

BIRTHDAYS

PALMERSTON CHILD & FAMILY EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

Family Handbook

E: palmerstonelc@childaustralia.org.au

P: 08 8944 9224





**Thank you for choosing Child Australia
Palmerston Early Learning Centre for your child's
early education and care.**

**We are pleased to have your family join our
community!**

The information in this booklet is designed to provide you with all the essential information needed to get you started at our Early Learning Centre.

If you require more detailed information, please do not hesitate to talk with the Director.

Child Australia Palmerston Early Learning Centre (ELC) is situated on Larrakia Country. Palmerston ELC recognises the Larrakia People as the Traditional Owners of Garramilla (Darwin) and pays respect to Larrakia Elders past and present.



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About Child Australia

Palmerston Early Learning Centre (ELC)

Palmerston ELC is operated by Child Australia – a not-for-profit organisation that offers premium standard of early childhood education with services across the Northern Territory and Western Australia.

As a leading organisation, Child Australia has over 25 years' experience providing programs and services that support the rights of all children to access high quality early childhood education and care.

Our Philosophy

Our philosophy is at the core of everything we do, and endeavour to do here at Palmerston CFC ELC. This is reviewed each year as a team and shared with family for their input.

'Environments, Nurturing, Quality care, Relationships'

Palmerston Child and Family Early Learning Centre prides itself on our nurturing learning environments for children, where we extend and expand upon their interests and provide them with a range of materials to explore and help understand their world with.

Our outdoors environment is nature based and provides a safe space for children to become confident in their abilities and explore their imaginations either individually or with their peers.

Our educators are nurturing and develop programs which help to support every child and their needs, age appropriately and with the greatest of care, as we respect the families' wishes while ensuring that all aspects of their needs are catered for.

Quality care is more than meeting standards, but is where we believe, we provide the children and families with a sense of belonging as we always strive for creating an 'at home' feel where every child is acknowledged and their backgrounds and cultures are treasured.

Palmerston Child and Family Early Learning Centre is part of an integrated service where we recognise the importance of working with and supporting our local community by providing quality care for our children who may not otherwise receive it.

Strong relationships are built with every individual who walks through our doors and we value family input in everything we do.



We recognise parents as first teachers and ensure that we respect our parents in every decision we make to provide the best outcomes for children.

The team at Palmerston Child and Family Early Learning Centre are dedicated professionals that value the importance of maintaining an optimum level of care and education for all children. Our team attend Professional Development where appropriate and we view ourselves as life – long learners, who adapt different approaches of Early Childhood Education as we see fit for our centre.

Our team view themselves as resourceful, focussed and engaging teachers, who consistently develop and refine their professional practice. As a centre, we have a great understanding of the Early Learning Years Framework (EYLF) and all that it entails. We use the EYLF principles and practices to help us extend on children’s interests and learning outcomes.

Our routines are flexible and empower children to make decisions, allowing them to feel in charge of their learning which is reflected in the style of Programming and Planning that we follow.

Social Media



You can follow and ‘like’ us on the following Facebook pages for upcoming events, updates about what happens at our service and helpful articles.



*Child Australia
Palmerston ELC
Facebook Page*



*Child Australia
Facebook Page*



Kangaroo Time

Download the **KT Connect App** to manage your account



KT Connect is an application designed specifically for parents and guardians to view your account balance, make payments and change your kiosk pin.

Below are the steps you need to download and start using the KT Connect app.

01
Download
the Mobile
Application



02
Verify your
account



03
Set your
pin code



Contact Details

Email: palmerstonelc@childaustralia.org.au

Address: 2 Brennan Court, Farrar NT 0820

Phone: 08 8944 9224

Operating Hours

Our opening hours are:

- 7:00am – 6:00pm | Monday to Friday

We are open for 50 weeks of the year, closing for two weeks over the Christmas/New Year period. Dates for closure each year are shared with families well in advance.

We are also closed for all Public Holidays.

Please ensure all children are picked up by closing time. \$15.00 for the first 15 minutes late fee applies for all pick-ups after the above times, \$3.00 per minute commences after 15 minutes has passed.

Regulations and Standards

Palmerston ELC operates under the National Quality Framework. This framework includes:

- Education and Care Services National Law
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- The National Quality Standard (Including the 7 quality areas)
- The Early Years Learning Framework – Belonging, Being, and Becoming

These 7 quality areas are:

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Leadership and service management

More information can be found at <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/families>



In addition to the 7 quality areas there are 5 learning outcomes that the service is required to consider when designing and implementing programs. These make up the foundations of the Early Years Learning Framework:

1. Sense of identity
2. Connection to world
3. Sense of wellbeing
4. Confident involved learners
5. Effective communicators

Regulatory Authority

Quality Education and Care Northern Territory (QECNT) are the regulatory authority in the Northern Territory. QECNT are responsible for the administration of the National Quality Framework (NQF), including monitoring and enforcing compliance with the National Law and Regulations and conducting assessment and rating of services.

