



FAMILY HANDBOOK

Including
Health, Hygiene and Safety
Policies and Procedures

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NOTE: Our Family Handbook and policies will be reviewed yearly and updated when required throughout the year.

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Reason: updated the guide to the National Quality Framework.

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Please Read other related policies:

Child Protection Policy and Procedures – Please read the **Staff Handbook**.

Excursion Policy – It is a policy on its own.

Nutrition Policy – In this policy and we have a nutrition folder with lots of great ideas for parents and early childhood educators.

Policy on Toxic and other Potentially Dangerous Products – Please read the **Staff Health, Safety and Hygiene Policies and Practices**.

Strategies for Environmental Sustainability – In this policy.

Maria Montessori's vision was the attainment of peace through the preparation of the child.

Dr. Maria Montessori, internationally renowned child educator, was originally a medical doctor who brought the scientific methods of observation, experimentation, and research to the study of children in the early 1900's. Maria Montessori observed the children in her care to ascertain their developmental patterns. Montessori believed in working on the whole child. To nurture in each child an inner conscience, this teaches children to think about their actions. We can provide the child with the knowledge of right from wrong, but it is for the child to follow through when no one is around, e.g., wasting water, looking after the animals in our environment, not hurting others, the care of the earth, and the love of humanity. Only with time can we measure the success of Montessori's approach by distinguishing those adults who are interested only in personal satisfaction or materialistic gain, to those working actively for the care of the earth, peace and help for others. Montessori is an approach to the education of children. It has been effectively used with normal, gifted, physically handicapped and mentally challenged children in different countries around the world. Previously it was considered that children had short attention spans. Dr. Montessori was amazed to observe the length of time that very young children would choose to attend to tasks that interested them.

The Montessori Philosophy

Maria Montessori's vision was the attainment of peace through the preparation of the child

The Montessori Journey views the parents as primary in the education process. The centre ensures we employ the most suitably qualified educators and staff who will have ethical, respectful practices and committed to working in partnership with you. We value the educator's views, strengths, professional experiences, and diversity. Management, educators, and staff have a collaborative relationship, so we can ensure a meaningful experience for your child.

The Montessori Journey views each child and their family as unique individuals and one to be respected for that uniqueness, their circumstances, culture, family structure, customs, language, beliefs, and kinship systems. We believe in building on children's prior and current experiences helping children to feel secure, confident, and connected to familiar people, places, events, and understandings.

Our program is flexible and responsive to each child's individual needs and interests. We let the child construct themselves through work and their own natural laws of development. We will support the children's love of learning. Montessori is an education for independence, preparing not just for school but for Life.

The relationship between management and educators are built on respect. A partnership within the team, we utilise educator's knowledge, their diversity, culture, and professional experience to enhance our program daily.

The Montessori Journey acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land are the Quandamooka people, we pay our respects to the elders both past, present, and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal Australia. We always remember that under the concrete and asphalt this land will always be traditional Aboriginal Land.

**"Tell me, I'll forget
Show me, I may remember.
"But involve me and I'll understand."
*Chinese Proverb***

Educational Program, Kindergarten Program, Montessori Program

A statement of principles and planning procedures. Building a foundation for lifelong learning

1. The Montessori Journey educational program has a deep respect for the Montessori principles and the Early Years Learning Framework. Our centre philosophy is to maintain a high standard of personal care for each child whilst allowing the child to experience a Montessori education which will encourage the child's love of learning, support their natural potential, and build a foundation for lifelong learning.
2. The Montessori Journey is also approved to run the kindergarten program within a Montessori environment. We follow the kindergarten guidelines as set out by the Office of Early Childhood Education and Care.
3. We believe in providing the child with a carefully prepared environment and curriculum, that has developmentally appropriate activities which is based on the child's individual needs and a routine that is flexible both inside and outside which allows the natural unfolding of the child, physically, emotionally, intellectually, and socially.
4. The Montessori Journey's broader vision is to reinforce the child's learning. The self-correcting material helps children to achieve the result without adult interference and in the process assists in building the concentration while they work. On their own, children choose to practise things they were trying to master repeatedly - "The love of repetition".
5. We will support children's freedom of choice as children like to choose things they do. Montessori classrooms are set out for children, so the children have easy access to the materials they would like to work with. Children will choose, take, and replace items without the need of adult assistance. Montessori children are supported to make choices, accept challenges, manage change and cope with frustration. We use a prepared classroom to inspire children to achieve the best outcome for independent learning discoveries. Children learn through hands-on experiences. Dr. Montessori found that young children have a natural inclination for organisation and orderliness.
6. The Montessori Journey focuses on nurturing the inner conscience of children, which teaches the children to be responsible for their actions. We believe in teaching the children about a sustainable environment, to be less wasteful and more thoughtful.
7. Within this safe and unique learning environment that is child-centred and adult-guided, we believe in maintaining an orderly, calm, and cheerful environment where the child can feel confident to explore and attempt new skills without fear of failure or judgement. Our teachers interact with all the children throughout the day making sure that they are happy, feel safe and content within their environment.

Welcome to the Montessori Journey

(Discovery of the Child)

About us

The Montessori Journey opened its doors to the children and their families in January 2002 as an Early Childhood Montessori school for 3 to 6-year old's.

