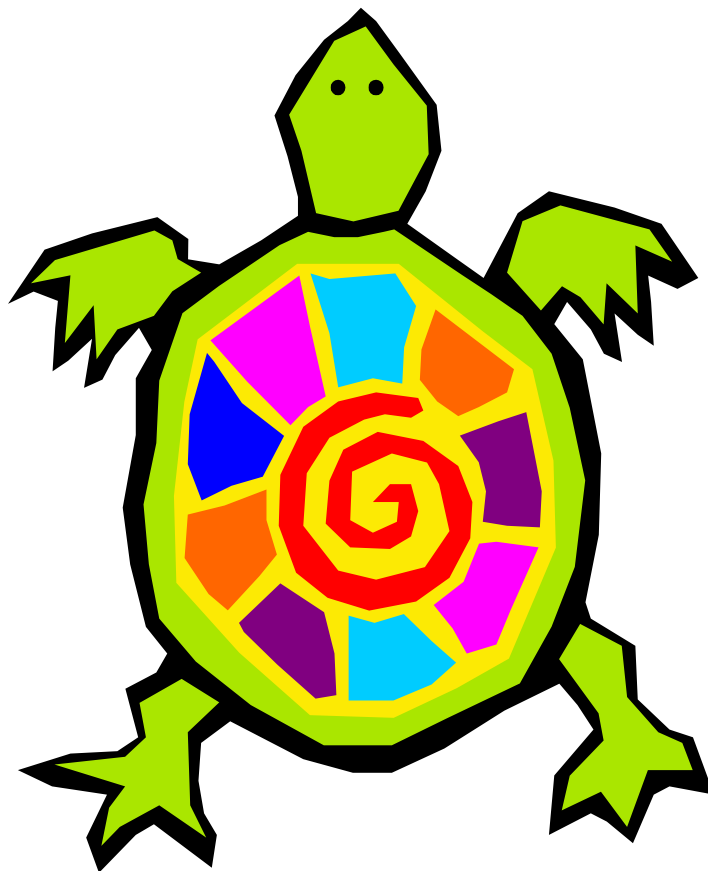


ARNHEM EARLY LEARNING CENTRE PTY LTD

(ABN: 39 128 278 026)

CENTRE HANDBOOK



"learning through discovery!"

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Phone: 08 8987 1004
Fax : 08 8987 2004
Version: 1.07.2011

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ARNHEM EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

On behalf of the staff, I would like to welcome you and your child / children to our centre. We aim to provide an environment that promotes play, education and experience allowing your child to "Learn through Discovery". Should you require translation services please contact the Director who will endeavor to assist.

ABOUT OUR CENTRE

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The Arnhem Early Learning Centre is privately owned and managed. Day to day management of the centre is the responsibility of the Director.

The Arnhem Learning Centre is licensed for 75 places catering for four age groups. Babies (3-18months), Toddlers (18months to 3 years), Over 3's (3 to 5 years) and OSHC (5 to 12 years). We operate 52 weeks of the year, Monday to Friday, 6.30am - 5.30pm. (Each group of children has a group leader and assistants, which is as per licensing requirements). The group leader is responsible for daily programming, which is designed to allow each child the experiences to grow, learn and develop. The assistant is in a support role to the group leader and will also work with the children to achieve the same goal.

We understand that children grow, learn and develop at their own pace, and over time they will progress to the next group. Our staff will prepare the child for the transition to the next group and parents will be consulted and a period of "settling in" visits will be arranged for your child to enable them to adapt.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

At the Arnhem Early Learning we believe it is important for children to feel safe and comfortable in their surroundings. We strive to foster a sense of belonging so that children feel confident becoming involved in experiences and offer play based learning within the environment.

We value and respect all parent input and encourage parents to take advantage of our open door policy. We understand families are the children's first and most influential educators and we aim to work in partnership with all families and share children's attempts and successes together.

In consultation with parents we will provide programs and experiences that give children the opportunity to make choices and take on new challenges. Our programs will reflect the needs and interests of every child and we will provide opportunities for children to further develop their social, emotional, cognitive, physical, language and self help skills.

