

Any Concerns ?

Staff are always available for discussions with parents on any issues relating to their child's attendance and progress at the centre. Questions regarding centre policies and practices can be directed to the Director or to the Group Leader in your child's room. Parents can also express concerns in writing to the Director or Licencee.

The nearest branch of the Department of Communities is located at 21 Cornmeal Street, Maroochydore. Ph. 54750050.

Our centre's website is www.jelly-babies.com. All the current news and issues regarding the centre can be viewed here as well as the monthly newsletter.

Our e-mail address is jelly_babies@bigpond.com. If you need to contact us please use this address. It is checked daily.

Centre Philosophy and Goals

Fun, Colour and Creative Play !

The staff and families of this centre believe that:

- * children are individuals who grow and learn in a unique way
- * self esteem and self confidence should be developed to the fullest extent
- * play is the foundation for developing essential life skills and reaching the child's full potential emotionally, socially, physically and intellectually

We therefore aim to:

- * encourage the child to be an individual and learn to respect the rights and individual differences of others
- * develop the child's mastery of his/her world through curiosity, enthusiasm, interest, spirit and excitement in play, daily routines and spontaneous learning experiences
- * develop the child's growing awareness of the needs and feelings of others
- * encourage the child's independence and sense of responsibility to himself/herself and to others

In our centres programs include all aspects of Preschool and Kindy. We aim to cater for each child's interests, needs and abilities and to foster the development of attitudes and skills which will assist his/her educational development.

Children will:

- * develop effective communication skills
- * develop concepts which will help them to understand their world
- * develop self confidence
- * make friends, share and co-operate with others
- * develop physical skills and co-ordination
- * develop a positive attitude to learning
- * be happy and safe in a caring, nurturing, stimulating environment

Parents and staff of this centre believe in the importance of working in partnership and will therefore work together to promote the development of the whole child.

Development of the Whole Child

Welcome

The staff and management of Sunshine Beach Preschool, Kindy & Child Care Centre would like to welcome all children and families to our centre.

Throughout your child's attendance, we aim to create an exciting, non-threatening environment for all children, staff and families. The staff will be available at all times, should you wish to discuss the centre's operations, your child's progress or any other matter of concern, either personal or professional.

We pride ourselves on offering the highest quality of care available.

This handbook is designed to introduce you to the centre's routines and policies. Please read it carefully and keep it so that you can refer to it as needed.

To our Families

We welcome your interests and visits. Feel free to discuss with us any queries or worries that you may have about your child's education. We would also like you to look often into our busy, happy creative centres and see your child at play. We want you to realize the validity of play and the importance of what your child is learning. By working together, parents and teachers can help each child to develop to his/her full potential. It is the parents responsibility to be familiar with the centre's policies, so please read them carefully.

We are looking forward to working with you.

Hours of Operation

The centre is open from 7:00am to 6:30pm Monday to Friday. We are open 51 weeks of the year (unless otherwise specified) and will be closed on all prescribed public holidays. Late fees will be charged at \$2.00 per minute if staff are required to care for your child after normal hours of operation. Punctuality in collecting your child is important as children may become worried if they are not picked up on time.

Enrolling Your Child

Parents will be required to book their child in for set days of the week to ensure a position. Unfortunately there can be no swapping of days when children do not attend unless prior arrangements have been made with the Director. Fees are payable for each day your child is book in at the centre. If parents wish to change their booked days on a permanent basis they should see the Director. Ability to make these changes will be dependent on availability of places.

Extra Days

Parents who require additional or extra days should request these from staff. Extra days will be available dependent on vacancies and will be charged at the families normal daily rate.

Leaving the Centre

If you need to cancel your child's enrolment, 2 weeks notice must be given to the Director or alternatively 2 weeks fees will be charged. If your child does not attend during this time, child care benefit can not be claimed and therefore parents will be liable for the full daily fee.

Group Sizes

This centre comprises of two buildings. "Little Jellybabies" has 3 rooms catering for 15 months to 4 years and "Big Jellybabies" has 2 rooms catering for 3 to 5 year olds as well as Before and After School Care and Vacation Care. The centre will also provide care for children with additional needs with equality, respect and consideration.

The groups are organised in terms of age, time spent at the centre and regulations set down for Department of Communities. Children are not moved up to the next room immediately after a birthday. We believe that the development of friendships with peers and bonding with staff is a priority. Children move up to an older group after consultation with parents and staff. Parents, teachers and children will discuss their needs and expectations during this process. The groups are as follows:

15 months – 2 years	10 children
2 years – 3 years	12 children
3 years – 4 years	14 children
3 years – 4 years	24 children
4 years – 5 years	24 children

Before and After School Care and Vacation Care as places permit.

Weekly Fees

Weekly fees are determined by family income, number of children in the family using child care services and the amount of child care used each week. The Family Assistance Office uses this information to allocate the family with a Child Care Benefit percentage. All families are encouraged to contact the Family Assistance Office for more information. The nearest office is located at Noosa Civic and can be contacted on 131650.