A copy of the Education and Care Services National Regulations is accessible online from <http://aceqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/national-regulations/>

To contact the NT Regulatory Authority:

Quality Education and Care NT

Website: www.det.nt.gov.au

Email: Qualityecnt.det@nt.gov.au

Phone: 08 8999 3561

Our Education and Care Team

At [SERVICE] ELC we are proud of our dedicated team of educators. The quality of care and education your child receives each day is a direct reflection of their passion, professionalism, and expertise. Each educator has been carefully selected for their experience, knowledge, and genuine commitment to nurturing and supporting young children.

Our team holds a range of early childhood qualifications. We deliver evidence-based programs designed around contemporary best practice and tailored to the needs of the children in our care. Our educators create engaging, play-based learning environments that support both fun and meaningful learning experiences, helping children develop confidence, curiosity and a love of learning from the very start.

Continuity of Care

Consistency and continuity of care are vital components of high-quality care. We support this by maintaining a thoughtful staff roster system that priorities secure, familiar



relationships for children. Our rosters are designed to ensure that your child experiences consistent care from educators they know and trust.

Staffing Ratios

In line with the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the minimum ratio of staff to children is always followed. These are as follows:

- Ratio for children aged Birth to 24 months – 1:4
- Ratio for children aged over 24 months and less than 36 months – 1:5
- Ratio for children aged 36 months up to and including preschool age – 1:11

Our program structures and staffing levels are made to ensure each child receives quality individual and personal care.

Staff Shortages

Unfortunately, sometimes due to unforeseen or uncontrollable circumstances the service may find itself in a situation where there are insufficient staff to operate the service with the number of children booked for that day. In such circumstances, families will be notified as early as possible to keep their children at home or make alternative arrangements. We will always endeavour to make this a last resort and will consider all other options beforehand.

Enrolment & Bookings

Enrolment Priorities

Priorities

The Australian Government has set guidelines for the priority of access to ELC and requires that the Palmerston ELC service provide access according to the following list:

First Priority: Children at risk of serious abuse or neglect / children with identified special needs.

Second Priority: Children whose parents satisfy the work/training/study test.

Third Priority: All other children.

Enrolment Procedures

To enroll your child in our service, follow these steps:

1. Provide your email address to the Director and a digital waitlist form will be emailed to you.



2. Fill out and submit the Waitlist Form. On this form, you can indicate your preferences for permanent care or casual care.
3. Wait for an offer from the service, based on current availability. You'll be notified via email and will have 14 days to respond.
4. Review the offer and confirm your acceptance.
5. Complete the enrolment form. Be sure to include any relevant medical information (e.g. ADHD, Autism, allergies, asthma), as well as any legal or dietary restrictions, in the Medical Information Section.

All information collected is confidential and only accessed by staff when necessary to provide the best care for your child.

More information can be found at: [Kangaroo Time Parent Help Guide: Completing an Online Enrolment Form](#)

Orientation

We offer a welcoming and supportive orientation process to help you and your child transition smoothly into our service. This includes:

- A guided tour of the service, where you'll meet educators and learn about the key policies and procedures.
- A copy of our Parent Handbook and time to ask any questions you may have.
- At least one orientation visit before your child starts. During this visit, you'll stay with your child for around two hours to help them get to know the room, educators, and daily routine. More visits can be arranged if needed. These visits are free of charge.

We encourage you to share information about your child, including any worries or questions you may have. When your child begins care, you're welcome to stay as long as needed to help them settle, and you can call during the day for updates.

We'll also work with you to create a calm and consistent goodbye routine to help your child feel secure. If your child becomes upset, educators will comfort and support them until they feel settled and safe.

While we understand that families may have time constraints, we strongly encourage participation in the orientation process to support a positive start. The wellbeing of your child is always our top priority.



Booking Procedures

To make a casual booking you will need to follow these steps:

1. Download the **KT Connect app** and log in.
2. Tap **Attendance**.
3. Select **Schedule New Booking**.
4. Tap the days you need to book for, they will turn purple. Tap **View Availability**.
5. Select each available new booking, which will be white and turn green when selected.

Then tap **Review**.

6. Check the details of your selected bookings, then tap **Confirm**.

More information can be found at: [Kangaroo Time Parent Help Guide: Book Casual Sessions for your Child through KT Connect](#)

To request a change in your permanent booking days you will need to follow these steps:

1. Download the **KT Connect app** and log in.
2. Tap on the **Hamburger Menu** in the top left-hand corner.
3. Tap **Manage Enrolments**.
4. Tap **Request New or Updated Enrolment**.
5. Select your service and tap **Next**.
6. Select your child/ren and tap **Next**.
7. Select the program and tap **Next**.
8. Enter the start date, the schedule (casual or permanent), and the days.
9. Check the details of your request, then tap **Submit**.
10. Once your request is submitted, you will receive an email confirming that your enrolment enquiry has been added to the waitlist. The service will send you an offer as vacancies become available.