Our objective for our children is to explore the many different aspects of the environment; demonstrate real life experiences, expand children's curiosity and thinking, and acknowledge and respect the diversity of all children's backgrounds.

We strive to provide an accepting environment where the gender, additional needs, cultural and socio economic background of the staff, children, families and community as a whole are respected and catered for.

Our philosophy and goals come in line with the Early Years Framework (Belonging, Being and Becoming). This will reflect our practices and decisions and guide all activities within our centre.

Our goal is to guide children positively through their everyday life experiences, model appropriate behaviours, show genuine affection, understanding and respect for all children so they can reach their full potential.

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"Learning through Discovery".

MISSION STATEMENT

To benefit the community through providing quality child care to meet the needs of families and to promote an environment of positive interaction and support among all those involved with the service.

VALUES AND GOALS

At Arnhem Early Learning Centre we acknowledge and respect the fact that each child is individual and we will aim to nurture the child's health, well-being and developmental skills according to their individual needs.

Our aim is to provide high quality care which is within the guidelines and licensing requirements provided by the NT Children's Services Unit.

Our aim is to provide the children with programs that enable positive learning outcomes and facilitate physical, social, emotional and intellectual development with support and positive guidance. Your child's journals will be displayed in each room and each child will have a learning journal. Programs for each group are available please ask the group leader to view them.

Our staff aim to develop programs that are not only developmentally appropriate to meet the needs of each child, but they also aim to allow the children to "Learn Through Discovery".

There is a balance between active and quiet; indoor and outdoor; individual and group; free play and directed activities for the children to participate in.

Our staff regularly evaluate their programs, routines, individual children's progress and their own performance. We invite parents to provide their participation in these evaluation processes as it allows this information to be used in future planning of the program.

GENERAL INFORMATION

CENTER OPENING HOURS

Arnhem Early Learning Centre is licensed to open from 6.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday. The centre is open for 52 weeks of the year, and closed on all gazetted public holidays.

AGE GROUPS

Four (4) age groups are cared for in the centre. They are as follows:

Babies:	3 months to 18 months
Toddlers:	18 months to 3 years

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Over 3's: 3 years to 5 years
OSHC: 5-12 years (Before/After School Care and Vacation Care)

We also offer a Preschool bus run service where qualified staff will transport your child to and from Nhulunbuy Preschool. We also provide a bus run to and from school. See our "Transportation Policy" in the foyer area.

These groupings may be reviewed from time to time to meet the needs of the community.

PRIORITY OF ACCESS

Every approved child care service has to abide by the guidelines stated below. They are used when there is a waiting list for the child care service.

There are three (3) categories of eligibility for childcare in this centre when filling vacant places:

- Priority 1:** a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect:
Priority 2: a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under Section 12 of the 'A New Tax System (Family Assistant) Act 1999';
Priority 3: any other child

Within these main categories priority should also be given to the following children:

- Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families;
- Children in families which include a disabled person;
- Children in families which include an individual whose adjustable taxable income does not exceed the lower threshold of \$38 763 for 2010-11, or who's partner is on income support;
- Children in families from a non-English speaking background;
- Children in socially isolated families; and
- Children of single parents.

(Source - www.deewar.gov.au)

ENROLMENT PROCEDURES

Prior to enrolling a child in the centre a Waiting List form may be required if all placements are currently filled.

To enrol a child at the centre we request that parents complete the following steps:

- Completion of the "Enrolment Booklet" which contains all of the forms required for the centre
- Attend an interview with the Director

EMERGENCY & EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Located in each room and in the foyer is the Emergency Evacuation Plan, which includes the route to follow to exit the building and the assembly area.

Arnhem Early Learning Centre will have an emergency fire drill practice on a regular basis. This is to ensure that children become familiar with the process and understand

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why it is happening. If you are at the Centre at the time of the drill, you will be required to participate in this procedure.

The drill will be discussed with the children before the evacuation takes place to ensure that they do not become upset during the process.

Our building and equipment are regularly monitored to ensure that all standards are met and any areas that need attention are addressed immediately.

