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Hours: 8am to 5:30pm Monday – Friday

Provider Number: 407 012 622A

We welcome your family to Tree of Life Early Learning School.

This booklet contains information about the operation of this centre.

We hope you find the booklet informative and that it helps you to feel at ease when you commence with us. Please let us know of any questions you have.

## **OUR TEAM**

### **Owner/Director**

Suzanne Conroy – Diploma

### **Nominated Supervisors**

Suzanne Conroy - Diploma

Sofie Aydin – Diploma

### **Educational Leaders**

Nurcan Teker – ECT

Sofie Aydin – Diploma

### **Assistant Educators**

Dafina Begaj – WT Diploma

### **Casual Educators**

Dawa Kendo – WT ECT /Brooke Elliott – WT Cert III/ Sarah Collins – Cert III

## **CENTER PHILOSOPHY**

Our philosophy is shaped by the robust principles of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) for Australia. Aligned with the United Nations (UN) Rights for Children, our center shares a common vision. Our dedicated and experienced staff collaboratively strive to deliver a service that comprehensively meets each child's fundamental needs.

## **PROGRAM**

At our Centre, we prioritise creating a culturally rich and inclusive learning environment where every child feels a sense of belonging and connection. Inspired by the principles of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF v2.0), our programs are designed to honour and celebrate the diverse cultures, languages, and traditions of our children and families. Our program adopts a holistic perspective, integrating elements that nurture children's self-identity, relationships, health, well-being, knowledge, and communication skills, all guided by the principles of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF v2.0). Guided by the principles of inquiry-based learning, intentional teaching, and play-based pedagogy, our educators plan experiences that stimulate children's curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking skills. Drawing from renowned pedagogical approaches, including those of Piaget and Vygotsky, we create dynamic learning opportunities that scaffold children's learning and development across all areas, while also following their interests.

Family partnerships are paramount to our approach, as we recognize the invaluable role of families in children's learning journeys. We strive to build strong relationships with families, fostering open communication and collaboration to ensure that our programs reflect the unique needs and aspirations of each child and family.

Through our holistic approach to education, which prioritizes culture, sustainability, play-based learning, and family partnerships, we create a nurturing and enriching learning community where every child can thrive and flourish.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

Sustainability is a key focus of our curriculum, and children are actively engaged in practices that promote environmental stewardship, such as recycling, gardening, and exploring nature. By instilling a sense of responsibility for the planet from an early age, we empower children to become environmentally conscious citizens. Additionally, our center boasts two rabbits as cherished members of our community, fostering children's empathy and connection to animals. Surrounded by the beauty of nature, including birds, lizards, and our Burudyara Butterfly Garden, we embrace a farm-to-table concept, allowing children to witness the journey from garden to plate and deepen their understanding of sustainability and the interconnectedness of all living things.

## **CHILDREN**

We view each child as a unique and capable individual, arriving at our Service with their distinct interests, talents, skills, and ideas. As dedicated educators with comprehensive training and genuine passion, we deeply value, respect, and appreciate this individuality. Recognizing children's right to be active participants in their learning journey, we are committed to empowering them to express their views and ideas.

We firmly believe in the significance of acknowledging a child's perspective, valuing their opinions for their validity, and respecting their autonomy and initiative. Our role as educators extends to protecting and cherishing the innocence of children, ensuring a safe and secure environment for their growth.

Aligned with the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), we are committed to actively promoting children's learning through meaningful and challenging experiences. Our aim is to foster high-level thinking skills through purposeful interactions, working collaboratively with your child to create an environment that encourages exploration, curiosity, and holistic development..

## **STAFF**

As educators, we thrive in collaborative efforts, pooling our knowledge and expertise to gauge each child's progress in realising learning outcomes. We actively engage with children, discovering ideas, providing learning opportunities, and conducting active research alongside them. In identifying those who may require additional support, we either provide that assistance or guide families in accessing specialist help.

Our dedicated team of experienced educators plays a vital role in evaluating the effectiveness of learning opportunities, environments, and experiences offered. Reflection on pedagogy tailored to the context and the unique needs of our children is a crucial aspect of our practice.