More information can be found at: [Kangaroo Time Parent Help Guide: Managing Enrolments through KT Connect](#)

Absences

Please notify the service of your child/ren's absence as soon as possible using the KT Connect app. Prompt notification helps the service account for all children efficiently and ensures their safety.

Remember: Fees apply for all absences, including those due to illness and on public holidays.



To notify the service of your child/ren's absence you will need to follow these steps:

1. Download the **KT Connect app** and log in.
2. Tap on **Attendance**.
3. Tap on the day, select Standard or Holiday, and confirm.

Cancellations

To cancel a permanent booking, written notice must be provided to the Director at least two weeks in advance. You can send your notification via KT Connect messaging or email. Please note that verbal cancellations will not be accepted, and fees will continue to apply during the two-week notice period.

Remember: Your child must attend on their final booked day. If they do not attend, Child Care Subsidy (CCS) will only be paid up to their last day of physical attendance, and full fees will apply for any unattended booked days.

To cancel a casual booking, you will need to follow these steps:

1. Download the **KT Connect app** and log in.
2. Tap **Attendance**.
3. Select the casual booking and,
 - a. Tap **Confirm** to remove the booking without charge so long as it's within the cancellation period.
 - b. If you attempt to cancel the booking outside of the cancellation period, you will only be able to **mark the booking absent**.

Ending Your Enrolment

There may be circumstances where it becomes necessary to discontinue a child's enrolment at the service.

Exclusion from the service will be considered after all reasonable avenues of communication, support, and intervention have been explored. This step is taken as a last resort and may occur under the following circumstances:

- Professional advice indicates that a child is at risk due to ongoing difficulty in settling into care and separating from their parent.
- A child consistently engages in behaviour that puts the safety or wellbeing of other children or staff at risk.



- A parent or guardian repeatedly fails to comply with the service's operating hours or does not meet ongoing fee payment obligations.

The decision to end enrolment is made with careful consideration of the child's needs, the safety of all children and staff, and the overall functioning of the service.

Fees & Payments

Fee Schedule

Our fees are reviewed on an annual basis. We will give 10 business days' notice of any fee changes.

Our current fees are:

- \$126.00

Current as of 3rd November 2025.

Fee Payment

Fees must be paid two weeks in advance to secure a child's ongoing place in the service. This ensures continuity of care and helps the service maintain appropriate staffing levels and resources.

Fees are payable for all booked days, regardless of attendance. This includes public holidays when the service is closed, as well as absences due to illness, holidays, or other reasons, whether the booking is permanent or casual. Staff rosters are created based on the number of children booked to attend, to comply with legal educator-to-child ratios. Therefore, fees for booked sessions are not waived due to absence.

All fees must be paid via direct debit, using either a bank account or credit card. Payments are processed through Fat Zebra, which is managed by Kangaroo Time. Families are responsible for creating and maintaining an active direct debit agreement through Kangaroo Time and for accepting all associated terms and conditions.

The service does not accept direct deposit payments unless they are part of an external agency program. Families are asked not to pay directly into the services bank account, as these payments may be missed and not properly recorded.

Anyone experiencing difficulty in meeting their fee payments is encouraged to speak with the Director as soon as possible. Open communication may help to find a management



solution. Please note that families will be liable for any additional fees incurred if a debt collection agency is required to recover unpaid fees.

More information can be found in the **Service Fee Policy** which is available on request.

Failed or Outstanding Payments

If a payment fails or fees are not kept at least two weeks in advance, your child/ren's access to the service may be suspended until the outstanding payment is received.

Families may request a payment plan to manage outstanding debt. Any approved payment plan must include the regular weekly or fortnightly gap payment for current fees, plus an additional amount to reduce the existing debt.

Families can make payments at any time via the **KT Connect app**. To pay your account:

1. Tap **Billing**
2. Tap **Make a Payment**
3. Enter a **Payment Amount, Payment Date**, and select the **Payment Method**.
4. Tap **Pay Now**

Statements

The service will provide a statement of fees due each week via Kangaroo Time. If you believe there is a mistake in your statement, please inform the Director as early as possible.

More information about reading your statement can be found here: [Kangaroo Time: Understanding your Statement](#)

Child Care Subsidy

Families may be eligible for Child Care Subsidy (CCS). To claim, you must be registered with the Australian Government's Family Assistance Office.