We are a privately-owned family Centre with a contact Director/Nominated Supervisor (responsible person in charge) and Educational Leader who is also the Licensee (Sandy Vassiliou). I am happy to meet with you about any management queries, our early childhood educators, the educational program, your child/ren, the building or equipment maintenance or any other matter relating to the Centre. If you require an in-depth appointment, this can be easily arranged at a mutually convenient time. Any queries regarding direct debit or term fees can also be directed to the management. If management needs to consult with a parent about anything, you will either get a phone call, a note in your child's pocket, an email or personally spoken to while at the Centre. Please contact me for any matters concerning your child or the centre on 07 3396 8800 or email info@montessorijourney.com.au

Our centre offers full and part-time positions. We also offer a free transitional period, the timing and approach of which will be discussed with you upon enrolment.

One of the things that make our centre different from others is our genuine application of the Montessori program. We offer children a strong foundation for the preparation for their lives ahead. We run a challenging curriculum in a peaceful environment, and we strive to offer not only a joyful educational experience for the children, but a supportive school community for the entire family. Our aim is to create a special learning environment that is child-centred and adult-guided where the atmosphere is orderly and calm. Our environment is one where children feel confident to explore and attempt new skills without fear of judgment or failure.

Our centre is very proud to have been nominated for the best educational program in the Bayside where we have either won or been a finalist for the award in Education Training and Tuition continually from 2002 to 2010. The Montessori Journey was very proud to be listed in the Hall of Fame for our consistent achievements. In 2011 we changed from the above category to Child and Family Services and once again either was a finalist or won the award until they stopped the business achiever awards.

Some other proud moments have been:

- 2010 The centre being asked to take part in the pilot program in the Early Learning Framework which is the new system in the early childhood sector throughout Australia.
- 2010 The centre being nominated and chosen to take part in the television commercial, radio, posters, and brochures for the Queensland Government for the new kindergarten program. This was quite an experience for all our families, children, and early childhood educators. First viewing of the commercial was in February 2011.
- 2012 We went through the assessments and ratings for the centre which we were very proud to meet EXCEEDING IN ALL AREAS. This can be viewed on our website.
- 2013 Our centre was approved to run the kindergarten program, please note we follow the kindergarten guidelines within the Montessori environment, our teachers are fully Qld Registered teachers who are also trained in Montessori.
- 2013 Our centre was asked to participate in the 2nd phase of the television commercial for the kindergarten program. We were very proud to meet Jay Laga'aia who was the presenter.
- 2017 Once again the centre was asked to be part with its children to run a Federal Government television commercial for families, it was very exciting for all who attended.

Governance and Management Policy

Aim

The efficient and effective management systems allow the service to support all the families. Management makes sure the centre is compliant with the national law, the national regulations, and the national quality standard. We liaise with the regulator authority, inclusion support and other professionals when required. Management makes sure we have an effective compliant operation of the centre.

Office location and telephone equipment

The director's office is located in the Van Gogh room which is the front room near the gate. The office has all the information for families and staff. All the enrolment records and other confidential information for children as well as staff's forms and confidential information are kept in the filing cabinets in the office. There is a first aid box with the inventory list in the office's cupboard. All the policies and Quality Improvement Plan are kept in the folders if anyone wants to read or review them. The visitors sign in book, the maintenance book and the fire drill/lockdown records can be found in the office as well.

There are two telephones in the office for communication purpose. The landline phone can make outgoing calls as well as communicate with each classroom's telephones so the educators or staff can call the office in case of emergency or unforeseen situations. If a parent calls to check on the child, the director can transfer the call to the child's room and the educator can speak with the parent directly if it is not a busy time. The wireless phone can be carried by educators or staff if the director is not in the office.

Hours

The centre is open from 7.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday, except public holidays. We are open 50 weeks a year. The centre will be closed over the Christmas and New Year break. A late fee of \$2.00 per minute will be charged if your child is picked up after 4.30pm. The Childcare Benefit does NOT cover this fee.

Service management policy and procedures

The effective management systems allow the service to support families with Centrelink and making sure the families receive all their entitlements for their child/family. Management makes sure the centre is compliant with the national law, the national regulations, and the national quality standard. We liaise with the regulator authority, Inclusion support and other professionals when required. Management makes sure we have an effective compliant operation of the centre.

Cyber-safe environment

- The centre does not allow children to access the internet without staff supervision. We may access the internet to learn about faraway places, foods or use the internet as a tool to show the children something that we are trying to explain to further their learning.
- Educators take photos of the children for the purpose of observations and documentations. Photos and videos will be taken for Facebook, Instagram, or our website. The authorisation is on the enrolment form, and it is optional for the parents to sign it. Any footage will be censored before we upload. Photos and videos on Facebook, Instagram and the website will stay on indefinitely.
- All staff are required to leave their mobile phones in the staff room.
- The Montessori Journey will monitor all social media postings.
- If at any time a parent is not happy with something to do with their child and social media please see the office ASAP.

Centre decisions/Suggestions

Most decisions concerning the centre are based on the management, early childhood educators, parents, extended family members, and children's input. If you have any feedbacks, ideas, concerns, suggestions, or comments, please feel free to bring them to the director/nominated supervisor's attention or put your suggestions/comments in the fee's slot through the reception desk or your child's room suggestion box and we will try and work together.

Payment of fees

Fees are paid fortnightly and are two weeks in advance. Should you wish to withdraw your child from the centre, we require two weeks' notice in writing or two weeks full fees will be charged in lieu of notice. This is fully payable whether your child attends or not and the balance of the bond will be reimbursed. The CCS will only be paid from the last signed day, thereafter full fees will be charged to the end of your child's notice period. Fees can only be paid by direct debiting fortnightly or per term, in advance. The parent/guardian agrees that this amount can be changed without notice only by administrative educators and only for childcare benefits or late fees, extra days taken, and arrears retrieval (for any other reasons the parent will be notified). The direct debit service will charge an administration fee of \$2 for the first payment. Fees paid by bank account through direct debit will incur \$0.88 surcharge. Fees paid by credit card through direct debit will incur 2.14% surcharge. Other payments (Diners Club, American Express cards, etc.) will incur a 4.00% surcharge. Please retain all your receipts for reference purposes. Insufficient funds will incur a late fee of \$20.

