

ALBERT WATERWAYS CHILDREN'S CENTRE



PARENT HANDBOOK 2021/2022

91 Sunshine Blvd. Mermaid Waters. Qld 4218

Phone: 0755 727 333

Email: director@albertwaterwayscc.org.au

Website: www.albertwaterwayscc.org.au

Centre Director / Nominated Supervisor: Tamara Fallon

Asst. Director / Educational Leader: Haley Peisley

Administrator: Nikki Thornton

Opening Hours: 7.45am - 5.45pm

Service approval number: 1-631-3476

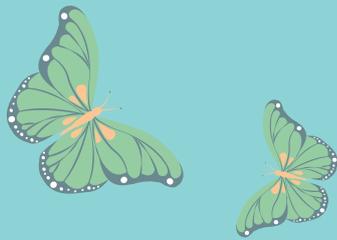
ABN: 98901908265

PROVIDING CHILDREN WITH EXCEPTIONAL BEGINNINGS

OUR VISION

We believe in the significance of the early years in a child's development and therefore our aim is to provide children with exceptional beginnings. Through the programs that we implement, our goal is to provide children with strong foundations that will provide; a sense of who they are, of where they belong and the opportunity to evolve and flourish as learners and people.

To see our vision fulfilled our intention is to provide an environment that is rich in play opportunities where adults provide a safe space and act as the facilitators for children, providing respect, understanding, guidance, resources and teacher knowledge to encourage the child's holistic growth.



NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS - RATING

Under the National Quality framework, to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of the children, as well as promoting continuous improvement and developing educational and developmental outcomes for all children attending our service, the centre has been assessed with the outcome of:
Exceeding



ACKNOWLEDGMENT TO COUNTRY

*Here is the chagun (ground as earth) the borrogura (sea) and ngorung (sky)
Here are my jimbelong (friends) and here is ngaio (me).*

We acknowledge, thank and respect the traditional custodians and elders of the Kombummerri for the chagun which we nabei (play) and learn.

Let's remember! Dunngunns dugun barai (hands up high). Dunngunns djui julogull (hands down low).

We are on Yugambah Language Group, part of the Bundjalung Nation's jagun (country).

*Written in conjunction with Albert Waterways staff and Uncle Allan Lena
August 2018*



OUR PHILOSOPHY

IN RELATION TO CHILDREN WE BELIEVE:

- In creating a home like environment with a positive atmosphere where children feel nurtured and safe and have a sense of belonging
- In the benefits of family groupings that give children the opportunity to be together, build new friendships and develop a sense of belonging to groups
 - In extending and fostering child-initiated play
- That children learn best from hands-on experiences based on their strengths and interests
- That children should be provided with choices in their play to empower their sense of self, being and belonging
 - That children need repetition where they can practice and master their skills
- In providing an indoor/outdoor program that fosters the 'whole child' (i.e. identity, wellbeing, communication, connectedness, active learning & cultural development)
- Children are competent and capable learners that should be treated with respect at all times
 - In building children's self-esteem throughout the entire program
 - That each child is unique with their own personality and learning style
 - In providing predictable routines that develop autonomy, resilience and sense of agency
- In creating an anti-biased curriculum and environment where individual needs are catered for and respected
 - In supporting children to feel proud of their cultural heritage
- In including children with additional needs and creating an environment where they feel secure and a sense of belonging.
 - In providing healthy and nutritious meals which meet current recommendations
 - In supporting children to make healthy lifestyle choices
- In encouraging children to be socially responsible for the environment by developing an understanding of our environment through our program.



IN RELATION TO FAMILIES WE BELIEVE:

- In an open-door policy where parents are encouraged to support and enhance the program
- In providing a daily visual diary for parents to share and discuss with their child
- That staff should share and discuss methods of behaviour management to ensure consistent care between home and the centre
- In developing a partnership with families where they can seek further information on a range of programs within the community
- That parent and staff communication should be warm, open and productive
- In parental input within the centre management committee



IN RELATION TO STAFF WE BELIEVE:

- In staff working as a team using the Centres policies and philosophy to guide them in their daily work
- The relationships staff build with children and their families are warm, friendly and respectful
 - In staff maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of children and families
 - In staff using clear and open communication with children and families and other members of the community.
- In encouraging staff to share their ideas, skills and talents with each other and within the Centre
- In staff proudly sharing their own cultural heritage with children, families and other staff members
 - In staff continuously developing their skills through professional development opportunities
 - In staff always working within the Centres 'Code of Conduct'
 - In staff working within the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics 2017

IN RELATION TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY WE BELIEVE:

- In respectfully acknowledging our local Aboriginal mob, the Kombumerri people and in valuing the wealth of knowledge that can be passed to us from Elders, both past and present
 - In fostering links between the children, their families and the broader community as there is an understanding of the valuable contribution other people and resources can make towards the holistic development of each child
- In valuing the wealth of knowledge and resources that can be provided from within our local community and accessing them to support and enhance the Centres programs
- In respecting our local physical environments and working together with the community to maintain them for a better world for our children and the future generations to come.

IN RELATION TO THE PROGRAM WE BELIEVE:

- In implement the Early Years Learning Framework and the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines
- In embedding the frameworks throughout our daily programs as we strive to develop each child's sense of being, belonging and becoming through child initiated and intentional teaching activities while providing quality care.
- It is important for children to make their own decisions and choices, giving them the opportunity to use their voice and be heard during all experiences
- In ensuring that documentation is meaningful and relevant to each child's learning; reflecting and assessing their development and adapting to acquiring life-long skills

IN RELATION TO THE ENVIRONMENT WE BELIEVE:

- In the value our large natural outdoor environments that provide children with opportunities to explore, discover and learn
- In the value our spacious interior play rooms which are flexible in their design making them ever changing and constantly inviting
- In providing large blocks of time for children to become fully involved in their play
 - In offering children risks in safe, well supervised learning spaces
 - In the use of quality learning resources to enhance children's learning
 - In using open ended resources that have more than one purpose
 - In giving children real choices in the setting up of equipment and resources

IN RELATION TO OUR WORLD AND SUSTAINABILITY WE BELIEVE:

- In role modelling and teaching children the importance of living in this world sustainably
 - In recycling, reusing, reducing and rethinking our resources each and every day
 - In re-using and re-purposing unwanted items from within our community
- In working with children, families and community to grow and care for all plants including flowers, herbs and vegetables
 - In teaching and reminding children of the link between food and plate
 - In giving children the opportunity to feed, nurture and care for living animals.
 - In composting fruit and vegetables to reduce greenhouse gases
 - In using natural fertilizing agents such as worm castings
- In educating families about the importance of sustainability within community for our lands, sea and air



FEE INFORMATION

Daily Booking* \$110.00 for babies enrolled in an under 2 years placement
\$105.00 for children enrolled in an above 2 years placement

*2022 Fees detailed above are excluding Childcare Subsidy (CCS) payments from Centrelink. Fees are reviewed annually by Parent Management Committee.

Waitlist fee = \$25 non-refundable fee included with wait list application form

Bond fee \$150 for the 1st child in the family and \$100 for any further children enrolled simultaneously. Payable before the child/ren at the centre.

Welcome Pack Fee \$30 on enrolment. Your child will be provided with a cancer-council approved hat that will stay at the Centre. A Wet bag will be provided and placed in your child's bag each day and used to store wet clothes/items.

Late Fee - \$2 per minute for each minute your child is at the Centre after 5.45pm. Late fees are not covered by Childcare Subsidy.

Voluntary Fundraising Fee \$10.00 per quarter year

Fees are not charged for the period between Christmas and New Year or for QLD gazetted public holidays when the Centre closes.

Please note - You will be charged full fees if your child is absent from the Centre for reasons of illness or holidays. By advising the administrator prior to these absences, we MAY be able to allocate the day to another child.

METHODS OF PAYMENT

- Parents are issued with an invoice on a fortnightly basis that includes the total cost, less any Child Care Subsidy (estimate), payments made and include any outstanding balances due.

If transferring money electronically by internet or phone banking please include your child's name as the reference to the following bank account:

Name: Albert Waterways Children's Centre

Bank: Suncorp

BSB: 484 799

Account Number: 605 570 166

- Notice Period: The centre requires two weeks written notice to be submitted prior to the departure of child/ren, or dropping of days. Failure to provide notice period may result in the family incurring the fees for the two week period.