Recognising the pivotal role of play, we anchor our approach in the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF v2.0). Through this framework, our educators skilfully guide your child's play by designing learning activities and creating stimulating indoor and outdoor environments. By observing your child's learning within the framework, we continually build upon their progress and plan the next steps.

We firmly believe that children's learning is a continuous and individualised journey, and our consistent team of experienced educators is dedicated to facilitating this journey in diverse and meaningful ways. Acknowledging that learning is not always predictable and linear, we adapt our strategies to ensure each child's progress is nurtured and celebrated. We will value and build on children's strengths, skills and knowledge to ensure their motivation and engagement in learning (EYLF). We aim to create an environment of trust and respect, where we work towards achieving a shared goal. Ongoing education and training is a critical aspect of staff's professional development. It is through accurate evaluation and assessment, which occurs when we critically reflect on our actions, that we are able to identify areas which may be considered a skill and those which may need further development.

## **FAMILIES**

We are working with the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) where community is valued, and families are encouraged to become involved with the Centre and we encourage a positive and strong link between home and Tree of Life Early Learning School. The main theme of the EYLF is Belonging Being and Becoming. It is also our philosophy to constantly improve our service and standards. This is where we rely heavily on our parents to provide suggestions and feedbacks. We believe that families have rights to access their child's confidential individual records through our privacy policy procedures and be aware of their child's progress and access services and be a part of the ongoing programs. We will keep in touch with you regularly to discuss your child's progress and use photos and other documentation to show what your child is learning, how they are developing and what particular areas of learning interests them.

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

We believe that Community building is also critical to the teaching and learning experiences within our centre. Children of all age groups are given the opportunity to be aware of the community within and outside the centre. We hold regular incursions and family get-togethers to promote community involvement. The centre plays the role of a family support service linking the families to local community services when in need of support.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

Children inherit connection to the natural world and, as educators we understand that children often develop their ideas and understandings of the world around them from the information presented to them by the significant adults in their lives. As we are one of these significant adults, we have a responsibility to present a positive approach to the environment. We also embrace diversity within our Service and the wider community, so that children view this diversity with a sense of appreciation and wonder rather than misunderstanding and fear. Through respect, acknowledgement, appreciation and acceptance of diversity within our Community, our Service will embrace, celebrate and share traditions and cultures throughout our program. Learning environments are welcoming spaces when they reflect and enrich the lives and identities of children and families participating in the setting and respond to their interests and needs. Our Service will cater for different capacities and learning styles and invite children and families to contribute ideas, interests and questions (EYLF). We believe that Indigenous culture is important. We respect and value Aboriginal culture and promote it in our program.

## **CURRICULUM**

We are thrilled to announce that our Centre proudly embraces the updated version of the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF v2.0). This comprehensive educational program fosters exploration, wonder, and self-expression in a socially and emotionally supportive environment, aligning perfectly with our core principles and beliefs that early childhood is a unique and formative stage in life.

Our curriculum planning is individualized, empowering children to make decisions about the experiences they wish to explore indoors and outdoors. Our dedicated staff work closely with children in small groups and one-on-one, guiding them to represent their ideas through various symbolic means such as drawing, painting, clay work, verbal expression, physical movement, storytelling, writing, and socio-dramatic play.

In addition to the EYLF framework, we integrate elements from Munch and Move for physical activity and promoting healthy lifestyles, ensuring that children develop essential motor skills and understand the importance of maintaining a balanced lifestyle. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) elements are incorporated into our weekly program, providing opportunities for hands-on exploration and critical thinking.

Our daily routines include engaging activities across curriculum areas such as art, music, science, mathematics, language development, literature, drama, movement, independence, and pre-academic skills. Furthermore, our yarning circles offer a platform for story sharing, music, and movement, enriching children's cultural understanding and language development.

As part of our commitment to school readiness, we provide support with transitions and prepare children for the next stage of their educational journey. Through varied experiences and activities,

children acquire essential skills that equip them for a smooth transition to school, laying a strong foundation for their future success.

## **STORYPARK**

We have implemented Storypark – a secure, private online space to ensure your child receives the best support possible and that you are involved and up to date with your child’s development. Storypark provides each child with an online community which you (their parent/guardian) own and control who has access to, at no cost, for as long as you wish.