Bond

A two-week full fees' bond must be paid and is held until your child leaves the centre. This is calculated on the days your child attends fortnightly.

Please note:

- * All fees for permanently booked children will include payment for public holidays if it falls on your child's day.
- * Unfortunately, we are unable to do make-up sessions for public holidays or children unable to make their scheduled days of attendance.

Waiting list/Enrolment fee

With your enrolment or waiting list application you will be charged \$10. This will come off your full enrolment fee of \$25.

Fee schedule

\$115 per day

Attendance records

It is a legal requirement that all children must be signed in on the digital on their arrival and signed out on their departure daily. These signatures are how you will continue to receive the Child Care Subsidy (CCS). These attendance records are also used to check attendance in the case of an emergency (e.g., fire drill). For parents receiving the subsidies you will also need to sign the Digital when your child returns if your child has been absent. 42 absent days are allowed per financial year before you lose your rebates and full fees will be charged.

Fee relief

The Federal Government has set priority guidelines for the childcare scheme. The main priority for a place in our centre is for working parents, those seeking work and students. The amount of CCS will depend on your

joint gross weekly income, which is assessed through the Family Assistance Office (FAO). Families can contact the FAO on 13 61 50.

Our centre charges for whole days (i.e., 9 hours). If your child goes over their eligible hours either in our centre, or in another centre, you may be liable to pay back the money at the end of the year.

If you are applying for childcare assistance, we advise parents to apply for a Child Reference Number (CRN) and a Family Reference Number (FRN) which is done through Centrelink. We need both reference numbers and the date of birth for your child and the primary parent/guardian who is applying or claiming the CCS for the Child Care Management System. Once we submit the data to Centrelink you will need to approve it via My Gov. The **centre's provider number: F01-6LQ-51.**

Kindy savings

From 2023, the Queensland Government is making kindy cheaper for many Queensland families, you may be eligible for free kindy or cheaper kindy. Check your eligibility and savings by using the steps below.

Kindy Plus eligibility

- Do one or more of the following. It this applies to you or your child who will be attending kindy?
- hold a current Australian Government Health Care Card (HCC)
- hold a current Australian Government Pensioner Concession Card (automatic HCC entitlements)
- hold a Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card or White Card
- have formal communication, such as a letter, from the relevant agency stating the intent to issue a Health Care Card
- have evidence of formal foster or kinship care arrangements
- identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- have three or more children, of the same age, enrolled in the same year
- have a child who is identified as living in a formal child protection out-of-home-care arrangement
- are a family and child who have entered Australia under the Australian Government's Refugee and Humanitarian Program, or is in the process of seeking asylum and holds a temporary visa

If yes...

The Queensland Government may make your kindy free. The Queensland Government will reduce your out-of-pocket costs for your long day care 600-hour kindy program by **\$1,443.30** per year.

Family Tax Benefit eligibility

Has your family been confirmed as eligible for Family Tax Benefit (either FTB A or FTB B)? If you are not sure of your eligibility for Family Tax Benefit, please visit <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/family-tax-benefit>.

If yes...

The Queensland Government will make your kindy cheaper. The Queensland Government will reduce your out-of-pocket costs for your long day care 600-hour kindy program by **\$512.00** per year. Please confirm your eligibility and the actual fees with your chosen kindergarten provider.

Penalties

- Fees for dishonoured cheques will be charged to the parents.
- Fees must be paid by the due date, or a \$20 late fee will apply.
- No fees will be charged for the 2-week break over the Christmas and the New Year period.

- If fees accumulate your child's place will be withdrawn. A debt collector will be contacted which will then affect your credit rating as CRAA will be informed. All fees incurred with a debt collection agency will be charged to the parent/guardian.

Dealing with grievances and complaints

We acknowledge that although we try to be, we are not perfect, mistakes and misunderstandings may happen. If you or your child have any concerns, complaints, comments, suggestions or grievances about the centre, educators or management please see either the director/nominated supervisor or early childhood educators involved.

We would like to note that your child will always be supported should they come to the staff with their concerns and suggestions.

The systems we use to deal with complaints or grievance is taken seriously and dealt with very quickly. Our goal is to create a safe and happy centre for our children, educators, families, and community.

If you feel you have any complaints or grievances, we offer confidential options for your convenience. Listed below in no order:

- Email your concern to info@montessorijourney.com.au. The director/nominated supervisor will raise your concern with relevant staff unless asked to keep confidential and investigate the issue and will inform you as soon as possible of the outcome.
- For our child/teacher ratio for supervision we ask that you make an appointment to speak with your child's teacher. These meetings are usually set for 9am of your child's attendance days, or by phone between 1.30pm and 2pm. At that meeting you can voice any concerns you may have and exchange ideas. To make an appointment contact our office on (07)3396 8800 or let a staff member know you would like a meeting.
- You may approach the director/nominated supervisor personally on any issues. The director/nominated supervisor will investigate and address the concern and will advise the outcome back to the parent in a timely manner.
- We understand how busy parents can be. Should you find it easier, you can call the director/nominated supervisor on our office number of (07)3396 8800 to voice any concern. We will always come back and let you know what action or amendment has been taken.