CHILD CARE BENEFIT

The Child Care Benefit (CCB) is a subsidy provided by the Commonwealth Government to approved long day care centres and other providers. This subsidy is then applied to the fees that parents are required to pay. Parents may apply for CCB through the Family Assistance Office (FAO) which is available online or by phone on 13 61 50 or based at Centrelink here in Nhulunbuy.

CCB is based on each family's estimated yearly income and the responsibility is on each family to ensure that they have a current Assessment Notice in order to receive the benefit.

If you do not have a current Assessment Notice, full fees will be charged.

Please provide to the centre your Family and Child CRN numbers and date of birth information as per what Centrelink have on their system, a print out is best.

We strongly advise that you read and return information or forms that are sent to you from the FAO. This is to ensure that you remain current with CCB.

In order to receive CCB it is mandatory that parents sign their child / children in and out of the centre every day that they attend care. It is also important to inform the centre if you will be absent from care and sign the attendance sheets giving the reason for the absence eg; holidays, illness, etc

PARENT PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION

Our centre adopts an open door policy where parents and family members are welcome at the centre at any time. We appreciate that parents/guardians are the child's first teachers and encourage family members to be involved in the centre's program.

The centre aims to welcome parent participation in all aspects of the centre's activities and allow them to be comfortable with their individual level of involvement. For example:

- Spend some time and read a book or do a puzzle with your child and his / her friends
- Visit the centre to join in with activities
- Volunteer as a helper for excursions or outings
- Come outdoors and kick a ball or play a game with the children
- Collection of scrap materials for arts and crafts
- Sharing your special interest with group e.g. music or cooking
- Sewing or mending of dress up clothes
- Maintenance of books, toys or equipment

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- Fundraising
- Attending social events e.g. Christmas party, Easter parade etc.

It is important to all of the children that parents show and interest in them, it enables them to feel valued and gives a sense of pride.

We will endeavour to communicate with parents through a variety of ways including newsletters, informal chats, formal meetings, notices, displays, signs, account updates, phone calls, email, suggestion box, feedback forms etc. If you have a preferred method of communication please advise us on your enrolment form and we will try to assist you with this.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

In order to avoid incident or upset we ask that parents consider the following when arriving and departing from the centre:

- Drive carefully into and out of the car park
- Arrive with time to spare so that if required you have time to settle your child in
- Take the time to advise staff of your child's well being and start to the day as well as anything that may contribute to their behaviour for the day, eg; late night, restless sleep, breakfast etc
- Always sign your child in (or out) and advise the group leader that they have arrived or are departing
- Reassure your child that you or your nominated collection person will be waiting to hear all about their day when you return to pick them up

CHILDREN'S CLOTHING

We request that parents dress their child appropriately for the climate. Ensure that all clothing is labelled with the child's name, send clothes for two or three changes throughout the day, consider sun protection when choosing clothing, appropriate footwear and be aware the clothes may be damaged in messy play.

POLICIES

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Parents / Guardians are entitled to practices that ensure that information relating to their child will remain confidential.

Centre staff and management protect the privacy and confidentiality of the individual by ensuring that all records relating to the child, family and staff are kept in a secure place. This information is only accessed by, or disclosed to those that need the information to fulfill their responsibilities at the centre, or those who have a legal right to the information.

Staff will not disclose any details regarding your child's attendance and enrolment at the centre, nor the names of children who have caused injury to others whilst at the centre. This is to safeguard each family's privacy.

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All staff shall complete an Confidentiality Policy and Agreement form upon commencement. Confidential and private conversations will be conducted in a quiet area away from children, parents and staff.

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY

Arnhem Early Learning Centre understands that each child is unique and individual; our policy is to use positive guidance strategies that encourage children to co-operate, enhance their self-esteem and encourage their ability to interact with others.

Our staff are trained in developmentally appropriate responses to children's behaviours and support children in understanding the consequences of their actions. A pro-active approach encourages the child to recognize their feelings and express those feelings in an appropriate manner.