Storypark helps educators, children and families:

- improve understanding of each child’s interests and abilities so they receive even better support
- deepen relationships and strengthen communication
- share videos, photos and text capturing children’s learning and development
- create a portfolio of your child’s learning that travels with your child and can be accessed by you forever
- reinforce experiences and deepen children’s learning · capture family culture and heritage
- involve the children in their portfolio
- interact quickly and effectively through iPhone, Android and tablets
- create smooth transitions when your child moves from one educator/centre to another.

## **PARENT AND STAFF MEETING**

Parent and staff meetings are held approximately twice a year after 5.30pm. All parents are welcome to attend. Parents will be notified two weeks prior to the meeting. We conduct these meetings to allow parents to meet and offer suggestions and ideas. These meetings will also explain the curriculum that has been planned, functions and events and allows parents to communicate with the staff regarding their child. We facilitate extra meetings on a needs basis and are always available to talk to families. Our open door policies means that we welcome parents at any time and are always available for communication, whether it be via phone, an after hours meeting or at the door.

## **FEES**

As the centre is privately owned, it is financed by payment of fees from parents. Fees cover staff wages, rent of the centre, the running of the centre and administration expenses. They are therefore unpredictable from year to year. The current fees are \$153 per day for all children. It is necessary for fees to be paid regardless of your child’s absences.

Invoices are emailed to you at the beginning of each month. Fees are to be paid on or before the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month. If the fees are not received by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month, you will incur a \$100 late fee, which will be added to your account. Any parents who have difficulty paying each month should discuss this with the Nominated Supervisor so that a more suitable arrangement can be determined. Following are the details of our bank account:

Account Name: Suzanne  
Conroy BSB 112 879  
Account Number: 119 263 326

## **CHILDCARE SUBSIDY**

Families may be eligible for Childcare Subsidy. You need to be assessed by Centrelink to receive. Ask the nominated supervisor for further information and go to [my.gov.au](http://my.gov.au)

## **BOND AND NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL**

Before commencement of enrolment and to secure your position, we take a six-week refundable deposit reflecting the number of days your child is enrolled. For example, if your child will attend two days per week, we require \$148 x 2 days x 4 weeks. Once your child starts attending, six weeks' notice is required should the child be withdrawn for any reason, and you will receive the deposit back or it will be taken from your final account.

## **REDUCTION OF DAYS**

Should you wish to reduce your child's enrolled days, a three-week notice period is required.

## **COLLECTION OF YOUR CHILD**

A parent or an authorised adult, known by staff, must pick up children from the centre. Any changes must be notified in writing on the Authorisation to collect form and told to staff prior to children being collected. If a child is not collected by 5.30pm, the emergency contact person on the enrolment form will be phoned. If this is unsuccessful, the NSW early childhood education and care or the police will be contacted.

## **MEDICATION**

If it is necessary for your child to take prescription medication whilst at the centre, please hand the medication to staff and complete the "Medication Authority" form. Staff are only permitted to administer medication to a child if it has been specifically prescribed to them in the original bottle. We are unable to administer any over-the-counter (i.e. non-prescription) medicine, such as cough medicine. We can only give your child the medicine with the pharmacy's label, your child's name and expiry date on the medicine. For any child who suffers from epilepsy, asthma or other specified medical condition, a treatment case plan developed by the child's doctor must be supplied to cover treatment in the event of an attack. Please note: If your child has a temperature 24 hours prior to attending the centre, please keep them at home to minimise the spread of infectious disease. If your child is on medication, but well enough to attend kindy, please:

1. On arrival at the centre, remove the medicine from your child's bag. Fill out the medication form, which is on the sign in/out table and give medicine to a staff member, which will then be locked in the medicine box. The form provides details on the dosage, time and reason for medication
2. When the medicine is administered, the two staff members who witnessed the dosage will sign the medication form. The medicine will be placed in the fridge in a locked box. Parents are to ask staff for their child's medicine when they collect their child.

## **EXCURSIONS**

The facilities at Castle Vale include award winning gardens and a Clubhouse with a green that we regularly visit to provide opportunity of learning through natural and built spaces and nature

pedagogy. These excursions take place according to weather and lowered child to educator ratios. Children will remain within the Castlevale complex at all times and no roads will be crossed at any time.