We aim to deal with any issues fairly, in confidence, effectively and confidentially.

If you are still unhappy about the outcome of your problem the nearest office of the Office for Early Childhood Education who are responsible for the National Quality Standards are:

Postal:	Early Childhood Education and Care Department of Education PO Box 15033 CITY EAST QLD 4002
Phone:	13 74 68 (8am to 6pm Monday - Friday)
Email:	ecec@qed.qld.gov.au

Behaviour Guidance Policy

Aim

The aim is to encourage all the children to express themselves, develop self-resilience and self-esteem. All the educators give positive guidance to each child while building trusting and supportive relationships.

Implementation

At the Montessori Journey we demonstrate a consistent approach to behaviour guidance to ensure each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others, and communicate effectively to resolve conflict. We believe that true discipline comes from within. Our aim is to show the child the way to adhere to discipline. The child who can obey their inner guide is a disciplined child. Montessori believed a peaceful atmosphere that pervades the classroom as the children pursue their work is extremely touching. No one could have obtained it by external means. We encourage children to use their words not their hands and regularly encourage children to think about how others might feel. Appropriate behaviour is modelled and discussed on a regular basis with all the children, included in our discussion is why we have rules within the centre, e.g., fort rules, sandpit rules, inside rules, etc. Which in most cases is to keep us safe. How to play together with consideration to others, caring for our friends, equipment and using our words. When unacceptable behaviour is observed, we discuss this with the children and what they could have done instead. We encourage children to acknowledge their actions and take responsibility.

Children need guidelines and acceptable limits within which they are free to make their own decisions. We aim to assist children to become self-disciplined who know and understand the limits set.

If children carry on with challenging behaviour after we have tried to support them to regulate their own emotions we take them away from the situation, encouraging the thinking time approach. This usually happens if the child is hurting other children, physically, emotionally, psychologically, themselves, Educators or disrespecting other children or property. We focus on the acceptable behaviour which is displayed by the other children.

At the end of thinking time early childhood educators discusses what alternative behaviours and problem-solving skills could have been used and any learning's that can be gleaned from the situation. Educators actively seek the different guidance strategies used by family members and will constantly evaluate situations and use it in a constructive way within the centre.

Early childhood educators try to encourage children to empathise with and support other children who are experiencing difficulties. If the child is uncooperative and the unacceptable behaviour continues to jeopardise the safety of other children and educators, the centre reserves the right to phone the parent/guardian and request a meeting with the parent. In extreme cases if the child is out of control, we will ask the parent to pick up their child. This must happen within an hour of our phone call.

We encourage children to use "I" statements – that is, we support them in identifying their own feelings rather than blaming others for their actions. We do not force a child to say "sorry" but rather ask what may make the other child feel better. They may have to get an ice pack for them, a drink of water, tissues, a hug or recognise that the other child just wants to be left alone.

Guidelines for the centre

- The centre promotes a policy on peace.
- War toys and fighting type games, degrading name-calling and jeering are not permitted at the centre.
- Children walk inside but can enjoy running outside.
- Children will be in the company of an adult, inside or outside.
- Children's hands and feet are used in a positive way.
- Chairs are for sitting on. Tables are for sitting at.
- Children are to respect their belongings and of the belongings of others.
- Children will, where appropriate, use words to deal with confrontations.
- Materials are to be played with appropriately e.g., books are for reading, blocks are for building.
- Children will be reminded about personal hygiene - especially at routine times.
- Sand is to be played with and not used for throwing.
- Bikes can be ridden whilst considering others around them and be rode as bikes not as scooters.

Guidelines for the educators

- Educators encourage children to express themselves and their opinions, the Peace Table support children to do this.
- Educators allow children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem.
- Children are allowed to maintain their dignity and rights.
- Educators give positive guidance and encouragement to each child so that they feel supported to feel secure, confident, and included.
- Educators consider the family and cultural values, age, and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child.
- Interactions with each child are warm, responsive and build trusting relationships.
- Educators engage every child in meaningful, open interactions that support the skills for life and learning.
- Educators follow our behaviour policy

Children with challenging behaviour

If a child persists in targeting other children on a regular basis, a report will be done with all incidents, times, dates, and children who have been targeted and the parent will be notified, and it will be a requirement that you seek appropriate advice to support the centre more to manage this behaviour. The centre can assist you with finding the appropriate help needed.

The three steps to the challenging child procedure

1. Early childhood educators will communicate with parents/guardians that there is an issue that needs addressing and we need to work with them to develop an action plan that best suits their child. This will require the parent/guardian, child, educator, and director/nominated supervisor to come in for a discussion at a convenient time for all parties. If the parent/guardian requires a support person, or another educator that they feel comfortable with, they may include them. They may also seek external help from someone in a specialised field if this is required. At this meeting, the child's behavioural problems will be discussed together with why this meeting has been requested. It will require all parties to develop an action plan together to follow. The action plan will include strategies for the adults and the child, outcomes, and a timeframe within which the plan will be evaluated.
2. The second step states that if the behaviour of the child is aggressive or inappropriate and threatens the safety of other children and educators, educators will call the parents/guardians immediately after an incident occurs, to come and collect their child. If the behaviour does not improve over a specified period, then we will ask you to seek help from outside agencies which we may be able to advise you on.
3. The third step states that if you are unwilling to seek outside help or willing to work in partnership with the centre, we reserve the right to discontinue your child's enrolment at the Montessori Journey as the safety and welfare of the other children, families and educators is paramount to maintaining a happy centre.

Please know we are all working in the best interest of your child.