You must lodge your application at enrolment, to ensure your Child Care Subsidy notice reaches the child care service in time to backdate your entitlements to the time of beginning care. **The Service is only able to reduce your fees on receipt of your Child Care Subsidy Notice. Until such time, full fee is charged and must be paid in advance.**

Each child is entitled to 42 days per year "allowable absences" for holiday, illness, public holidays and other purposes. Once the initial 42 absences have been used up, the CCS rebate will only be able to be claimed for absences for which a legitimate certificate can be



provided (i.e. for sickness or work related reasons). This means that the full fee will be payable during your child's absence (for a previously booked place) even if you are usually entitled to a reduced fee.

Parents are required to sign the appropriate Complying Written Agreement during the booking and enrolment process. This agreement must also be updated and signed again whenever there are changes to a permanent booking pattern.

Confidentiality of information

Confidentiality is of paramount importance in our Service.

All the information provided to us by you, such as addresses, phone numbers, and custody information, is seen and recorded only by the administration educators and the educators directly responsible for the care of your child.

More information can be found in the **Confidentiality and Privacy Policy** which is available on request.

Health & Safety

Ongoing Medical Conditions

It is essential that families provide complete and up-to-date information about their child/ren's ongoing medical conditions on the enrolment form and notify the service of any changes as they occur.

Examples of ongoing medical conditions include (but are not limited to):

- Allergies and anaphylaxis
- Asthma
- Developmental or neurological conditions such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), ADHD, Sensory Processing Disorder, or Global Developmental Delay
- Hearing or vision impairments
- Skin conditions
- Mental health or emotional wellbeing needs
- Autoimmune conditions

Parents or guardians are required to participate in developing the **Risk Minimisation Plan** and, where applicable, must provide a Medical Action Plan completed by a medical practitioner **before** the child's first day of attendance.



More information can be found in the **Ongoing Medical Conditions Policy** which is available on request.

Medication

All medication is administered in accordance with the medical practitioner's instructions and relevant first aid guidelines to ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of the child.

Parents and guardians must inform the service of any medication their child is taking, both short-term and long-term, via the enrolment form and through direct verbal communication with staff.

A medication record form must be completed prior to any medication being administered by the service.

As part of the enrolment process, parents/guardians give permission for the service to administer emergency Panadol if a child's temperature exceeds 38.5°C.

Prescription medication must be in the original packaging with a pharmacy label clearly stating the child's name and dosage instruction. Medication will only be administered as prescribed, to the child it is intended for, and only if the medication is within its expiry date.

Non-prescription medication must be in the original packaging with a pharmacy label identifying the child. Medication will only be administered as per the instructions on the packaging, and only to the child for whom it is provided, and within the medication's expiry date.

Please be aware that medication must not be stored in children's bags.

More information can be found in the **Administration of Medication Policy** which is available on request.

Illness & Exclusion

Children who are unwell at home should remain at home until they have fully recovered.

The service cannot care for unwell children. If a child becomes ill while attending, parents or guardians will be contacted and asked to collect their child as soon as possible.



It is essential that parents and guardians remain contactable during care hours, either directly or through emergency contacts listed on the enrolment form. If urgent medical attention is required, a staff member may call an ambulance. Every effort will be made to contact the parent or guardian immediately. All medical costs are the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

To protect the health and wellbeing of all children and staff, exclusion periods apply for children who are unwell. Children with infectious diseases will be excluded in accordance with the NT Disease Control Guidelines, which are displayed at the ELC service, and the National Health and Medical Research Council's Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services 6th Edition.

Common minimum exclusions include (but are not limited to):

- Respiratory symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, a runny or blocked nose, and sore throat: exclude until symptom free for 24 hours.
- Gastric symptoms such as diarrhoea and vomiting: exclude until symptom free for 24 hours.
- Eye symptoms such as pus or clear discharge and itchy red eyes: exclude until discharge has stopped, or after 24 hours of starting prescribed eye drops.
- Fungal infection symptoms such as ringworm or tinea: exclude until 24 hours after starting appropriate treatment.
- Other symptoms such as rashes (especially rapidly developing), open sores, and fever (body temperature above 38°C): exclude until symptom free for 24 hours.

In some cases, medical clearance from a doctor may be required before the child can return to the service.

If you are unsure whether your child is fit to attend, please speak with the Director.

More information can be found in the **Accident, Illness and Incident Management Policy** which is available on request.

Incidents and Accidents

Despite all precautions, accidents may occur at the service. There are policies and procedures in place to ensure your child's safety and keep you fully informed in the event of an incident.



In the event of a minor incident or accident, qualified staff trained in First Aid will attend to the child. Depending on the nature of the injury, parents may be contacted at the time of the incident or informed when they arrive to collect their child.