Arnhem Early Learning Centre staff utilise a variety of strategies to respond to inappropriate behaviour including:

- Positive re-direction
- Being role models through correct behaviour and language
- Listening to the child's individual problems and needs
- Allowing children to experience consequences when this is safe and desirable
- Teaching children to take the other's perspective
- Teaching of problem solving
- Creating a "child friendly" environment
- Giving reasons for rules and consequences
- Giving choices
- Involving children in "owning" or developing the rules as they are able
- Encouragement and celebration of small steps towards achievements
- Consistency-be consistent with expectations and rules

Behaviour management strategies should be flexible-what may be suitable for one child may not be suitable for another child.

Arnhem Early Learning Centre staff, are encouraged to discuss behaviour with parents in an aim to provide a consistent approach in behaviour management. If a significant event has occurred, such as illness, death of a pet or family member, moving house, custody issues etc., we encourage families to communicate with staff, so that staff can respond to any changes in a child's behaviour with empathy.

Our staff are aware that cultural, religious and varying parental styles need to be considered when planning programs and allow for this in their daily routines. If staff and parents find inappropriate behaviours are ongoing and behaviour guidance and management strategies are ineffective, additional support may be sought through meeting with the director and Group Leader, or external resources may be required if the parent chooses, eg: speech pathologist, audiologist, inclusion support worker etc.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Arnhem Early Learning Centre is committed to child protection and child safe environments and has a duty of care to ensure that all persons are provided with a high level of safety and protection during the hours of the service's operation.

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It is understood by the 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.

Suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect will be recorded and reported to the appropriate authorities.

FEES POLICY

Upon enrolling your child you will be provided with information outlining the fee structure for our service and the payment options available to you. An information booklet will also be provided which explains the CCB for your child. This will need to be activated prior to your child beginning care, so please contact the Family Assistance office promptly. Full fees are payable until the CCB confirmation is received by the centre.

All families will be charged a non-refundable Enrolment Fee of \$50.00 upon initial enrolment which for this you will receive a centre t-shirt and hat for your child. This also provides you with a full information package detailing our policies of the centre. A bond of \$350 will also be payable on enrolment. This will be refunded at the end of your care but will be used to finalise your account if any outstanding amount is due. All families are required to give 2 weeks written notice to cease care.

It is the policy of Arnhem Early Learning Centre that fees be paid in advance weekly, fortnightly or monthly. Some families may make alternate arrangements, which can be arranged on an individual basis and must also be in advance. If you are having financial difficulty paying your fees contact the Director to arrange a payment plan.

All fees must remain 2 WEEKS IN ADVANCE at all times.

If fees are outstanding for more than 2 weeks a written notice will be issued. If fees are outstanding for more than 4 weeks a second written notice will be issued and failure to pay the outstanding balance within 14 days will result in the Director passing information to a debt collection agency and your child's enrolment at the centre will be cancelled and another family offered your place.

It is preferred that fees are paid electronically via **Payway Direct Debit Authority**. We also accept direct deposit and EFTPOS.

If at any time you need information regarding your account please speak to the Director or Administration Officer.

Holidays and Public Holidays

The centre is not open for care on Public Holidays and the fee for that day is still charged as per normal as we hold your place in anticipation of your return.

If going on private holiday / annual leave, the Holiday form must be completed prior to going on holiday and this advice is to be returned to the Director for signature, at least 2 weeks in advance. Half price fees will be charged for the period that you will be on holidays, as this will hold your place in anticipation of your return. This is to a maximum of 4 weeks per financial year.

Failure to advise the centre that you will be on holiday indicates that you have left the centre and your child's place will be offered to another family.

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Late Fees

A late fee will be charged if your child is left at the centre after their contracted hours of care. There is a five (5) minute grace period, however if your child is continually left at the centre after the contracted hours of care, a meeting will be arranged with the Director to discuss the issue. This late fee is charged at \$1.00 per minute after the grace period and the late fee is not subject to CCB.

Sickness or Absence from Care Fees

All families are eligible for 42 days of allowable absences and non-attendance caused by holiday or illness (no medical certificate). Once the 42 days allowable absence have been taken, full fees will apply for subsequent absences, as CCB cannot be claimed for these additional absences.

Cancellation

The Centre has the right to cancel your booking should your fees be in arrears on a continual basis. Please ensure that you discuss any problems that arise regarding fee payment with the Director.

