

Parent Handbook

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Ph: (07) 3208 2007

Email: rochelle.bevan@groves.qld.edu.au

Opening times 7:00am to 6:00pm

50 weeks per year

Welcome to our Service.

The Parent Handbook outlines important information you will need to be aware of while you are a part of our Service family. It is important that you read over this booklet and ask questions about matters you do not understand. You will find a form at the back of this booklet which you must sign and return to the Service to indicate that you have read the information in this booklet and your enrolment pack.

Our Service has an open door policy. You and your family are welcome to visit the Service at any time.

Our Policies

All our policies are available in the policy folder located in the front foyer on the white bookcase and on the ipad in Senior Kindy Room

Please feel free to look and provide feedback on our policies at any time.

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Introduction

Welcome to Groves Christian College Early Learning Centre. Finding a new education and care Service for your child can be a daunting task. At (Groves Christian College Early Learning Centre our aim is to provide a secure and happy environment where children can develop their intellectual, social, emotional, physical, aesthetic skills to become competent and confident individuals, and for you as a parent/guardian to feel safe knowing that your child is receiving the best possible care.

We believe the best way to work with you and your child is by building a **partnership of education and care**. To do this we want you to feel:

Welcomed, recognised, acknowledged and respected by all our Educators.

That your child is really known by, and really knows, the people who care for him or her.

You are given lots of information about what is occurring and are asked for your views.

You are involved in making decisions about your child's experiences.

You and your child are received and greeted upon arrival.

Your child is happy, secure and engaged.

Your child is not just looked after but really educated and cared for.

Contact Persons

Approved Provider Christian Community Ministries

Nominated Supervisor Rochelle Bevan

Certified Supervisors Frances Potaka, Jessica Greenslade and Ling Jing
Educational Leader Rochelle Bevan

Regulatory Authorities

Our Service complies with the National Quality Framework (NQF) including the National Quality Standard (NQS), the Early Years Learning Framework (or other Approved Framework) and the National Regulations (Education and Care Services National Regulations).

Our Service is regulated by the new national body for early education and care – the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) as well as the state licensing department in our State/Territory. To contact our Regulatory Authority, please refer to the contact details below –

Queensland

Office for Early Childhood Education and Care Department of Education, Training and Employment
www.education.qld.gov.au 1800 637 711, ecce@dete.qld.gov.au, PO BOX 15033 CITY EAST QLD 4002

Education, Curriculum and Learning

We will be following the Early Years Learning Framework (or other Approved Framework) as per our Education, Curriculum and Learning Policy.

Our Educational Leader is Rochelle Bevan.

All Educators at our Service are trained and experienced in areas of early education and care. Due to our high standard and commitment of our Educators, we are able to provide developmental and educational curricula for each group of children.

We will use the relationships children have with their families and communities to build the curriculum, working in partnership with parents, to ensure each child's knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of our programs.

Early Years Learning Framework Learning (EYLF)

Learning Outcomes:

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

- Children feel safe, secure, and supported
- Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency
- Children develop knowledgeable and confident self identities
- Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect

Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

- Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation
- Children respond to diversity with respect
- Children become aware of fairness
- Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

- Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing
- Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

- Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity
- Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, enquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating
- Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another
- Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials

Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

- Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes
- Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts
- Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media
- Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work
- Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking

If your child's Educator feels there is an area of concern, they will inform you and advise where help may be sought, e.g. speech therapist. It is always your decision to follow this up. Educators are willing to discuss any aspect of learning and development with parents.

Grievances, Complaints and Feedback

If for any reason you are not happy with our level of education and care or our environment we want to know immediately. You can discuss this with Educators or write a formal letter. When any matter is raised the Service will be following our Grievance Procedure. All Service policies/procedures are available to parents. Positive feedback is most welcome too.

Child Care Benefits

A family subsidy (Child Care Benefit) is available from the Family Assistance Office (FAO). The Family Assistance Office will assess parents' taxable income and a scale will be used to determine the amount of assistance each family will receive. The assistance may be claimed at a reduced Service fee or at the end of the financial year. Every family regardless of their income is entitled to this assistance.

The Child Care Rebate covers 50% of out of pocket expenses up to a maximum amount each year. The Child Care Rebate is not income tested. If you are claiming Child Care Benefit you are eligible for the Child Care Rebate if you meet a "work study test".

For further details please speak to our Nominated Supervisor or contact FAO on 13 6150.

Opening Hours

The Service is opened for **11** hours per day, **50 weeks** per year and caters for children 15 months-6 years.