Managing biting behaviour procedure

We get the child who bit to hold the icepack on the child that they had bitten if the child that was bitten is ok for this to happen. We follow the behaviour policy with the child that bit and fill in an Accident report for the child that was bitten, and an Incident report for the child that bit. We also have appropriate books that we read in our library.

Early childhood educators are responsible for

- Giving positive reinforcement for appropriate behaviour within the centre, which will be clear and consistent.
- Setting clear, fair rules/limits, this will be age-appropriate, having regard to the child's stage of development.
- Prompting and supporting children to remove themselves from situations where they are experiencing frustration anger or fear.
- Re-directing conflict situations with children to more appropriate behaviour/activities with explanations as to why their behaviour is unacceptable. Patiently reminding the children of the consequences of their actions.
- Guiding children to use conflict resolution skills to solve problems. Educators ask for support from other educators when dealing with behaviour situations.
- Being vigilant in their awareness of all children to avoid any future situations that may occur.
- Liaising with parents so we are aware of anything in the child's home life that may affect the child i.e., death in the family, a separation etc. Being mindful of how it may have impacted on the child emotionally.
- Modelling ways to negotiate and resolve conflicts with others.
- Supporting children to negotiate their rights in relation to the rights of others and intervening sensitively when children have trouble in resolving a disagreement.

Child Protection Policy

(Please refer to the Staff Handbook for more information)

Aim

The aim is to ensure all the staff identify and assess possible sources of harm to the children and then take the appropriate steps to prevent it from occurring. All the staff understand their reporting obligations and their responsibility to protect them from any types of harm. Our centre has a commitment to maintaining the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

Child protection risk management strategy

The approved provider, nominated supervisor, employees and volunteers will implement the child protection risk management strategy to ensure the health, wellbeing and safety of all children at Montessori Journey, protect them from harm as well as the integrity of employees and volunteers. Management and early childhood educators are responsible for monitoring centre compliance with the guidelines set down by the Commission for Children and Young People. Monitoring will occur daily.

Child Protection is a three-phase system:

1. **Prevention** – Teaching all children protective strategies such as ‘7 steps 2 Safety’ (<https://www.napcan.org.au/Programs/7-steps-to-safety/>)
2. **Early intervention** – Identifying high risk families and situations and providing support and community referrals or reporting to authorities.
3. **Response** – Recognising indicators of abuse and reporting to authorities.

Preventive education

Educating children, parents and educators is important and is the first step in the prevention of child abuse. Knowledge builds confidence and empowers children and adults. Children who understand about personal safety are more likely to disclose abuse to others.

Educators can include child protection topics in the program:

- Acceptable/unacceptable behaviours, and appropriate/inappropriate contact in a manner suitable to children’s age and level of understanding
- Children have a right to always feel safe.
- Children should say “no” to anything that makes them feel unsafe
- Children can use their own skills to feel safe.
- Children being able to recognise signs that they do not feel safe and need to be alert and think clearly
- There is no secret too awful, no story too terrible, that they can’t share with someone they trust
- Educators are available for children if they have any concerns
- Children need to tell educators of any suspicious activities or people
- Children learn to recognise and express their feelings verbally and non-verbally

Boundaries for physical touching

Physical touching from caregivers to the children is an important part of quality care and nurturing. Acceptable touching includes hugging (e.g., to greet or farewell a child or to comfort). Rubbing their back for reassurance and comfort, kissing an injured finger, etc. Touching for hygiene reasons includes changing children's clothes, bathing, assisting with toileting, etc.

Children have the right to refuse an adult's or other child's touch and need to be taught about acceptable and unacceptable touches in a non-threatening way. The welfare and interests of the children are of paramount importance from any forms of child abuse.

Children's stress and brain development

Some stress is normal and an important aspect of every child's experience and development. High and ongoing levels of stress where children are not supported by warm and consistent relationships with their carers (e.g., parents/guardians, grandparents, early childhood educators) lead to negative outcomes.

Positive stress

Positive stress is a moderate and transient stress response which results in mild increases in stress. It may occur as the result of encountering new people or situations, dealing with frustration and adult limit setting and the pain of a minor falls or injections.

Tolerable stress

Tolerable stress responses may be caused by the death or serious illness of a loved one, parents' divorce, witnessing a frightening event or a natural disaster. Tolerable stress responses are generally limited to a short period of time when the carers are supportive and facilitate the child's adaptive coping skills.

Toxic stress

Toxic stress responses occur as the result of strong and prolonged activation of the body's stress response, without the buffering protection of supportive relationships with caregivers. Toxic stress responses can be triggered by physical or emotional abuse, chronic neglect, severe maternal depression, and family violence. This increases the risk of stress related physical and mental illness.

Early brain development impacts later life

The disruption of early brain architecture, resulting in disordered brain circuits, leads to problems in childhood. There is evidence that many problems in adult life begin and form in childhood. There will never be sufficient resources available and treating established problems is often difficult, expensive, or ineffective. It is therefore essential that the focus be on prevention, by investing in the most critical brain development period that occurs during a child's early years.

Enrolment and Orientation Policy

Aim

The aim to provide equal access for all children and meeting the needs of the local community. We maintain confidentiality in relation to all information provided on enrolment forms. We ensure all families are welcomed and receive an effective orientation into the centre, you will be shown around, given a family handbook, and encouraged to ask questions.

On your enrolment you will be charged a \$25 non-refundable enrolment fee with the acceptance of your place at our centre. You will receive a free t-shirt or sun hat. They all can be purchased thereafter - T-shirts and skivvies for \$12 each and sun hats for \$10 each. You and your child will be invited to attend a free transitional period from 8.30am -11am approximately, so hopefully your child will become more familiar before they do longer hours. This is optional.