Our centre offers discounts of \$2.00 per day for children attending on a full-time basis and for children attending 4 days per week.

FEES ARE TO BE PAID INM ADVANCE EACH WEEK (ON THE FIRST DAY OF ATTENDENCE BY YOUR CHILD). Should fortnightly payments be more convenient to you, then these should be paid in advance each two weeks by arrangement with the Director. Please note that failure to comply with the above could result in cancellation of enrolment at the discretion of the management. As with all child care centres, fees are payable for days that are missed and days that fall on public holidays. Please notify the Director if your child is to be absent.

Please note: It is the parents responsibility to ensure that fees are paid weekly and to inform the centre of any changes to family details regarding child care.

Enrolment Bond

There is a \$50.00 enrolment bond payable on commencement. At the time when your child leaves the centre this bond will be refunded by cheque within 10 working days if all fees are paid up to date.

Child Care Benefit

Government Child Care Benefit is available for families.

Child Care Benefit is a payment made by the Commonwealth Government to help families with the cost of quality child care. The purpose is to ensure that all Australian families, including those on lower incomes, can afford child care.

Each eligible family receives the benefits of reduced fees at the time when care is used and paid for, rather than having to wait for reimbursement.

Families may also be entitled to a 50% tax rebate on child care fees which can be claimed every 3 months or at the end of the financial year.

The centre has more information on the Child Care Benefit Programme and the 50% Tax Rebate Scheme available from the reception area.

Families are entitled for Child Care Benefit on their first day of attendance providing the application has been lodged with Centrelink.

Priority of Access Guidelines

The Commonwealth Government has determined "Priorities of Access" guidelines for child care centre. The guidelines rank priority as follows:

- 1.
2. Work force participants where a single parent or both parents are employed, seeking employment or studying/training for future employment
3. Those children or parents with a continuing disability or incapacity
4. Children at risk of serious abuse or neglect
5. Parents at home with more than 1 child below school age and single parents at home

These priorities determine your child's placement at the centre. Therefore, if a priority 1 child requires care another child's needs may be reviewed. Your understanding and co-operation in regards to this matter is appreciated.

Allowable Absences

Those families claiming child care benefit will have child care benefit paid for days absent up to but not exceeding 42 days per financial year. These days will include days children are enrolled at the centre but do not attend for holidays, occasional absences, sick days, public holidays or any other reason. Upon enrolling at the centre parents are required to declare any absences already accrued at any other child care service for the current financial year. It is the parents responsibility to make sure the centre is aware of these absences.

Signing In and Out Daily

Families are required to sign their child **in and out** each day. This is for safety reasons as well as to ensure child care benefit is paid for each day. Parents will be charged the centre's full daily fee for any days where parents have not signed in and out.

Confidentiality

All information regarding children and their families is confidential. Telephone numbers of staff and families using the centre cannot be given out to anyone without prior consent.

Arrival and Departure of Children

On arrival at the centre parents must sign their child in on the register. Each day your child should be placed in the care of a staff member. Children's lunch and drink placed in the appropriate fridge and the child's other belongings placed in a locker.

If your child is to receive medication ensure that the medication form has been completed and the medication is handed to a staff member (not left in child's bag). When departing each day, please inform staff that your child is leaving. You must again sign the register before leaving the centre. Please ensure that your child has collected all their belongings from their locker.

Settling Children Into the Programme

Parents are encouraged to make several visits to the centre before their child commences their enrolment. Short stays of between half an hour to one hour are encouraged so children become familiar with the environment and the staff, therefore easing the pressure and fear of the first day. This is completely negotiable with staff. Some children cope marvelously with the first day and others will require a little extra encouragement. It may take several weeks for your child to settle in, however the staff will communicate openly with you and advise you if your child is not coping. We do everything we can to make these happy days for your child.

What to Bring / What to Do

A large school bag containing:

- a healthy lunch and drink – no junk food, lunches must be of nutritional value
- a hat (clearly named) – NO HAT NO OUTSIDE PLAY!
- old clothes for uninhibited play
- spare clothes
- nappies
- bed lines – a fitted cot sheet in a draw string bag

We endeavour to keep our centre free from nuts and nut products. Please help us in keeping all children safe by not sending peanut butter sandwiches and other nut products.

Parents should apply 30+ sunscreen before their child leaves home as children may be playing outside immediately after their arrival. Staff will re-apply sunscreen during the day.

Lost Property

All your child's belongings must be labeled carefully with a nikko or laundry marker. Every effort is made to return all children's possessions to their bags and children are encouraged to take active responsibility for their own belongings. If children's belongings are named, staff are able to assist children in learning to take care of the belongings. Unnamed items are kept in the lost property box in the reception area for a short time only (health reasons) so please check regularly.

Birthdays

You may like to bring along a cake for your child to share.

Treasures From Home

Toys brought to the centre may be broken or misplaced. We provide a large variety of play materials for the children, therefore we urge you to discourage children from bringing their cherished possessions to the centre. Staff cannot be held responsible for toys brought from home.