The Daily Routine

We provide an environment where the children feel comfortable and secure at all times, and all our rooms have daily routines that reflect this. Our routines are designed to maximise each child's opportunities to learn and develop.

Throughout the day the children will experience a number of different activities which are part of the educational and developmental curriculum operated by all of our Educators. These will be based on the interests, skills and knowledge of the children and include aspects of their culture, family and community.

Each room will display their routine which parents may read, and educators will be happy to answer any questions. There are summer and winter routines which are adapted to the weather conditions.

Services Offered

Long Day Care

Kindergarten Program

Age Groups

The Service has three rooms which promotes a spacious, warm and inviting environment for all our children at the Service. The rooms are:

Junior Kindy: 15mths-2.5 years

Kindy: 2-3 years

Senior Kindy/Kindergarten 3-5 years

Children

Those First Weeks

The introduction into long day care can be difficult for children and parents. Children's welfare and happiness are the priority for educators when welcoming new children to the Service and when assisting the family to settle into the Service environment. It is recognised that families' needs will vary greatly in the orientation process and individual needs will be addressed.

The following outlines some helpful hints for parents on settling their child into care:-

Make sure you familiarise your child with the environment and the people in the environment (children and adults) by coming in for visits before commencing care.

- Ease your child into care with short stays to begin with.
- Provide a favourite toy, blanket or comforter to support your child when they are separating from you or settling to sleep. This can help your child feel more secure.
- If your child is unsettled, short visits with you will help your child to gain trust with an unfamiliar environment. These visits can be made on a day when your child is not booked to attend.
- Your child will be reassured when they see positive interactions between Educators and parents or Educators and other children, and this will help them to establish trust in an unfamiliar setting.
- Try to talk at home about child care. Mention the names of the Educators and other children. Talk about the things the child will be able to do at child care that are fun and enjoyable.
- Talk to the Educators about your child, for example, what they like to do; successful ways of settling them to sleep; foods they like and dislike and so on. This helps Educators to get to know your child.
- When leaving your child it is best to make sure you say goodbye and then leave. Hesitating and not going after you have said your goodbyes only confuses them, especially if they are upset. Reassure your child that everything is alright and you will return later. This can help them to settle.
- It sometimes helps to establish a routine when leaving. For example, giving your child a cuddle and then passing them an Educator, or sitting down with them to read a book or for a short play before leaving.
- At first some children protest strongly while others may take a day or two to realise that you are leaving them and begin to protest after several days. Children soon learn that you do return and in the mean time they are well cared for.

What to Bring

15 months-5 years

- A change of clothing that is weather appropriate (younger children- especially those toilet training- will need extra changes)
- A security item for rest time.
- Nutritious morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea. These are to be brought in a plastic lunch box.
- Nappies if required.

Birthdays

Your child's birthday is a special event in his/her life. To celebrate your child's birthday, you are welcome to bring in birthday cakes. Please check with your child's educator prior to the birthday that what you plan to bring in is suitable for all children, including those who may have allergies or special dietary requirements.

Clothing

Parents are advised to send their children to the Service in comfortable, inexpensive clothing. The children need to be able to move around during play and should be unimpaired by clothing. While paints etc will come out in the wash, accidents do happen so please don't send your child in expensive or designer clothing. Young children enjoy and need "messy" play with paint, clay, sand, water and mud.

The Service only has a limited supply of spare clothing. Please supply at least one change of clothing and underwear (for those children out of nappies) in case of accidents. Toddlers should have about three complete changes of clothing and plenty of training pants.

Please label your child's clothing and replace name tags if they fade in the wash. Ensure clothing is suitable for the weather.

Clothing safety

Please do not dress your child in clothing with cords e.g. shorts, hats, as these have the potential to become caught on equipment and may cause serious harm to your child.

Belongings

Please ensure all belongings are clearly labelled including dummies, clothes etc. Lost property will be displayed for parent collection in your child's room. Parent co-operation in labelling assists the Service in keeping your child's belongings together.

It is appreciated if personal possessions are not brought to the Service e.g. guns, toys etc. Any possessions brought must come entirely at the parent's own risk with regards to breakage or loss. A soft toy or security item for rest time is acceptable.

We welcome and encourage family input and news/weekend sheets can be placed in 'News Box'.

Lockers

Each child is allocated a locker. Please place bags etc in your child's locker. If your child attends less than five days per week, they will share their locker with another child.

Guidance and Discipline

Educators follow a Behaviour Guidance Policy which extends across the whole Service giving consistency of expectation in all rooms. This policy allows children to develop self-discipline, a respect for others, for property and respect for self.