Notice of Cancellation

At least two (2) weeks notice is required when a booking is cancelled. The child must be in attendance on their last booked day or full fees will be applied back to their last day in attendance at the Centre. Should two (2) weeks notice not be provided payment of full fees may be in lieu of notice.

Review

Fees are reviewed from time to time and changes applied accordingly. Each parent will receive formal notification of the change in the fees applicable to them and when the change will be implemented.

NO SMOKING POLICY

Arnhem Early Learning Centre believes that children in the care of the centre are entitled to an environment that promotes optimum health and wellbeing.

Given the known dangers, hazards and associated risks of passive smoking, it is the policy of Arnhem Early Learning Centre that all children be cared for in a smoke free environment.

It is not permitted for staff and parents to smoke whilst on the premises.

If a staff member or parent chooses to smoke they must do so off the premises and place any cigarette butts in the rubbish.

SUN PROTECTION POLICY

Arnhem Early Learning Centre acknowledges and recognises the potential risk of skin damage caused by the sun's harmful UV rays, and has a duty of care to ensure that all persons at the centre are provided with a high level of sun protection during the hours of the centre's operation.

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It is understood by carers, children and families that there is a shared responsibility between the centre and the other stakeholders that the Sun Protection Policy and procedures are accepted as a high priority.

It is recognised that the peak UV radiation periods are between 10am and 3pm. Outdoor activities planned for these times will be encouraged to be in the outdoor shaded areas of the grounds. Due to living in the Northern Territory these periods may be extended due to the season.

Carers will be encouraged to be responsible role models by wearing hats, sunscreen and non-reflective sunglasses whilst outdoors, thus promoting a positive Sun Smart example for children to follow. Children will be encouraged to wear their bucket hats and water resistant sunscreen (broad spectrum 30+) during outdoor play times, which will be applied as per manufacturer's instructions and easily available for reapplication.

Programming will from time to time reflect the importance of sun protection and what children can do to protect themselves and others in the sun.

Information and support will be available to parents to educate them on the sun protection and the centre's sun protection policy, and how they can assist in supporting this policy.

Children who do not have their hat on will be asked to play in shaded areas, or where they will be protected by the sun. As hats will be supplied by the centre there should be no reason for a child to not participate in outdoor play activities, however should the child's hat not be available a centre hat will be provided.

Water will be available for children at all times for both indoor and outdoor play, especially, so as to remain hydrated throughout the day.

SLEEP & REST TIME POLICY

Arnhem Early Learning Centre feel that rest and sleep are important factors in insuring that the child feels safe and secure in the centre's environment and is based on recommendations from the recognised national authority SIDS & Kids.

It is understood by carers that each child's requirement for rest and sleep is different and if a family's beliefs and practices are in conflict with SIDS & Kids, the centre will not endorse an alternative practice, unless the centre is provided with written advice from a medical practitioner.

The rest environment shall be equipped with bedding that is safe, free from hazards and meets Australian standards. Children will be monitored at regular intervals during the rest / sleep period.

MEDICATION POLICY

Arnhem Early Learning Centre has a duty of care to ensure that all medication has written authorisation for administration by the child's parent or guardian, prior to being administered. Parents are requested to provide medication in the original packaging. All

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medications are to be removed from the child's bag and given to Centre staff to ensure safe storage.

All medications, prescribed and non-prescribed, that is administered is to be labelled with the following information:

1. Child's name
2. Medication
3. Dosage
4. Date of purchase
5. Expiry date of the medication

Medication that is to be administered is to be witnessed by another person and signed off and after administering.

Arnhem Early Learning Centre reserves the right to contact a health care professional if carers are unsure about administering medication to a child, even if the parent or guardian has requested the medication to be administered.

Parents will be informed when they come to collect their child if and what medication has been administered to their child through the day.

ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS POLICY

Even in the safest environment incidents and accidents do occur. Any accidents that may occur at the Centre are recorded on an Incident Report. If your child has been injured during the day you will be required to sign the Incident Report, indicating that you have been made aware of the incident.

Should a serious accident occur we will make all attempts to contact parents/guardians. In the case of a head injury, parents/guardians will always be contacted. If an emergency occurs the Director may call an ambulance to transfer the child to further medical assistance. At the Centre we will discuss "safe play" with the children to help reduce the risk of injury to children.