- FAT ZEBRA can be set up through the OWNA App to directly withdraw your payments on a weekly basis linked to either your personal bank account or credit card. A fee of 65c for Direct Debit / 1.6% + 10c for Bank Card Fee / Failed payment charge \$2.50
- Each family is able to choose their method of payment, however if you prove unable to make consistent weekly payments FAT ZEBRA/ OWNA will be enforced to ensure your child's position in the Centre is maintained.
- All outstanding accounts will be reviewed on a monthly basis and your child's position will be under review should no payment be made. As a non-profit centre we cannot afford bad debts. If you are having trouble with your fees, you need to see the office staff to make arrangements immediately.
- If you have any questions regarding your fees or payments please see the Office Administrator or Director who will gladly help you.

INFORMATION ON CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is a means-tested subsidy paid directly to the service as a fee reduction. There are 3 factors that will determine a family's level of CCS, which include;

1. Combined Family Income
2. Activity Test for both Parents
3. Service Type

Accessing CCS requires families to provide information and confirm current details by using your Centrelink online account through myGov.

Each family will be assessed by Centrelink and given a percentage and a number of hours they are eligible for CCS.

Childcare Subsidy Absences: If you are receiving Childcare Subsidy your child is entitled to 42 days of absences per year, (1st July to 30th June). After that any subsequent absences will be charged at full fees. If your child is ill, a doctor's certificate may be obtained for the period that your child is absent from the centre. Please give the certificate to the office on your return to the centre. Fees must still be paid for this period of absence. If you obtain a Medical Certificate for your child's absence, this will not count as part of your 42 day allowance. Immunisation status will also effect your CCS eligibility.



MORE INFORMATION ON CCS AVAILABLE HERE:

- <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/service/s/centrelink/child-care-subsidy>
- <https://www.dese.gov.au/child-care-subsidy>

CENTRE INFORMATION

Parent involvement - occasionally you may be asked to make comment on policies or make suggestions for change. By answering as truthfully as possible, we can determine the areas that we are excelling in and those areas that require improvement. It's a team effort that requires everyone's input to make it work.

The centre is run by a Management Committee of elected parents that are responsible for the overall management of the centre. Parents are encouraged to join the Committee; it is seen as a way for you to have a voice in the running of the Centre, which ultimately impacts upon your child's time here at the Centre.

Albert Waterways Children's Centre was opened in February 1980 as a Community Children's Centre. We are one of a small number of Non-profit centres on the Gold Coast. We provide a unique educational experience for children from 6 weeks of age to the commencement of school.

Our funds are derived from parent fees and government Child Care Subsidy. All profits from the fees are put back in the centre in the form of resources for the children, wages for the staff, maintenance of the building and benefits for families e.g., no fees for public holidays.

Albert Waterways has two blended rooms:
Junior Kindy and Kindergarten

Junior Kindy: 21 children enrolled daily, ranging from birth to 4 years. (5 permanent educators)
Kindergarten: 26 children enrolled daily, ranging from 3 to 5 years (3 permanent educators). We also provide the Queensland Govt approved Kindergarten Program for 4-year-old children.

The centre is licensed to cater for children from 0-5 years. As a mixed age group centre, we are licensed for these ages only and are only permitted to enroll children of these ages.



PARENT INFORMATION

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

Parents/Grandparents etc. are always welcome at Albert Waterways. We actively encourage you as parents to become a part of the programming and evaluation process and rely on your feedback to ensure that the service that we are providing is of the highest possible standard. There are many ways in which you can become involved in the centre. Here are just a few examples.