If a serious incident or accident occurs, the nominated supervisor or educator will contact the child's parents or emergency contact person immediately. They will provide details of the incident and advise where the child can be met (e.g. hospital/clinic, or service). Every effort will be made to communicate this information clearly and calmly to avoid causing unnecessary panic.

Parents will be provided with a copy of the incident and accident following any minor or serious incident. Parents are asked to sign the report to acknowledge that they have been informed. They are not required to agree with the contents or the actions taken, but if they choose not to sign, staff will note the time at which they were offered and informed of the incident.

To support the service in responding effectively to incidents or accidents parents have specific responsibilities. These include notifying the service upon enrolment or immediately upon diagnosis of any medical conditions or needs their child must have.

It is essential that parents and guardians remain contactable during care hours, either directly or through emergency contacts listed on the enrolment form. If their child is involved in an incident or accident, parents must collect their child as soon as possible when requested to do so.

More information can be found in the **Accident, Illness and Incident Management Policy** which is available on request.

First Aid

To ensure we can respond promptly and appropriately to any incidents, the following procedures are in place:

- First aid will only be administered by staff who hold current, approved First Aid Qualifications.
- A fully stocked and regularly maintained First Aid Kit is always available on-site.



- As part of the enrolment process parents and guardians are required to provide written consent for staff to:
 - Administer basic first aid if needed.
 - Contact emergency services (e.g., ambulance) if required.
 - Allow their child to be transported by ambulance or other appropriate means and leave the service in the event of a medical emergency.

More information can be found in the **First Aid and CPR Policy** which is available on request.

Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting

In line with Northern Territory Mandatory Reporting laws, we are legally obligated to report any concerns of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities.

Any such concerns will be handled with the child's health, safety, and wellbeing as our highest priority.

More information can be found in the **Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting Policy** which is available on request.

Guiding Children's Behaviour

Learning how to behave appropriately is a key part of your child's social and emotional development. At our service, we aim to help children understand acceptable behaviour, take responsibility for their actions, and develop respectful relationships with others.

We value strong partnerships with families to support your child's behaviour and development. We expect that families will:

- Share any relevant background or concerns that can help us better support your child.
- Reinforce consistent expectations at home.
- Engage in any support strategies or inclusion plans as needed.
- Let us know promptly if you have concerns about your child's wellbeing or behaviour.

Age-Appropriate Behaviour Expectations

Babies (0-2 years):



- **Expected Behaviours:** Babies communicate through babbling, gesturing, and exploring their environment using touch and mouthing.
- **Guidance Approach:** Educators respond with gentle redirection, verbal encouragement, and nurturing support to meet emotional needs.
- **Unacceptable Behaviours:** Harmful physical actions such as biting. Educators will intervene promptly and provide safe alternatives.

Toddlers (2-3 years):

- **Expected Behaviours:** Toddlers often assert their independence, display strong emotions, and begin developing early social skills.
- **Guidance Approach:** Educators provide clear, consistent boundaries, model appropriate behaviour, and offer opportunities to develop self-regulation skills.
- **Unacceptable Behaviours:** Aggressive actions such as hitting or biting. Educators will support children through calming techniques and teach more appropriate ways to express needs and feelings.

Kindergarten (3-5 years):

- **Expected Behaviours:** Children are learning to share, cooperate, follow rules, and use respectful language.
- **Guidance Approach:** Educators use group discussions, collaborative rule-setting, and praise for positive choices to support learning.
- **Unacceptable Behaviours:** Repeated exclusion of others or disrespectful language. Educators will use restorative practices to help children build empathy and repair relationships.

Behaviours Not Tolerated

To ensure a safe, supportive environment for all, we do not tolerate behaviours that harm others or the environment including:

- Persistent aggression or physical violence.
- Bullying or discrimination.
- Intentional damage to property.

These actions are taken seriously and are deemed psychological hazards which violate our child-safe and workplace health and safety policies.

More information can be found in the **Guiding Children's Behaviours Policy** which is available on request.



Nutrition & Meals

Parents and guardians must provide information about any dietary requirements in the enrolment form. A Dietary Requirement Form must also be completed for all allergies, anaphylaxis, intolerances, food preferences, and cultural or religious dietary needs.

Our service is strictly **nut-free**. Any food items containing nuts must not be brought to or consumed at the service. If a child is found to have consumed nut-containing products while at ELC, they may be sent home to ensure the safety of children with severe allergies. Please speak with the Director regarding any additional anaphylaxis alerts currently in place. This information is also clearly displayed within the service.

Children are offered the following meals:

- **Morning Tea:** Served around 9:00am – a light snack such as fruit, wholegrain crackers, or yoghurt.
- **Lunch:** Served at approximately 11:00am – a balanced, cooked meal including vegetables, grains and protein.
- **Afternoon Tea:** Offered around 2:00pm – a healthy snack such as fruit, sandwiches, or vegetable sticks.
- **Late Snack:** Provided after 5:00pm – a small snack to keep children comfortable until pick-up.