GRIEVANCE & COMPLAINTS POLICY

A grievance or complaint is any matter related to any aspect of the work environment, which is causing distress to any individuals.

It is inevitable that at some time grievances or complaints may arise to benefit all parties concerned, it is advisable that all conflicts be resolved as quickly as possible. The Arnhem Early Learning Centre believes that all persons utilising the centre have the right to be heard and express their concerns.

It is encouraged that the parties involved should attempt to resolve the grievance / complaint between themselves in the first instance. See the "Family Concern & Grievance Policy" for further reference.

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH PARENT/STAFF CONFLICT:

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- The parent should discuss the problem with the relevant staff member concerned.
- If the parent still feels further action is necessary after discussion with the relevant staff member they should take the matter up with the Group Leader.
- If the parent is still unhappy, or the initial complaint is with the Group Leader, the Group Leader can offer to take the matter to the centre Director.

Or

- The parent can make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Director.
- The parent can make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Licensee.

Or

- The parent can complete a grievance report form and lodge this with the Director.
- The Director will discuss the matter with the Group Leader and advise the Group Leader of their decision. The Group Leader will convey that finding to the parent concerned.

Or

- The Director will discuss the matter with the parent and advise the parent and the Group Leader of their decision.
- The Director will contact the parent and discuss possible outcomes.
- The Director will advise the Licensee of the discussions and outcomes.

If a resolution is not achieved, the matter should then be referred to the Director. If there is no resolution then the Director will consult Centre Management. At this stage if there is no resolution a process of mediation using a third party will be implemented, and all related charges will be the complainant's responsibility.

Should you wish to take the matter further please contact a representative at the NT Departments of Health and Community Services, Children's Services Unit in Darwin on 08 89 992 888.

EXCLUSION, INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND MANAGEMENT OF SICK CHILDREN POLICY

At the Arnhem Early Learning Centre we aim to work co-operatively with parents in the effective management of sick children and for staff to be able to recognise signs and symptoms of illness, ensuring the comfort and safety of sick children. We also endeavour to minimise the spread of infectious diseases within the centre.

Note: The NHMRC recommends that children who are unwell should be excluded and stay home to recuperate. The Director has the right to refuse attendance at any time if he/she feels that the child is not well enough to attend.

Communication with families:

- Inform families and children of the centre's 'Hand Washing Policy'
- Families will be asked to provide the centre with a written copy of all immunisation records or written medical notification of why their child is un-immunised

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- Families are encouraged to call the Director at the centre if unsure about whether their child is well enough to attend care
- Families are required to
 - notify staff on arrival or via a phone call, of illness or infectious diseases that the child may have contracted or be suspected of contracting
 - maintain up to date contact records of emergency contacts for notification of sick children
 - collect sick, unwell or infectious children from care within timeframe required as discussed with Director
 - keep children at home or arrange alternative care for sick children if they have any suspected cases of any of the diseases outlined in the NHRMC Staying Healthy in Childcare Exclusion Schedule as provided or if their child is generally unwell.
 - keep children at home if they have any of the following:
 - A temperature in excess of 38°C.
 - Vomiting or Diarrhoea
 - Severe skin rash/infection
 - Excessive discharge from eyes or nose
- Families will require a medical certificate for children returning to the centre within 48 hours of exclusion indicating they are no longer infectious.
- Families with un-immunised children will be excluded from the centre for the prescribed times set out by the NHMRC or Northern Territory Public Health where a vaccine-preventable disease has been present.
- In the event of an outbreak staff will post signs stating that an infectious disease has been present at the centre. This sign will include symptoms to watch out for. Children's names must not be used. In some instances letters will be sent home to families.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE POLICY

We are committed to ensuring that we provide and maintain safe, healthy and hygienic environments and resources for all staff, children and visitors. As such we use "Staying Healthy in Childcare 4th Edition" by the National Health and Research Council as a minimum for maintaining healthy and hygienic environments.