## **STAFF TRAINING**

To keep up date with current research and trends in the early childhood field, the centre provides on-going professional development for staff.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Policies provide a sound framework for parent/staff/child interactions as well as guiding all practices within the centre. Policies are kept in a labelled folder on a shelf in the parent library in the front locker/play room along with the Early Years Learning Framework, National Regulations and National Law. These documents are also available online on Storypark as well as in the locker room. You are encouraged to read these at any time. We will share policies weekly on Storypark and any time a policy is updated and ask for your feedback. Many policies will be shared with you upon enrolment via email, as part of our enrolment pack.

## **PARENT GRIEVANCE AND COMPLAINTS POLICY**

If you have any concerns regarding the centre, please discuss these with the relevant staff member or Director, as many concerns can be resolved at this level.

There is also a "Suggestions and Complaints" box on the communication cupboard, if you would like to put it in writing and stay anonymous. We will then forward this complaint to Community Services.

## **EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE (HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY)**

We are required to carry out an emergency evacuation quarterly. The children are told it is a "practice to get out of the building quickly" to keep stress to a minimum. Full details of the evacuation procedure are posted in several positions throughout the centre.

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND CHILD SAFETY**

We prioritise the safety and well-being of every child. To ensure this, all staff members undergo annual refresher courses on child protection, equipping them with updated knowledge and skills. Additionally, we implement a range of strategies aimed at creating a child-safe environment, according to our policies, procedures and codes. Our commitment to child protection is unwavering; staff, including licensee Sue Conroy, are mandatory reporters, and parents are encouraged to report any concerns. We emphasise the importance of promptly assessing if a child is at risk of harm and taking immediate action to safeguard their welfare. Our full Child Protection Policy and Child Safe Policy will be provided as part of our enrolment pack.

**Helpline 132 111**

**NSW early childhood education and care**

1800619113



## **Health and Safety Policy**

At Tree of Life Early Learning School, all staff are required to hold a valid First Aid Certificate. One staff member holding a First Aid Certificate will be on the premises at all times.

### **FIRST AID KIT**

The First Aid Kit is located in the staff room/office with a First Aid Box notice posted on the front of the door opening. A contents list is located inside of the box and staff ensure that adequate supplies are available at ALL TIMES and that no expiry dates are exceeded.

### **IMMUNISATION**

It is recommended by the health authorities that all children be immunised against infectious diseases. On enrolment, we require that the parent state the child's immunisation history and a photocopy of their immunisation form will be taken and filed with your child's enrolment form. If your child is not immunised against a specific disease, your child will be excluded from attending kindy until the outbreak is over. The policy is in line with The Department of Health regulations governing childcare centres. Fees are still payable during this time. Please keep your child at home if they are suffering from a heavy cold or anything infectious and observe the prescribed quarantine periods, which are set by Department of Health. NSW Health publishes information on some infectious diseases of children and their symptoms and exclusion times.

### **PANADOL POLICY (HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY)**

Panadol is to reduce fever and for pain relief. Raised temperatures generally mean illness/sickness. No child is to be at kindy with a temperature above normal. Parents are asked to fill the Authorisation of Panadol section in the enrolment form.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

1. If a child's temperature raises at kindy and reaches 38 degrees Celsius, the parent/emergency contact will be advised to pick up the child immediately. Panadol will be given according to the directions on the bottle for the child's age. This will be witnessed and signed by 2 staff members.
2. Staff member cools the child by removing excess clothing and/or placing a wet washer on the child's forehead if necessary, until parent arrives.
3. Panadol will only be administered after a 4-hour period to ensure there is no associated high temperature.

A sick child is a parent's responsibility, not the Centre's

### **PROCEDURES REGARDING SICK CHILDREN (HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY)**

When should my child not be at kindy?