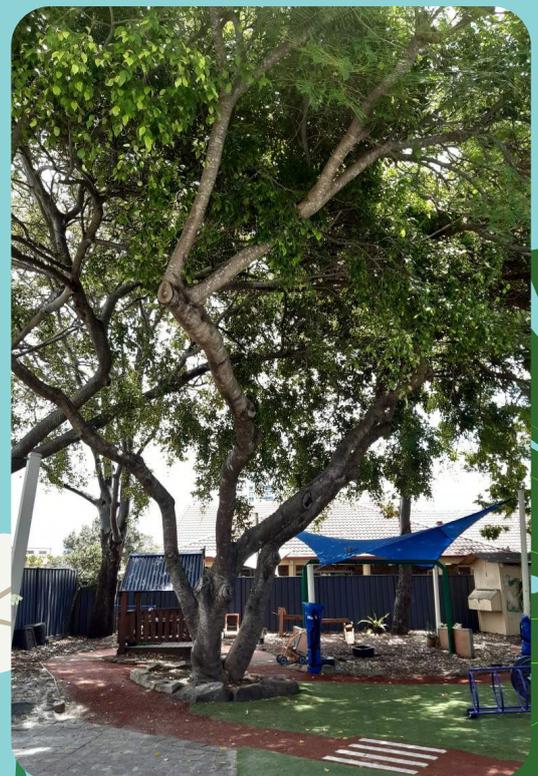
- Can you play an instrument, and can you share it with the children?
- Can you cook and would you like to share your skill with the children?
- Do you have a job that the children might be interested in learning about?
- Do you speak another language and could you teach the children some things about your cultural heritage?
- Can you share with the children a cultural or religious celebration?
- Can you sew? If so there may be times when things may need repair or to be made.
- Are you handy with tools? Can you teach the children some woodwork skills?
- Do you have collage materials that the children can use for art and craft? Boxes, buttons, feathers, material?
- Do you have access to large paper or cardboard that the children can use to make their wonderful art work?
- Can you help to review the Centre's policies and centre Philosophy?
- Do you have time to donate to the parent committee, or for social and fundraising activities?

If becoming involved is something that you would be interested in please approach your child's teacher or the Director/Nominated Supervisor and they would be more than happy to get you involved.

PARENT CONCERNS

If you have any questions, queries or suggestions please do not hesitate to speak to the Director/Nominated Supervisor. The procedure for addressing parent concerns is:

1. Speak directly with the Director/Nominated Supervisor who will work with you to resolve the issue.
2. If the issue cannot be resolved the Director/Nominated Supervisor will take the issue to the Management Committee. Parents will be asked to meet with the Management Committee.
3. If you have any concerns that have not been resolved with the above procedures you may contact the nearest regional Office for Early Childhood Education and Care - P.O. Box 492. Oxenford Qld 4210 or by phone on 56566688.



HOW WE COMMUNICATE WITH YOU

At the beginning of the year or on enrolment

- Parents will be asked to complete an online enrolment form and attend a Parent Interview with the Director. This is an opportunity to share and discuss information specific to your child including child's interests, likes and dislikes and additional information about developmental requirements - e.g. sleep, toileting, food intake, and medical needs and dietary requirements.
- Parents will be asked to complete a "Parents' Evaluation of Development Status" (PEDS) form to open communication between educators and parents in regards to any child developmental concerns.

On a daily basis

- Informal conversations will take place at drop off and pick up times.
- Photos will be taken of your child on most days and shared through the OWINA Parent App (private and only for centre families) This will provide you with an overall view of the room's learning program & your child's food intake and sleep details.
- The centre menu will be shared through OWINA Parent App.

On a monthly basis

- A monthly newsletter
- Staff will contribute to your child's individual developmental file (e.g. photo's, written observations, work samples, art items).

On an annual basis

- You will be provided with your child's art portfolio that will contain artwork from your child's year with us.

On an ongoing basis

- Parent-staff interviews can take place at any time at either the request of the Teachers or the parents. Information from your child's learning stories and observations will guide the discussions.
- Parents will be encouraged to contribute to the program giving information about your child's development, interests, likes and dislikes.

Social Media Platforms used: OWINA Parent App & Facebook, please join us!!

Please advise staff of other community services that may play an active role in communication about your child's health and development, if your child has any special needs.

Parents are invited to contribute ideas, advice and share in decision making through various opportunities within the Centre.

Information on management decisions will be passed on to you as soon as possible.

Our aim is to build continuity between care practices in your home and practices in the Centre.

Remember if you have a concern about your child's health and development or wish to contribute to Centre activities, do not hesitate to talk with staff. Sharing information is vitally important.