Transitional process

The free transitional period is usually from 1-2 weeks from around 8.30am to 11am on the days your child is going to attend, but if needed can be different days. Educators are always ready to welcome and talk to parents/guardians about our program, philosophies and wherever possible meet any requests. It is also a good time for us to learn as much about your child so that the transition from home to the centre will be a smooth one. This is a good time for parents to advise educators of routines or times of the day that your child finds difficult or unsettling and discuss how we can manage this.

Procedures for settling new children and your child's participation into our program

A welcoming environment is provided, where parents hopefully will feel comfortable to spend as much time as discussed to settle new children. We will try and tailor the needs for you and your child as much as possible, if your child is apprehensive, it would be preferred for parents to let the educators, who are the primary care giver, know when you are leaving so we can support your child. Some children may settle more easily if they spend shorter days at the beginning and gradually increase later. Educators will be sensitive to the cultural background of the new families and will ensure that they use the child's familiar words, toileting procedures and any other concerns that you may have. Every child will be supported consistently to actively participate in the program.

On the first day, be brave and smile!

On your child's first day bring your child into the centre in a confident and friendly manner. Your child is very sensitive to your fears and apprehensions. It is in the best interest of your child that the early childhood educators and parents work together. The educators prefer to take your child from you whilst we are in the garden and not when we are lining up to go inside as it can get very hectic. Your child's first day is automatically considered a trial period; however, this period will be extended if your child is suited to our program, and we are suited to your child's needs.

Procedure on informing parents about your child's day

Any concerns about a child will be conveyed to the parent at the end of the day or sooner if necessary. The early childhood educators write in the daybook of what the group did during the day, sleepers, mealtimes, or anything of interest. Children's work will be placed in their bag or room pockets for collection by parents. We have a program on display for parents to read. This is only a guide for parents to know what the children will be doing throughout the week.

Drop-off and pick-up

Please sign your child in and out when you drop your child off and pick your child up. Always leave your child where the teachers are, especially in the early mornings as we are usually in the Van Gogh room (near the office). Due to the safety issue of the other children, we would appreciate parents to be responsible for their own child and any siblings once they are on the premises. We ask that you also be mindful when having in depth conversations with the early childhood educators as this could distract the supervision for the other children. If parents need an in-depth discussion a suitable time can be arranged.

Kindergarten enrolment information

Every child, regardless of circumstance, deserves the best start in life. Access to a quality kindergarten program supports that start. It lays the foundation for every child in Queensland to thrive and achieve life-long success. An approved, kindergarten program is for children in the year before Prep (i.e., children who are four by 30 June in the year they start). The child must access at least 15 hours a week to access the kindergarten program. This is run for 40 weeks a year. The kindergarten program is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher (ECT). Our teachers are also Montessori trained. We follow the QKFS guidelines but achieve this within our Montessori Program. Families (including foster families), accessing the QKFS Plus must supply either one of the following:

- a current Australian Government Health Care Card (HCC), Concession Card
- The child identifies as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- The family has three or more children of the same age, enrolled in the same year.

All children must give the centre a copy or email of the proof of date of birth. This would usually be a birth certificate but other official forms of documentation, such as a passport, are acceptable.

Please inform the office if.....

- Any changes regarding your address, telephone number, and custody/access arrangements
- If someone different is picking up your child
- If your child is absent, sick, or going on holidays.
- If your personal circumstances change which may affect your child and you think we should know
- Any updates of your child's immunisation and changes in health

What to bring at the start of each term

At the beginning of January, April, July, and October or when your child first starts,

- 2 rolls of toilet paper
- 1 box of tissues
- 1 liquid soap (*please make sure that it has no nuts in the soap e.g., almond etc.*)
- If parents do not bring in their supplies, a \$10 levy will apply each term.
- A named USB Stick (1 gig Minimum) or if you have an iPhone we can airdrop it to you at the end of the year.

What to wear

Please supply a spare set of clothes suitable to the climate and a wide brimmed hat. Please don't send your child in anything that you don't want ruined in case we have mucky play, even though we will try and keep them from getting paint on their clothing it does not always happen. Please dress your child for comfort and mobility as they may want to ride a bike, go on the climbing frame, play in the sandpit etc. Due to our sun safety policy, please dress your child in sun-protective clothing. NO SINGLETS. Educators will always assist your child with clothing when needed.

What to bring every day

1. Two pieces of fruit or vegetables (all fruit and vegetables are washed and shared for morning and afternoon tea).
2. A lunch to suit your child's needs. No soft drinks, chocolates, or lollies.
3. Perishables should be named and be placed in the fridge. All perishable food will be thrown out if not eaten after lunch time.
4. A named hand towel with a tag for hanging. This will be sent home on the last day of your child's week.
5. If your child uses a certain sunscreen, please give it to your child's teacher (no Aerosol cans), otherwise the centre supplies a sunscreen for children to use. Please apply the sunscreen in the morning and we will reapply it in the afternoon before going outside.
6. A named insect repellent if you want your child to use one. No Aerosol cans please.
7. A named sheet bag or pillowcase (no plastic bags) with a named cot sized fitted sheet for your child to lie on at rest time. A named blanket in the cooler weather.
8. It is important that the children become accustomed to wearing a hat. A hat will be worn all year round. NO CAPS, please read our sun safety policy.
9. Please name all your child's belongings.