Meals and snacks are prepared each day on our premises by our Food Coordinator, who focuses on using nutritious, wholesome ingredients. Our menus are varied, balanced, and designed to support healthy development while all food preparation follows strict hygiene and cleanliness standards. Menus are displayed in the ELC and updated regularly.

We promote a positive and social mealtime environment where children are encouraged to try a variety of foods and develop independence.

BABIES

We understand that young children may need to be fed outside of scheduled mealtimes. Our educators will work closely with you during enrolment and throughout your child's time at the service to support their individual and changing dietary needs.



Our routines are flexible and we aim to follow your child's established routine from home whenever possible.

If your child is on formula, please provide daily intake in clearly labelled bottles or containers, with the correct measurements. We cannot store formula tins or pre-mixed bottles on site. For children who have transitioned from formula, cow's milk is provided by the service.

Breastfeeding mothers are warmly welcomed. We offer a private, comfortable space for feeding or alternatively, can bottle feed expressed milk.

More information can be found in the **Nutrition, Food and Beverage Safety Policy** which is available on request.

Safety Drills and Emergency Procedures

A copy of the Evacuation Procedure is clearly displayed in each room, and families are encouraged to familiarise themselves with these procedures to support the safety of all children.

Parents and guardians are expected to support the service's emergency planning by understanding the service's emergency procedures, remaining contactable during service hours, or ensuring that a designated emergency contact can be reached. If a parent is present at the service during an emergency, they must follow the instructions of staff leading the emergency response and should not remove their child from the premises unless authorized to do so. In some situations, parents may be asked to assist with emergency procedures to ensure a safe and orderly response.

Safety drills are regularly conducted to ensure that both children and staff are familiar with the correct procedures in the event of an emergency. These drills are guided by the Evacuation Procedures and are tailored to address potential local threats such as fires, earthquakes, and intruders.

More information can be found in the **Emergency Management Procedures Policy** which is available on request.



Supervision

The service strictly complies with the staffing requirements set out by the National Law and has conducted a thorough risk assessment to determine the appropriate educator-to-child ratios across different settings.

To maintain a safe and engaging environment, the service implements a range of active supervision strategies. Educators are required to continuously observe and move throughout the space to maintain clear lines of sight with all children. Educators regularly scan the environment and listen for changes in tone or behaviour that may indicate a need for intervention. Engaging with children through conversation and play not only supports developmental goals but also strengthens the relationship between educators and children. Supervision also involves anticipating and mitigating risks, reporting hazards promptly, and using proactive communication with other staff and children. Educators remain fully present, especially during transitions or when responsibilities shift between team members. Educators also promote children's safety awareness by teaching protective behaviours and empowering children to advocate for their own safety.

More information can be found in the **Supervision and Active Supervision Policy** which is available on request.

Occupational Health and Safety

Our service is committed to ensuring the health and safety of both children and staff.

As part of our commitment to Occupational Health and Safety:

- The service is a strictly smoke and vape-free environment.
- All equipment and play areas are regularly inspected to maintain a safe and hazard-free setting.

Sun Protection

Our service is committed to protecting children and staff from the harmful effects of the sun during outdoor activities.

Children are required to always wear a hat when playing outside. Parents and guardians are asked to provide a clearly labelled hat that offers good sun coverage, such as a broad-brimmed or legionnaire-style hat that protects the face, neck, and ears. Children who do not have a hat will be directed to play in shaded areas for their protection.



It is recommended that children wear loose-fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible during outdoor activities, particularly ensuring shoulders are fully covered.

SPF 30+ broad-spectrum sunscreen is provided by the service. Educators will supervise and assist children with application. Parents and guardians who prefer their child to use a different sunscreen must supply it.

More information can be found in the **Sun Protection Policy** which is available on request.

Daily Operations

Delivery and Collection of Children

SIGNING IN AND OUT – ATTENDANCE RECORDS

Signing children in and out of the service is a legal requirement set by the Australian Government (Centrelink Family Assistance Office). If these records are not completely accurate, families may become ineligible for Child Care Subsidy (CCS). It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to:

- Sign children in and out each day.
- Mark children as absent on day they do not attend using the KT Connect app.

Parents must also ensure that any authorised persons collecting their child are aware of and follow these procedures.

DELIVERY – ARRIVAL AT SERVICE

Parents must not enter the service prior to the official opening time. Upon arrival, parents must sign their child in using the digital sign-in system. If a booking has not been made and the child cannot be signed in digitally, they cannot be accepted into care until the Director or Responsible Person confirms availability, and the child is added to the digital roll, allowing the parent or guardian to complete the sign in.