CENTRE PRACTICES

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURES

For safety and security purposes, ALL children must be signed in on arrival and signed out on departure and the times must be noted. We use an electronic signing In/Out platform which requires each person to use their own pin to sign in / out, so we have a record of who has dropped off and picked up.

AUTHORISED ADULTS FOR CHILD PICK UP

Your child cannot leave the centre with any person other than a parent or a nominated authorised adult. The centre must have written authorisation from the parent to allow their child to be picked up by another adult. This person must be over 18 years of age; we will not give children over to minors. Photo identification must be shown.

No child will be allowed to leave our Centre with a person who is not stated on the Enrolment form, unless prior arrangements are made with the Nominated Supervisor.

IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY

Whether that be brought about by an act of a natural disaster or by human hands, the Centre will have in place an emergency plan to cope with all situations. It is imperative that parents provide current contact numbers at all times. The staff at AWCC are trained in evacuation and emergency procedures on a regular basis.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

It is essential that we have copies of your children's birth certificate and immunisation status. We are also required to have certified copies of any court order relating to your child. Parents must notify the Centre if there are any Court Orders affecting residency of their child/ren and a copy is required for the Centre.

Without a Court Order, we cannot stop a parent collecting a child.

POLICY & PROCEDURES

You will find a copy of our Centre's policies and procedures in the office and on our OWNA app. We expect our staff and families to always adhere to our policies and procedures to ensure we maintain compliance and abide by National Law and Regulations.

We are constantly reviewing our policies and procedures and ask for staff and family participation to ensure we meet our families needs and required regulations. Your involvement helps us to improve our service.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We are committed to protecting your privacy. We support and are bound by privacy laws to ensure strict confidentiality is maintained. Any information shared in our partnership with families will be utilised to guide the children's learning journey. We do not disclose personal information about you or your child to other people or organisations without your consent, unless we are required to do so by law. You can look at the information in your child's file at any time.





MENU PLANNING

The menu is planned in consultation with the Director/Nominated Supervisor each week and is planned to meet the daily dietary requirements as set out by Nutrition Australia. The cook holds a Food Safety Supervisors Certificate and all staff have completed a food handlers course and adhere to strict hygiene practices. Menu selections reflect a diverse range of cultures and parents are welcome to make suggestions or bring in recipes to share.



AWCC is a NUT free Centre

NUTRITIONAL EDUCATION

- At the Centre we use food as an educational medium. We do this through discussions with the children. We encourage children to create foods through our cooking times.
- All staff wear disposable gloves, cloth aprons and hair nets, whenever they are serving food to the children.
- The children are encouraged to serve themselves morning and afternoon tea.
- We cover the tables with tablecloths when children eat. Children in the younger age group have staggered lunches to accommodate their individual needs. Staff are encouraged to sit down and eat with the children. Filtered water and milk are also served. Children are never forced to eat, but are encouraged to try new foods.

Good nutrition is vital to children's growth and well being. We ask parents to endeavour to encourage good eating habits.

REST TIME

Under 2's

- Children under 2 sleep according to their individual sleep patterns. They sleep in the nursery in cots that meet the Australian Standards. Children under 12 months will always be placed on their backs with the absence of any bumpers, pillows, toys, bottles etc. These recommendations come from SIDS and KIDS Safe Sleeping kit and will be adhered to at all times. The Sleep room is monitored by the staff every 15 minutes and the staff record this information.

Over 2's

- Rest time is an essential part of the daily program required under the National Regulations. This time allows children a quiet time in which to recoup after a busy morning.

Children who do not sleep will be encouraged to rest quietly for a short time and then they shall be allowed to participate in quiet activities. Comforters are allowed at rest time. Quiet activities are planned before and after rest time.

We ask that you provide your child with a named sheet set (cot sized), and in winter, a small blanket.

SUSTAINABILITY



Our Centre is passionate about the environment and sustainable practices and believe in supporting children to appreciate and care for the environment by embedding sustainable practices. By encouraging children to participate in our recycling program, conserving water and caring for our gardens, worm farms and chickens we aim to provide children with the skills and knowledge to become environmentally responsible.