What to wear

Please supply a spare set of clothes suitable to the climate and a wide brimmed hat. Please don't send your child in anything that you don't want ruined in case we have mucky play, even though we will try and keep them from getting paint on their clothing it does not always happen. Please dress your child for comfort and mobility as they may want to ride a bike, go on the climbing frame, play in the sandpit etc. Due to our sun safety policy, please dress your child in sun-protective clothing. NO SINGLETS. Educators will always assist your child with clothing when needed.

Cooking

\$2 per month. This is paid until the end of the year from when your child starts. The money is paid directly to the office. The money will be used for any cooking or sampling of different foods, art materials for special occasions e.g., Mother's Day, Father's Day, Easter etc.

Show 'n tell

(Optional with some rooms)

We would prefer items of an educational value or an interest to others, rather than swords and guns. Toys are not encouraged in the centre as this can create problems especially if the child's toys get broken. Spiderman/Batman etc. dress ups are not encouraged as it can make the other children very hyped up. Show and tell live animals/insects would be appreciated if they can be returned to their environment. All show and tell items are only to be used at show and tell time and not to be played with throughout the day.

Extracurricular activities

Mini Muscles and French - if you would like to do any please see the office. This is an extra curriculum for your child's physical and language needs. Payment is made directly to them. Mini muscles is on a Monday and Wednesday and French is a Thursday.

Procedure for transition to school

Educators will spend time discussing the move to school using appropriate stories and activities.

We also can have:

- Telephone conferencing with your child's new school.
- We work in conjunction with your child's new school by providing a 'snapshot' of your child with a transitional statement summarising their learning and development.
- We can fill in the school's own evaluation forms provided for the child.

After leaving our centre parents and children are always welcome to come back for a visit.

Children's Health and Hygiene Practice

Aim

The aim is to provide a clean and hygienic environment for all the children at Montessori Journey. We also promote children to develop their own good hygienic habits, including hand washing, toileting, sun safe and rest and sleep.

Children immunisation requirements

Children, who are not immunised, will be advised when a vaccine preventable disease is present or suspected in the centre. Children who have not completed their immunisation record will also be treated as un-immunised. If a parent tells you their child was immunised, please notify the office so we can update our records.

Child immunisation clinics

Brisbane City Council provides free child Immunisation clinics. These are held at regular intervals at various locations. To check for the most convenient location for you, visit the Brisbane City Council. For information regarding council run immunisation clinics in other Queensland regions, please contact your local council or [community child health clinic](#).

Immunisation requirements for eligibility for Child Care Benefits

To be eligible for Child Care Benefit (CCB) and CCS, children must be up to date with their immunisation. The easiest way to see if your child is immunised is to go to the Medicare office or go online with your child's Medicare number. If you have any questions about the immunisation requirement, contact the Family Assistance Office on 13 61 50 (8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday). Please bring in your child's latest immunisation statement which can be downloaded from myGov or Medicare online. Please advise the educators if your child has had a recent immunisation, in case of discomfort or a reaction. The centre will send out reminders about your child's immunisation in our newsletter.

Dental policy

Accidents to teeth and gums should be followed by a visit to the dentist. The educators will inform parents when such an accident has occurred and follow their first aid procedure i.e., put the tooth in milk. Parents will be notified straight away, time is critical. The centre has a dental kit called "Happy Children" from the Queensland Government in support of dental issues. Water should be made available to the children after any mealtimes, medications, or inhalers. The centre and educators will systematically incorporate information on hygiene and dental care into the children's learning program each term unless required sooner. The centre will also try and source a dentist to come into the centre and support our program at least once a year.

Rest-time or sleep-time policy

The Office of Early Childhood Education and Care states that all children must have access to a rest when required. Parents/guardians please advise Educators of your child's rest periods at home. Staff members will make the rest period as comfortable and soothing for the children as possible, soft music, stories or the children will use quiet voices to support the other children that want to sleep. Some children may be gently rubbed or stroked to help them relax.

- Allowing children to bring a named pillow from home or provide them with a toy to cuddle will assist in this process. All comfort toys supplied by the centre are regularly washed.
- All children will be offered the toilet, hands and face washed before rest time and shoes are removed.

- Fitted sheets are used on mattresses, they must come in either a named cloth bag or pillowcase to keep each sheet from touching another child's sheet. This will be sent home on your child's last day of the week for laundering. Soiled sheets will be rinsed, bagged, and sent home. All beds are spaced to ensure adequate means of access.
- All children are supervised during the rest period. Educators will closely monitor sleeping and resting children. This involves checking sleeping children at regular intervals, and ensuring they are always within sight and hearing distance. Factors to be considered include the age of the child, medical conditions, individual needs, and history of health and/or sleep issues.
- Mattresses are cleaned and disinfected once a week unless an accident has occurred (e.g., wee, vomit etc.)
- Children are not allowed to eat or drink on the mattress.
- Children who do not sleep will be offered quiet activities.

Sun protection policy

We live in a country with a high rate of skin cancer. Two out of three Queenslanders will get some form of skin cancer in their lifetime. Research suggests that at least two thirds of all melanomas occurring in Australia could be prevented if children were protected from the Sun during their first 15 years. Try to limit exposure to the Sun during the heat of the day, including cloudy days. As children will spend a portion of their day outdoors, we will take certain measures to protect them from the harmful effects of the Sun's rays. Educators will set up most outdoor activities in the shaded area and will make sure all children are in full shirts, no singlets. Opportune moments will be used to teach children why we need to protect our skin. Educators and parents should follow sun protection guidelines and act as role models for the children.

