ready to transition on to school and/or where we can assist in the developing and extending of your child/ren's learning. At these meetings documentation will be provided to assist in showing their progression and how the centre is implementing strategies to increase your child's development/learning. A learning summary will be shown to see what areas are being met.

EXCURSIONS/INCURSIONS

Excursions/Incursions that are planned will be announced to parents in advance for parental permission. No extra charge will be made for most excursions unless we have to pay an entry fee or transportation costs (other than our own vehicle). Parent participation is always welcomed.

Some precautions that are always taken during excursions are as follows;

1. A mobile telephone is always taken in case of emergency
2. A First Aid kit is always taken.
3. A list of emergency contact numbers for all of the children will be taken on the excursion.
4. Adult / child ratios will be kept to a minimum of 1 adult to 8 (2-3 year old) children and 1 adult to 10 (3-5year old) children.
5. Incursions such as fire/police visits, which may involve the children exploring the vehicles, will require parents to sign a permission form. Parents will be notified in advance of these incursions.

BIRTHDAYS

“Many children like to bring a cake to share with their friends on their birthday. Children love to blow out their candles while their friends are singing ‘happy birthday’. Cakes and candles may also be brought into the education and care service for other special occasions. To prevent the spread of germs when the child blows out the candles, parents should either:

- Provide a separate cupcake (with a candle if they wish) for the birthday child and enough cupcakes for all the other children.
- Provide a separate cupcake (with a candle if they wish) for the birthday child and a large cake that can be cut and shared.

Please make sure all cakes are “**nut free**” .We can also take photographs for you on your camera.

CLOTHING/LABELLING AND LOST PROPERTY

Whilst at Seascape Early Learning Centre your child will be involved in many craft activities including painting. Whilst every care will be taken to keep clothing clean, accidents do happen.

It is advisable not to dress your child in their best clothing. ***Please clearly label all items of clothing and anything else that your child brings to the centre.*** Lost property is displayed regularly in the reception area and if parents are aware that something has been lost we will do our best to find it. Naturally, labelled items will not normally be in lost property. If items are not claimed at the end of each term they will be donated to charity

We take as much care as possible to ensure the children’s clothing and belongings remain with their owner. The centre is not responsible for damaged, lost or stolen items. The centre has a lost property box, which is located in the foyer.

TOYS FROM HOME AND NEWS TIME

“Our hope for the future lies in our children. If peace and reconciliation are to be realised in the world, let us teach our children to love and live in harmony, not to have and destroy.” (Archbishop Desmond Tutu)

When purchasing equipment for Seascope Early Learning Centre, we select toys that foster peace and cooperation. We also encourage the use of equipment, which reflects the above.

- We would like to encourage children to only bring news on one day per week.
- **We would like to discourage children from bringing in the following toys: McDonald’s toys, cars, Super hero toys, transformers, Barbie dolls, small items, jewelry and makeup.**
- Please label your child’s news with their name. Staff’s first priority is looking after your children and while every care is taken, staff are unable to assume responsibility for lost toys that are taken out of children’s bags to play with. Supervision of the children is of paramount importance and we cannot provide this if we have to look for lost toys.

Some great ideas for news are:

- Photos e.g. holidays, special occasions,
- Talking news e.g. special events
- Items of interest e.g. shells from the beach/items found in the environment/books
- Things children have made. •If DVD’s are brought in, please make sure they are rated G.

CHILD PROTECTION

It is mandatory for childcare centre staff to notify suspected abuse and neglect of children to the Department of Human Services. All staff are aware of issues relating to child protection. It is staff’s responsibility to keep children safe at all times. The centre has a child protection policy that identifies the types of abuse, indicators and staff’s responsibilities for the rights of the children. It is important for parents to be aware of this policy.

Child Protection Policy

Seascope Early Learning Centre has a duty of care to ensure all persons are provided with a high level of safety and protection during opening hours. We are committed to child protection and child safe environments. It is understood by all staff, children and families that there is a shared responsibility between the service and all stakeholders that the child protection policy and procedures are accepted as a high priority.

Management and Staff implement and adhere to meeting the duty of care policy, NSW Children’s Services Acts and Regulations and to the centre’s child protection policy. This is to ensure a level of safety and protection to all children who access the service. All employees are required to sign off their acknowledgment and understanding of the child protection policy.

Code of Conduct

Every employee is given a copy of the NSW Children's Services Acts and Regulations and Code of Conduct. Staff are obliged to adhere to this code and follow all principles and procedures. All employees are required to sign off their acknowledgment and understanding of the Regulations.

Working with Children Check

All employees are required to sign a 'Working with Children Check - Employment Screening Consent Form.' This check ensures no prohibited persons are employed to work with children.

Mandatory Reporting

A mandatory reporter in NSW is an individual required under Section 27 of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* to report to the Child Protection Helpline **when he/she has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child, or a class of children, is at risk of significant harm from abuse or neglect, and those grounds arise during the course of or from the person's work.**

When considering if a child has been abused or neglected or is at risk of this, it is important to keep in mind the life circumstances of the child and their family.

If you have concerns you should report them to Community Services by calling the **Child Protection Helpline on 132111**, 24hours, 7 days a week.

POLICIES

The centre's policies reflect our centre philosophy and are in place to ensure that we provide high quality care for all children attending Seascope Early Learning Centre. Our policies have been formulated and reviewed by both staff and parents and are reviewed yearly to ensure they are kept current and up-to-date. The following is a list of policies currently placed at the centre. Full copies of these are located at the parent information area of the centre.

A different policy may be put out each month and will be located on the 'Policy Board' with a blank piece of paper next to it: we ask for all parental input and feedback on these policies.

SEASCOPE EARLY LEARNING CENTRE PHILOSOPHY

At Seascope Early Learning Centre we believe that children are confident and capable learners and aim to provide a welcoming, caring and positive learning environment, where children feel secure and respected. We strive to provide children with an atmosphere where they can be who they are, feel like they belong and have opportunities to guide who they are going to become.