Programmes

All programmes reflect upon the centre's philosophy and concentrate on the development of children socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually. Daily and weekly programmes are available for parents perusal at all times. Parents are also able to read the programme in the monthly newsletter. In addition, the support of the Department of Communities and the Quality Improvement and Accreditation System will be utilized in order to provide programmes of the highest quality.

Quality Improvement and Accreditation System

The centre boasts the highest quality possible in all areas including programming, health and safety, interactions with children and parents and management issues. Our current profiles and certificates of accreditation can be viewed in the foyer areas.

Excursions and Outings

Excursions will be programmed as part of your child's learning experiences. These will be low cost and to destinations in the local area. The excursion procedures will be run in accordance with the Child Care Regulations and will have adequate staff/parent supervision. Parents will need to sign the permission form issued to allow their child to attend the excursion.

The centre also organizes incursions where performers are invited into the centre to enhance children's learning.

Health Policy

In consideration of the well-being of others who attend the centre, children displaying signs of an infectious disease (flu, gastroenteritis, chicken pox, measles, mumps, conjunctivitis etc) or a condition (head lice, school sores etc) will not be admitted. If already at the centre, parents will be contacted to collect their child. In the case of an illness your child must not be collected within 1 hour of the centre making contact.

Excluding sick children is an important way of preventing the introduction of infection into the centre. Below is a list of the recommended minimum periods of exclusion as stated by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

Medication Policy

All medication to be administered to a child must be written in the medication folder at the front desk and a doctor's certificate provided. No medication will be administered if this documentation is not provided. Panadol and other pain relievers will be administered only if written permission is provided. Prescribed medication must have written instructions from the pharmacist and be well labeled with the child's name, prescription date and dosage.

In the case of serious accident, children's parents or emergency contact will be notified immediately. If staff feel it necessary to call an ambulance they will do so regardless of the family's membership to the Queensland Ambulance Association. Staff may also see it necessary to transport children to a doctor by vehicle. The centre reserves the right to take the above measures in an emergency. All parents are required to sign the Emergency Agreement section on the back of the enrolment form.

Safety of Children

To ensure the safety of all children, please sign your child in on arrival and out on departure every day. This record allows the staff to be aware of who is in the centre at any given time. It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that their child is signed in and out each day. These signing registers are located at the entrance to each room and are used in the case of an emergency evacuation. To ensure the safety of your child, please make it your daily routine to sign.

All children must be collected by an authorized adult as indicated on the enrolment form. Should anyone else be collecting your child on a particular day written notice must be given to the Director before hand (not via e-mail). If notice has not been received the child will not be released. This ensures your child's safety whilst at the centre. It is the parents responsibility to inform administration staff of any changes to enrolment details immediately.

Emergency Evacuation Drills

The centre holds regular evacuation drills at random throughout the day, at least monthly. If you are present during a drill you will need to follow staff instructions. Evacuation procedures are displayed at the door of each room.

Health and Safety

Our centre maintains a high standard of hygiene and safety practices. To ensure this, the following standards are set:

- Staff and children follow strict hand washing procedures – including washing hands on arrival and departure
- all equipment is checked daily and disinfected regularly
- our centre is a non-smoking environment – including our car park
- safety gates have been provided at the centre...it is the responsibility of all adults to shut them when arriving and departing AND TO ENSURE THAT CHILDREN DO NOT CLIMB, SWING OR RIDE ON THESE GATES
- staff use gloves for food handling and preparation
- toilets and floors are cleaned as needed
- storage of dangerous chemicals are out of reach from children

Staff

Both centres are operated by a team of fully and highly motivated staff. There is a Group Leader and an Assistant allocated to each room with a qualified preschool teacher overseeing the 3-5 year groups. All members of our staff strive to give consistent loving care to your children and provide them with a happy environment rich with learning experiences.

Visitors / Visiting Teachers

No persons with the exception of staff, parents and children will be admitted to the centre without a phone call or a suitable time to both parties being previously arranged. Visiting teachers may often attend the centre to undergo a practical part of their training. These teachers will be introduced to parents in the newsletter and/or by parent posters. This centre also helps local high schools with students undertaking the Certificate III in Children's Services. These students are often in the centre during their work experience component of their training. Under no circumstances will these visitors be left alone with the children.

Parent Involvement

We always have our "Welcome Mat" out for parents. We feel it is important for you to see first hand what happens in our centre and any suggestions and contributions you may have are welcome. Parents are invited to

- share skills
- enjoy and share the daily programme
- discuss the programme and evaluations with staff
- participate in special events / social evenings
- attend and become involved in parent meetings
- participate in excursions and outings
- and much more

Any contribution of your time at the centre will be of great benefit to all involved. It is parents the parents right to have information about the centre's management, so any queries, please feel free to ask.

Sharing Information

Events in family life, such as illness, visitors, accidents or death (including pets) can cause concern or excitement for children, thus affecting their behaviour. We would appreciate sharing in this information.

The centre will issue a monthly newsletter. This is designed to keep our parents well informed on current child care issues, programming in your child's room, special events at the centre and other useful parent information.