WHEN SHOULD I NOT SEND MY CHILD TO THE CENTRE?

Our Centre is a busy and demanding day for the minds and bodies of our children, we are not equipped to care for sick children; however, we will do everything we can to comfort a child who has become sick whilst in our care.

To try and prevent the spread of disease, please monitor your child's health and watch for:

- A runny green nose
- High Temperature
- Diarrhoea
- Red, swollen or discharging eyes
- Vomiting
- Rashes
- Irritability, unusually tired or lethargic

PLEASE DO NOT BRING YOUR CHILD TO THE CENTRE IF THEY DISPLAY ANY OF THE ABOVE SYMPTOMS.

If a child becomes ill whilst at the Centre the child's parents/ guardian will be contacted to organise collection of the child. Please note, staff do not administer Paracetamol.

ILLNESS & EXCLUSION PERIODS

It is important for the health and welfare of all of the staff and children at Albert Waterways that illnesses that occur are treated in the correct way with the correct exclusion periods. Our centre policy states that children must have 24 hours free and clear of the last vomit or diarrhoea before attending the centre.

Please find below a link to Staying Healthy in Child Care (5th Edition):

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/reports/clinical%20guidelines/ch55-staying-healthy.pdf>

MEDICATION

We realise that from time to time it may be necessary for your child to have medication whilst at AWCC. Medication Forms can be completed through the OWNA App including all details regarding the medication that is to be administered to your child/children.

It will be necessary for you to do the following:

- 1.Ensure that the medication is clearly labeled (full name).
- 2.Clear instructions MUST be written on the Medication Forms
- 3.Medication must be given to a staff member in the child's room to be locked into the medication storage box.
- 4.Prescription Medicine must be in the original container with the child's name and full instructions clearly marked.
- 5.PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE MEDICATION IN YOUR CHILD'S BAG!

INCIDENTS

If your child sustains an injury that requires emergency medical assistance, the centre will call an ambulance. The centre will inform you of any such incident immediately. Staff will document the events of any incidents where a child is injured. We will ensure parents are contacted immediately.

PLEASE ENSURE WE ALWAYS HAVE YOUR CURRENT ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS, BOTH AT WORK, HOME AND YOUR MOBILE!

Parents will be advised of any minor injury on pick up of their child. We ask that parents sign the incident form to confirm that they have been advised of any incidents.

SUN SAFETY



Children and educators will wear hats and appropriate clothing when outside.

WE ASK THAT CHILDREN COME TO THE SERVICE WITH SUNSCREEN APPLIED. STAFF WILL REAPPLY BEFORE AFTERNOON OUTSIDE PLAY.

WHAT YOU NEED TO BRING

- Children need to have a set of sheets at the centre for the days they are enrolled. Please place them in a draw string bag or pillow case with their name clearly marked for identification and hygiene purposes. Cot sheets fit the stretcher beds perfectly! All sleep items must fit inside the sheet bag.
- Please supply your child with three changes of clothes for toileting accidents and to participate in messy activities. The centre does not keep a large supply of spare clothes! In winter please supply warm clothes, shoes & socks. In summer you may also like to bring your child's swimmers for water play.
- Your child requires a backpack for Kindy. Any artwork or specific notes will be placed into your child's bags at the end of the day. Please ensure that you check your child's bag daily to ensure that nothing is missed.
- Your child's wet bag needs to be emptied and returned each day.
- If your child is in nappies, please ensure that your child has a sufficient amount to last them the week. Nappy changes at child care centres are more frequent than you would do at home, so please be aware.
- If your child uses a bottle, please bring them in with water measured and correct formula measured separately in a dispenser. The bottle must have their name clearly marked. Food is prepared here for those children who are weaning. A "sippy" cup with their name will also be needed if unable to yet drink from an open cup.
- Please do not allow your child to bring toys into Albert Waterways. The centre has an ample supply of stimulating, age appropriate toys for the children to use through out the day. Comfort items for sleep time are fine, but must be placed inside the sheet bag.



On behalf of the Educating team and Committee of Albert Waterways Children's Centre, we would like to welcome you to our AWCC family. We look forward to being a part of many happy memories and providing a positive start to your child's educational journey.