The policy aims are:-

To give all children the opportunity to expand their experiences of life in a productive, safe environment that allows individuals the right to safety, tolerance, self-expression, cultural identity, dignity and the worth of the individual, along with honesty in dealing with peers and caregivers.

- To be taught to respect the rights and needs of others by foreseeing the outcome of their behaviour and the consequences of their behaviour.
- To encourage the individual social development of each child.

If you require further information on this policy please ask Educators and refer to the policy book.

Rest and Sleep

Rest time routine varies according to individual needs. We aim to make rest time a relaxed, pleasant time for all children. We provide stretcher beds for children. Your child may wish to bring a security item, pillow or blanket to have at rest time. Please feel free to discuss your child's rest needs with Educators.

Parents

We believe the best way to work with you and your child is by building a **partnership of care**. To do this we want you to feel

You are given lots of information about what is happening and you are asked for your views

Communication Communication Communication

What is the best way to communicate with you?

Everybody has a different communication style and time for communication. We understand that mornings and afternoons can be a little rushed, and not the best time to discuss your child. We have many types of communication we use for families in the Service just like you.

Confidentially and Discretion

Information received through written and spoken communication with families will be treated with discretion.

At any time if you require a **private discussion with our Educators**, please inform us. This can happen face to face or by phone.

What type of communication do you prefer?

- Newsletter
- Phone calls to your work
- Emails
- Letters
- Face to face

You can tell us your preferred way of communicating on page 13.

Ways we communicate news/events at the Service:

- Verbally at arrival and departure times.
- Regular newsletters which will be sent home via the children's individual pockets once a month.
- A message section on the day book, where brief notes can be left between Educators and parents.
- A notice board where various messages and notices are displayed advertising current issues and upcoming events.
- A fees/communication box allows parents to leave more detailed written messages if they have concerns or want to provide positive or negative feedback. These can be anonymous if desired.
- Occasionally Educators will ask parents to complete short surveys in order to maintain up to date records and seek parent feedback on various topics.
- Each family will be allocated an individual pocket in which newsletters, accounts and other written communication will be placed. ***It is the parent's responsibility to read these notices and ensure they are aware of current issues and events in the Service.***
- Policies will be regularly reviewed in a variety of ways (sign in area, newsletters and via files to enable parent comment on Service practices).

COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATORS

What can you expect from Educators?

Educators will :

- inform families promptly and sensitively of any out of the ordinary incidents affecting their child.
- share with children's families some of the specific interactions they had with the children during the day.
- provide information on children's eating and sleeping patterns through verbal communication and through the room sign in sheet.
- keep an appropriate record of joint decisions made with families affecting children's progress, interests and experiences. (These may include new events like toilet training.)

Please feel free at any time in person, by phone or email to discuss your child's progress, relationship, interest and experiences.

Hours of Operation

Service hours are from 7.00am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday, 50 weeks per year.

Priority of Access

Please refer to our Enrolment Policy for more information about the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations' (DEEWR) requirements for Priority of Access.

Court Orders

Parents must notify the Service if there are any Court Orders affecting residency of their children and a copy is required for the Service. Without a Court Order we cannot stop a parent collecting a child.

Arrival and Departure

For safety and security reasons ALL children must be signed in on arrival, and signed out on departure. The times must be noted. No child will be allowed to leave our Service with a person who is not stated on the enrolment form, unless prior arrangements are made with the Nominated Supervisor.

Commencement Fees

On enrolment we will require a \$50 administration **fee** per family to be paid before your child commences at the Service. This is non-refundable and goes towards your first weeks fees.

Service Fees

- \$68.00 per day
- Holiday fee \$58.00 per day

It is our policy that all accounts are to be at a nil balance each week i.e. there should be no fees outstanding.

Accounts in arrears will be subject to care being cancelled.

Accounts

On your first week at our Service you will be required to pay your administration fee and you will receive a statement on the next billing cycle.

Any change of financial income will alter your fee structure. Please advise our Service and Family Assistance Office (13 6150) if this occurs. Payments can be made direct deposit.

Late Fees

If your child is collected from the Service after 6.00pm, you will be charged a late fee which is \$15.00 for the first 10 minutes or part thereof and \$1.50 per minute after 6.10pm. This will be added onto your account.

Attendance and Absence

Once a child is enrolled at the Service, payment of fees must continue during the child's absence for illness, **public holidays**, annual holidays etc. When a child is absent for any reason we must be notified. The Service is open for fifty weeks per year; the only period during which we are closed is Public Holidays and two weeks at Christmas. Dates will be advised.