Families must report to an educator upon arrival to signal their arrival and ensure the child is appropriately accounted for. Young children must be handed directly to an educator upon arrival.



COLLECTION – DEPARTURE FROM THE SERVICE

Children must be collected before the service's closing time, as displayed in the ELC Foyer. A late collection fee will apply for any pickups after this time.

Families must report to an educator before taking their child, to ensure the child's departure is properly accounted for and that the person collecting is an authorised contact. This is essential for ensuring each child is safely released from the service.

If someone other than the enrolling parent or guardian arrives to collect a child without prior notification staff will attempt to contact the enrolling parent or guardian to obtain authorisation. The child will not be released until proper authorisation is received.

All authorised collectors must:

- Be listed on the child's enrolment form with up-to-date contact details.
- Be at least 18 years old, unless they are the child's parent or legal guardian and under 18.
- Provide photo identification if they are not known to staff.

If there are any changes to authorised people, these must be submitted in writing by the enrolling parent or guardian as soon as possible. Parents must also inform the service in advance if someone other than themselves will be collecting the child.

Children will not be released to any person, including a parent or guardian, if there is an apparent risk to the child's safety. In such cases, another authorised contact will be called to collect the child. If no one can be reached, the service will notify the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider and may seek advice or assistance from relevant authorities.

Parents and guardians are expected to contact the service by phone if they are unavoidably detained and unable to collect their child before closing time.

If a child remains at the service 30 minutes after closing time, and no contact can be made with parents or emergency contacts, the Responsible Person will notify the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider. The service may contact the police for assistance in locating the parent or guardian.



Where disputes arise in relation to the responsibility for a child parental responsibility remains with both parents jointly except where it is altered by an order of the Family Court of Australia. In the absence of a court order, the service will release the child to any parent or guardian listed as an authorised person on the enrolment form.

Should a parent or guardian cite an Order of the Family Court, the order must be produced for inspection by the Director or Responsible Person. A copy will be retained by the service.

More information can be found in the **Delivery and Collection of Children Policy** which is available on request.

Privacy

In today's digital age, where access to cyberspace is widespread, it is more important than ever to remain vigilant in protecting the privacy of children. As a community, we share the responsibility of ensuring children's safety.

Families are asked to support our service's commitment to confidentiality by refraining from discussing other children who attend the service. Protecting each child's right to privacy is essential.

Families are not permitted to take photographs of children, including their own, on the service premises. We ask that families do not share photos including other children taken at the service and provided as part of educational documentation without appropriate written consent from the child's parent or guardian.

When talking about the service in person or online, we request that families do not mention children's names.

Children's Program

Our programs are thoughtfully designed around the natural rhythm of the day, such as arrival times, meals and rest periods, while also addressing children's need for play and leisure. Our programs include a balance of indoor and outdoor learning experiences.

We encourage children to take part in a wide variety of activities, including arts and crafts, sports, cooking, and other play-based experiences. Ample time is also set aside each day for spontaneous, self-directed, play.



Children play an active role in helping shape the program. Their ideas, interests, and feedback are incorporated into the daily planning to ensure that activities remain relevant, engaging, and developmentally appropriate. Parents and guardians are also invited to contribute ideas and suggestions to help enrich the program further.

Our programs are available on display in each room.

Daily Routines

Each Play Studio follows a flexible daily routine that supports your child's needs for meals, rest, and toileting. These consistent patterns provide a sense of security and help children understand what to expect throughout the day, supporting their confidence and emotional wellbeing.

While young children may not yet grasp the concept of time, a predictable routine helps structure their day and creates a familiar rhythm, which is especially important for building trust and independence.

Speak with the educators in your child's Play Studio for more information about their daily routine.

Rest Times

Rest is an important part of the day for all children. It helps them recharge, regulate their emotions, and feel secure. We create a calm, nurturing environment where children can sleep, rest, or enjoy quiet activities based on their individual needs.

We provide a cool, peaceful, environment with soft lighting and gentle music to help children wind down. Rest time follows a smooth transition from play or mealtime. Educators always remain with the children during rest time, and children are never forced to sleep.

For children who do not require a nap, we offer a range of quiet activities such as books, puzzles, drawing, or sensory play. Children are encouraged to relax in a comfortable space while respecting those who are sleeping nearby.



BABIES (0-2 YEARS)

Babies follow their home sleep routines as closely as possible, with flexibility to adapt to their mood and daily needs. For safety, babies are always placed on their backs to sleep with their heads uncovered. We encourage the use of baby sleeping bags that have fitted neck and armholes, and no hoods.

Educators always remain in the room during sleep and carry out physical checks every 10 minutes. Comfort items such as dummies, bottles, blankets, or special toys are always welcome to help babies feel secure during rest times. These items may be removed after the child falls asleep in line with safe sleeping practices.