At the centre we will:

- ✓ Promote hygienic practices and prevents the spread of infections by implementing the following strategies:
 - Effective hand washing

Hygienic cleaning techniques

Handling, storage and disposal of body fluids

Maintenance of a hygienic environment

Knowledge of infectious diseases and exclusion guidelines

Identifying and excluding sick children and staff

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- Promoting and maintaining records of children's and staff immunisation
- ✓ The Arnhem Early Learning Centre understands it has a duty of care to ensure that all staff are provided with a high level of protection.
- ✓ Management will notify children, families, staff and local community or the relevant health authorities of a diagnosed infectious illness or disease.
- ✓ Ensuring that staff have adequate equipment such as disposable gloves, detergents and soaps.
- ✓ The Centre maintains procedures, such as correct handling of bodily fluids, hand washing etc.
- ✓ Provide regular in-service training regarding awareness of hygienic human contact and physical interaction with others.
- ✓ Providing training to increase staffs awareness and knowledge of cross infection
- ✓ Ensuring that the Centre maintains a hygienic and healthy environment, such as cleaning the Centre daily and ensuring that the Centre is well ventilated.
- ✓ The Centre will follow exclusion guides as set by National Health and Medical Research Council (2005), *Staying Healthy in Child Care: Preventing infectious disease in child care* (4th edition.)

NUTRITION AND MEAL TIME POLICY

We provide meals throughout the day which includes; morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and also an afternoon snack for After School Care children.

Our menu is reviewed regularly and is guided by Dietary Guidelines outlined from Nutrition Australia and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). When reviewing the menu we consider how to meet the Nutritional needs of children by providing meals that include the five main food groups in combination with recommended daily servings.

Our Menu will include the following:

1. Breads and Cereals
2. Fruit and Vegetables
3. Milk and Milk Products
4. Meat and Meat Alternatives
5. Fats and Oils

Families will be invited to have input into the weekly menu.

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Information provided to families about children's eating and drinking habits relates directly to the age of each child.

This will usually be via one or more of the following methods;

- Written information provided to families either in the newsletter or via email or
- Calling the parent/guardian to advise if eating/drinking pattern varies greatly.

If a child does not eat or drink at all, even after encouragement, the parents are contacted so they can assist with suggestions to ensure that the child's nutritional needs and hydration levels are met. We will work with families to make sure children's individual needs are met.

Staff are aware that changes to children's eating and drinking patterns can be associated with illness and should monitor the child closely and contact the family if required.

Our families will receive current information through policy reviews, newsletters, fact sheets and circulars from relevant health and government authorities.

To ensure the safety of all children at mealtimes the following occurs:

- Children are required to sit down to eat, either on a chair at a table or on a picnic rug on the ground.
- Staff will remind children of good hygiene practices in relation to food handling including washing hands before and after eating.
- Children will not be rushed to eat meals, although they will be encouraged to finish their meal at their own pace.
- Staff interact and supervise children at mealtimes, where possible staff will sit with children at mealtimes.
- Children are not permitted to share food with other children, staff ensure children are aware of this and use informal and formal discussions to reinforce. Staff supervise to ensure children are not sharing food.
- Please refer to the Bottle Preparation Policy for more information about safe procedures with breast milk and formula for babies.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

As per the Childcare Standards for the Northern Territory, all records will be kept up to date, comply and be stored in a safe and secure area. All information will remain confidential and will only be made available to those who have a genuine interest in obtaining them.

The following records will be retained for the following periods:

Until the child is 24 years of age:

- The nature and circumstances of any injury to the child while at the centre
- Particulars of treatment given to a child who is injured or becomes ill while at the centre

For a period of six (6) Years

- If a child dies while at the centre, the details surrounding death

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For a period of 2 years after the staff member has left the centre

- If medication is administered to the child while in the licensee's care

For a period of 2 years from the date the record was made

- The parent's written permission for the administration of any medication

USEFUL WEBSITES FOR FAMILIES

www.sidsandkids.org

www.ncac.gov.au

www.nhmrc.gov.au

www.babyteeth.com.au/oralhygiene.com

www.health.gov.au

www.cancercouncil.com.au (Cancer council NT)

www.kidsafent.com.au

www.nt.gov.au/health

www.raisingchildren.net.au

www.nt.gov.au/health/vaccination

www.deewar.gov.au