Allowable Absences

Refer to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) for information about allowable absences.

Waiting List

When our rooms have full enrolment, children's names will be put onto a waiting list. Once a position is vacant, parents are then contacted about placement. When parents wish to change days, this can be effective immediately if enrolments

for that day are not full. If they are full the child's name will be placed on a waiting list. Once a position is available, days will then be adjusted. Our waiting list gives priority to working parents as per the Priority of Access Guidelines.

Notice of Withdrawal

Refer to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) for information about withdrawals from care.

Health & Safety

The Service provides a healthy and safe environment for children, Educators and families– please refer to our policies covering nutrition, hygiene, medication and infectious diseases. Children with contagious illnesses must be kept at home. A doctor's certificate must be presented to the service when the children returns showing the infection is no longer contagious.

Food Allergies

Please inform the Nominated Supervisor if your child has any allergy or anaphylaxis.

Illness

NO CHILD will be admitted with obvious signs of any contagious infection or illness. Our policy states the incubation period, symptoms and exclusion periods of such diseases. Children who are not immunised will not be allowed to attend the Service.

Medication

Educators will be able to administer medication to children who are recovering from illness if a medication form has been completed and signed by parents before the medication is given. The nominated supervisor or an educator can assist you to complete the form.

Medication must be in date, in it's original container with the original label, have the child's name on the label, and have any instructions about the medication (including those from a GP) attached to the medication.

Medication must be handed to an Educator for appropriate storage. **Please DO NOT leave medication in your child's bag.**

Any child who has commenced an antibiotic must not attend the Service for 24 hours from commencement.

Medical Conditions including asthma and anaphylaxis

The Service aims to provide a safe environment for children who have identified medical conditions. It is Service policy that a Medical Management Plan be completed by parents/guardians in consultation with the family doctor. The Plan should include a photo of your child, state what triggers the medical condition, what first aid is needed, contact details for the doctor who signed the plan and state when the Plan should be reviewed. This must be completed and returned before enrolment commences.

Our service will develop a Risk Minimisation Plan which is based on information in the Medical Management Plan.

Parents are responsible for updating their child's Medical Management Plan or providing a new Plan when necessary.

Sun Protection

Our Service's policy is "no hat, no play". This policy will be enforced. Our Centre will provide your child with a legionnaires hat with their name on it. We ask that

Children are required wear sun safe clothing that covers as much of the skin as possible when outdoors. Please dress your child in clothing that will protect them from the sun.

Accidents and Illness

The nominated supervisor will contact parents immediately if a child is involved in a serious accident or illness at the Service. As a matter of extreme importance parents must ensure that the Service has up to date emergency contact numbers. An incident report will be filled out for all accidents, injuries and illnesses. This will contain details of the accident /injury/illness, any first aid that was administered, and be signed an educator, the Nominated Supervisor and by the parent.

Emergency Drills

Throughout the year the Service will hold emergency drills which occur at any given time throughout the day. These are carried out in a well-organised and orderly manner. Educators will be trained in using the fire extinguishers that are in the Service. A emergency escape plan will be displayed in every room.

Using the Service Safely

Never leave children unattended in cars while collecting children from the Service.

Cars parks are dangerous places for children. Always hold children's hands when arriving and leaving the Service.

Never leave a door or gate open.

Never leave your children unattended in a room.

Children are not permitted into the kitchen and laundry areas.

Workplace Health and Safety Feedback

We welcome all feedback regarding the safety of our Service. If you see something that concerns you regarding safe work practices, the safety of building and equipment or general Work health and Safety, please contact the Nominated Supervisor immediately.

Educators: qualifications and ratios

We meet all legal requirements in relation to child to educator ratios and the qualifications of our educators. All Educators will hold First Aid qualifications, have Working with Children Checks completed and attend monthly Educators' meetings. Our Educators are continually evaluating how our curriculum meets the education needs of our children and reflecting on ways to improve children's learning and development. They are encouraged to attend further professional training and development.

For further details on the qualifications of the Educators, please see our Nominated Supervisor.

Conclusion

We guarantee your child will have a happy, safe and secure relationship with our Service and our Educators and that the time he or she is in our care will be positive and fulfilling.

Important Contacts and Information for Families

The Service provides families with current information on child and family resources and services accessible in the local community.

Our Service has a parent library with resources you may find helpful.