TODDLERS (1-3 YEARS)

We work closely with families to ensure that rest times for toddlers reflect their familiar routines at home. When a toddler begins to climb out of a cot, they transition to a low bed to prevent falls. Our sleep environment is kept safe by removing cords and any items that may pose choking or strangulation risks, such as necklaces or beads.

Toddlers are dressed appropriately for sleep and may bring a small comfort item from home. Educators supervise all rest times and check each child every 10 minutes to ensure their safety and comfort.

KINDERGARTEN (3-5 YEARS)

For kindergarten aged children who no longer nap, quiet time is offered with calming activities like reading or puzzles. We create a peaceful rest space with dimmed lighting where children feel safe and relaxed. Our routines are flexible to support each child's changing rest needs, offering shorter rest periods or longer quiet play as appropriate. Children are encouraged to manage their own rest time independently with support from educators.

More information can be found in the **Safe Sleep and Rest Policy** which is available on request.

Excursions

As part of the program, children may participate in excursions outside of the service. These excursions are thoughtfully planned and considered an important extension of the children's learning, offering a variety of engaging and educational experiences beyond the regular environment.



Written consent is required for all excursions. All excursions are conducted in line with the requirements of the National Education and Care National Quality Standards, ensuring appropriate supervision, planning, and risk management.

In certain circumstances, excursions may be cancelled or modified to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children. In these circumstances families will be notified as soon as possible.

More information can be found in the **Excursion Policy and Procedures** which is available on request.

Children with Additional Needs

We are committed to providing a program that promotes the inclusion of all children. Children with additional needs may be eligible for extra support through the Inclusion Support Program (ISP), which is designed to assist services in meeting the diverse needs of all children.

If you believe your child may benefit from additional support, please speak with the Director in the first instance. The Director can then initiate the application process for inclusion funding and support.

Family Expectations and Participation

Code of Conduct

As part of the enrolment process, all parents and guardians are required to sign the Code of Conduct. This agreement outlines the expectations for behaviour within the service. Breaches of the code may result in disciplinary action by Child Australia, which could include exclusion from the service.

As part of this code of conduct parents and guardians are expected to:

- Follow all service policies and procedures.
- Act respectfully towards all children, families, and staff.
- Work in a cooperative and positive manner.
- Use courteous and acceptable language.
- Value diversity and refrain from actions or behaviours that constitute harassment or discrimination.



- Keep information relating to children, families, and the service confidential.

Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring that all authorised people listed in the enrolment form are aware of and comply with the Code of Conduct.

Providing Accurate Information

It is essential that we have up-to-date and accurate information about each child to ensure their safety, wellbeing, and the best possible care. Parents and guardians are responsible for providing complete and truthful details during enrolment and keeping the service informed of any changes as they occur.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Contact details for parents, guardians, and authorised emergency contacts.
- Medical information such as allergies, medications, health conditions, or additional needs.
- Court orders or custody arrangements.
- Changes to family circumstances that might impact the child's wellbeing or behaviour.
- Financial information, including current payment details and Customer Reference Numbers (CRNs).
- Any other information relevant to your child's care and safety.

Please notify the Director immediately of any updates of changes.

Communication

We believe that strong, open communication is key to providing responsive, high-quality care for every child. Parents and guardians are encouraged to share any updates or changes that may affect your child's mood, behaviour, or general experience at the service. This allows Educators to respond with care, consistency, and understanding.

In return, our Educators are committed to keeping you informed, sharing their observations and insights into your child's experiences and growth while at ELC. We value this two-way communication and view families and Educators as partners working together to support each child's unique journey.



Families are encouraged to communicate with staff in person or using the KT Connect app messaging system.

Grievance and Complaints

Families can raise a complaint with their child's educator, the Director, or the Approved Provider. Contact information for making a complaint, including details for the Regulatory Authority, are displayed in the ELC Room.

We encourage complainants to first address the issue directly with the person involved. If the concern is not resolved, it should then be brought to the Director, either verbally or in writing.

If the matter remains unresolved, it can be escalated to the Operational Lead or Approved Provider for further review.

Our service has a child-focused complaint handling system that ensures children are involved in decisions affecting them. Staff create a safe and supportive environment where children feel comfortable expressing their concerns.

More information can be found in the **Service Grievance and Complaints Policy** which is available on request.



Thank you for taking the time to read our Parent Handbook.

Our policies and procedures are located in the ELC foyer.

Please speak with the Director if you require any further information or clarification.



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Australia
Palmerston ELC



Contact Us

E: palmerstonelc@childaustralia.org.au

P: 08 8944 9224

2 Brennan Court, Farrar NT 0830

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@Child Australia

@Child Australia Palmerston

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