1. They have had a temperature in the last 24 hours
2. They have had vomiting/diarrhoea in the last 48 hours
3. They have any communicable diseases e.g. measles, chicken pox, head lice, impetigo
4. They have a green runny nose
5. They have a persistent cough

## PROCEDURES REGARDING SICK CHILDREN AT THE CENTRE

Sick children are best cared for at home. Children who exhibit cold and flu symptoms, such as coughing, sneezing, or runny nose, are encouraged to stay at home rather than attend the Centre. If a child is experiencing vomiting, diarrhea (defined as two abnormal stools in one day), a significant fever (38°C or above), or a contagious illness (measles, mumps, chickenpox, conjunctivitis), they must be excluded from the Centre to safeguard the well-being of other children and staff.

Parents are expected to familiarise themselves with and adhere to the information sheets provided, titled "Staying Healthy in Child Care - Recommended Minimum Exclusion Periods" (refer to the Infectious Diseases Policy in your Enrolment Pack). These sheets clearly outline situations in which a child should not attend the centre and those in which attendance is acceptable.

The Director holds the discretion to determine when a child is too ill or infectious to remain in care, and when sending a child home is necessary. These decisions align with our policy book, considering the child's symptoms, temperature, general well-being, and the potential risk of infection to others.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR EACH DAY AT TREE OF LIFE EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL

**The centre Bag** – easily handled by the child and large enough to easily fit all of your child's belongings to promote self-help skills. Bags are placed in the child's locker.

**Spare clothes** – Having your child's own spare clothes at the Centre ensures they feel comfortable and ready for any unexpected adventures, promoting a sense of independence and well-being. Please make sure you send the following labelled clothes to the centre each day and leave them in your child's bag:

- 2 pairs of underpants
- 2 pairs of bottoms
- 2 T-shirts
- 1 jumper
- 1 pair of socks

(Please change your child's spare clothes with the change in seasons)

**Nappies** – You are welcome to bring in a whole nappy packet or at least four nappies per day. We will let you know when nappies run low.

### **A wide brimmed hat**

#### **Food:**

Nut Allergy Policy:

For the safety of all children, we are a nut-aware center and may have children attending who are at risk of anaphylaxis. Therefore, please refrain from including peanuts or tree nuts in your child's snacks and meals.

Healthy Eating and Sustainability:

Ensure your child's snacks and meals adhere to our guidelines:

Morning Tea: Provide a small snack or fruit in a clearly labeled container or plastic bag, separate from the lunch box and afternoon tea.

Lunch: Pack a healthy lunch in a clearly labeled container or bag. Avoid including lollies, chocolate, chips, or junk food. Additionally, please refrain from including peanuts or tree nuts due to allergy risks.

Afternoon Tea: Include a small snack or fruit in a clearly labeled container or plastic bag, separate from the lunch box and morning tea.

To promote sustainability, we encourage nude lunch boxes wherever possible to reduce waste. Please pack snacks and meals in containers that children can open independently, fostering their self-help skills.

## What to Wear

Children should wear comfortable clothing for the centre. Back and shoulders need to be covered as part of our sun protection policy. Paint, mud, sand, play dough and glue are part of the programming. Hats are to be worn for outdoor play. If a child does not have a hat, they are not allowed to play outside. If your child is toilet training, please dress them in bottoms that are easy to pull up and down.

## Belongings and Clothes

All personal items, sheets and clothes are to be clearly labelled with the child's name to assist with returning them to the right home.

## Bedding

Each child needs to bring a fitted cot sheet and flat cot sheet or sleeping bag. A blanket is needed during the colder months. Please make sure all sheets are labelled with your child's name and place in a sleep bag (no plastic bags please) with their name on the front. Children may bring a cuddly toy, bottle or dummy for rest time. Sheets will be sent home for washing each week on the last day of attendance.

## Toys

We ask that toys, other than comforters, are not brought to the centre. Toys tend to get buried, hidden, thrown and broken and can cause conflicts between children. If toys are brought by the children, the staff will not be held responsible for them.

## Celebrations and sharing food

If you would like to bring in food to share for your child's birthday or other celebrations, for allergy/health and safety reasons we only accept ice blocks and recommend Bulla Frozen Yoghurt Mini Iceblocks as a healthier alternative that is easy for the children to manage. Thank you for understanding.



For birthdays, the birthday child gets to sit in a special chair while the group sings happy birthday. We will always ask the child first but please let us know if you think your child would not be comfortable with this.