ACECQA is the new national body ensuring early childhood education and care across Australia is high quality

Address:	Level 15, 255 Elizabeth Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000
Postal Address:	PO Box A292, Sydney, NSW 2000
Email:	<u>enquiries@acecqa.gov.au</u>
Phone:	1300 422 327

Family Assistance Office

Phone: 13 6150

Australian Childhood Immunisation Register

Phone: 1800 653 809

Local Contacts

Community Health and Resource Service

97-103 Cnr Wembley and Ewing Roads
Logan Central QLD 4114

Speech Therapist

Dallas Fong (Certified Practicing Speech Pathologist & Director)
Unit 13 3442 Pacific Highway Springwood 4127 (above Blockbusters)

Phone: 0434 589 769

Fax: 07 3133 0410

Email: dallas@playwithwords.com.au

Occupational Therapist

Logan Community Health Centre Logan Ph: 07 3275 5411

Emergency Services

Police, Fire, Ambulance

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Logan Hospital

Phone: (07) 3299 8899

Fire Station

Woodridge

95 Kingston Road

Woodridge QLD 4114

Ph: 3441 8101

Local Immunisation Clinic

Logan Central Library

26 Wilbur Street, Logan Central

Every Thursday (excluding Public Holidays)

3.30 pm - 7 pm

Informative Websites For Parents

We have a list of useful websites for parents. Please ask educators for a copy.

Raising Children Network

The Australian parenting website: comprehensive, practical, expert child health and parenting information and activities covering **children** aged 0-8 years.

raisingchildren.net.au/

Better Health Channel - quality consumer health information quality-assured, regularly reviewed, health and wellbeing information and services. This site is sponsored by the State Government of Victoria

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/

Parent Involvement

Family Skills, Interests and Talents

We welcome and encourage the involvement of all parents/families at our Service. Your ideas, experiences and skills are greatly valued and will enable us to extend each child's interests, abilities and knowledge. There are many ways for your family to be involved. We understand that our busy lives can't always afford the time, however any contribution no matter how big or small is much appreciated. Here are just a few ideas.

Your Occupation or Hobby

Your child loves you and when they get to childcare all they talk about is you. You are the most important person in their world. We welcome all parents to the Service to talk about their occupation or hobby (eg music, craft, cooking). Everything parents do interest children and these talks are the best educational resources you can provide for the Service. We use information that has come from discussions about occupations and hobbies in our programming and the ideas explored from parent talks can last for weeks.

Your Home Culture

Your home culture is most welcome in our Service. We would greatly appreciate if you were able to share with our Service aspects of your culture and family life. This would assist us to enrich the lives of all our families and children.

Reading (especially good for grandparents)

Children love to be read to. If you or your parents have the time please contact your room Educators to organise a day for reading.

Please tell us what you can offer and your availability on the enrolment form.

Useful Junk - We are always on the lookout for recyclable items for the rooms. Empty food containers, ribbons, wrapping paper, towel tubes (not toilet or egg or milk because of hygiene and allergy issues) paper or anything interesting from your work is much appreciated.

Family Photos – Our aim is to create a warm, friendly and homely environment. One way we like to achieve this is by having family photos displayed. Please bring in a photo of your family for us to display in the room.

Concerts and Special Events

Our Service organises special events throughout the year. Keep an eye out as your child is sure to be a star!

Suggestions

Parents are welcome to visit or call the Service at any time. If you have any suggestions or ideas on how we best can work together in the Service please let us know.

If you have any concerns, please see your child's educator or the Nominated Supervisor. We have a grievance procedure if you would like to formally raise any concerns

REMEMBER

When your family becomes involved with the Service, no matter how small or big your involvement, your child will be experiencing the connection between home and our Service.

Please read this handbook carefully so you fully understand the commitment that you are undertaking and your responsibilities to the Service. When you have done so please sign and return this page to the Nominated Supervisor.

Thank you.

Family name: _____ **Parent's Full Names:** _____

Child/(children)'s name: _____

Please list what skills talents, interest and culture that you and your family (not forgetting grandparents) are able to share with the Service.

I have completed the enrolment form at the Service. I have read and agree to comply with the requirements set out in this handbook and in the Service's policies.

Signed: _____ **Dated:** _____

Have you completed the orientation evaluation Yes No

Communication

Please indicate the best way to communicate with you:

- Newsletter
- Phone calls to your work
- Emails
- Letters
- Face to face

Please Remember

We encourage family participation and involvement in the Service. This allows you to see first hand what we do and your child sees that there is a connection between home and the Service.

We welcome your feedback and view **"Feedback As A Gift"**