- **SunSmart app** – The centre uses the SunSmart app from Qld Cancer Council in the afternoon before we apply sunscreen on your child. The app tells us if we need to put sunscreen on for that day and time. We just read the UV levels. If we do need to put sunscreen on your child, we follow the below procedure.
- **Sunscreen** – The centre supplies an ultra-protection SPF 30. Please apply sunscreen on your child before leaving home in the morning. We will reapply it on your child 15 to 20 minutes before going outside in the afternoon. We understand that some parents may prefer that their children do not use sunscreen due to the unknown risk involved with putting chemicals on the skin. Please advise the office or put it into your enrolment form your preference in this matter, otherwise sunscreen will be applied to all children.
- **Hats** – Hats should stay on firmly, offer protection to the face, ears, and neck – legionnaire type hats and hats with brims of 8-10 cm are the best for providing shade, when choosing a hat, it is best to choose one that does not have a cord or toggle for safety reason. Caps are not suitable. Children without hats will stay in the shade. Please name your child's hat.
- **Clothing** – Some fabrics offer better protection from the Sun than others. Further information about protective clothing and sunglasses are available through the Queensland Cancer Sun Smart Shops. The Queensland Cancer Council recommends clothing with the following features:
 - darker coloured clothing
 - shirts with collars and sleeves
 - closely woven fabrics
 - natural fibres
 - longer style shorts and skirts

Our centre is a recognised Sun Smart Centre with the Queensland Cancer Association

Toileting procedure

- Only children who are toilet trained will be accepted into our centre unless it is a medical condition.
- We will try and accommodate families with the different toileting preferences, cultural and physical needs.
- Toileting will be made pleasant, hygienic and accommodates personal needs, e.g., in private with educator's close by.
- Educators assist the child to help themselves in toileting procedures.
- Educators supervise toileting procedures.
- Educators model hygienic practices in front of the children e.g., blowing your own nose and correctly washing your hands.
- Educators are patient with "accidents" and treat them as part of everyday life without shaming the child at all.

Children will be offered frequent opportunities for toileting, particularly after mealtimes and before sleep. Under no circumstances will children be forced to sit on the toilet against their will. If educators must assist a child with cleaning themselves, they will do it very gently. Children will be changed and washed down when necessary (e.g., after toileting accidents, water play). The wet and soiled clothes will be rinsed and bagged and put in the sealed container in the children's bathroom of each room. Some children have toileting preferences that the parents have told us about, e.g., not wanting to go to the toilet when other children are in there. Staff show the children dignity and follow through with parent requests.

Educators' compliance will be monitored by the management, other educators and visitors, no other persons are to toilet the children unless it is the parent of that child. Please always follow our procedures.

Inclusion/Non-discriminatory Policy

Aim

The aim is to provide an inclusive environment where all the children, families and staff regardless of cultural background, gender, socioeconomic or religious beliefs will be treated equally.

Inclusion is important

All children have the right to be included in early education and care. We know from research that all children benefit from belonging to, and participating in, quality inclusive childcare. All the staff should:

- Embrace the rights of all children to access and participate in programs
- Welcome all children at the service
- Provide flexible programs and environments that meet individual needs and interests
- Build partnerships with families and communities
- Work collaboratively
- Engage in ongoing reflection and learning
- Invite and welcome family and community participation
- Know our knowledge, skills and experience are valued

Non-discriminatory policy

It is the policy of this centre to offer enrolment to all children regardless of cultural background, gender, socioeconomic or religious beliefs. We do this by treating each child equally and encourage the participation of all children into our program.

Multicultural policy

As Australia is a multicultural society composed of people from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, all children and families are welcome regardless of cultural backgrounds. We aim to foster a positive attitude towards all cultures within each child. Couldn't be a better way to start than from background information from children in our centre. Parents/guardians from other countries are encouraged to share their experiences with the children, cook an authentic meal, show us the traditional clothes, and tell us why they wear them. It is endless and ongoing as we get so many opportunities to encourage in our daily program. Children develop respect for others by experiencing cultural variety in positive ways. This also helps the educators to get to know and understand the children on a personal level. We take advantage of the different cultural celebrations, encouraging families to help us celebrate in a not tokenistic way. We use posters, books, depicting people in similar and different situations. We use inclusion support if we have language barriers.

Strategic inclusion plan

Children with special needs are like other children in most ways and have the right to be nurtured in a caring and loving environment. We treat each child as an individual. The program is modified to the best of our ability to ensure maximum safe participation of all children, reducing barriers to participation into the program. Educators will gain as much information about the child's special needs from the parents and professionals. A meeting between parents, director/nominated supervisor, and outside professionals will be held at a mutually convenient time to discuss the child's needs and how they can be accommodated. The other children will be advised of the needs of the new child joining our group. We use, Inclusion Support Agency and Noah's ark for specialist Equipment. Our strategic inclusion plan is in consultation with our Inclusion support officer.

Gender bias

Children will be treated equally. We aim at doing this by:

- Presenting all in the nurturing role.
- Educators takes into consideration different upbringing of children from different countries, and it is not up to us to alter the family values and practices.
- We illustrate people doing a wide variety of jobs outside and inside the home through books, posters, puzzles, dramatic play etc. e.g., a female firefighter a male nurse.
- To present girls as well as boys in active play and boys as well as girls in quiet play.
- To encourage respect for each other so both can be friends through childhood to adulthood.
- To encourage the development and expression of emotions in both sexes.

Inclusive kindergarten program for all the children

Staff make sure all children and families are inclusive of the kindergarten program. Willingness to make reasonable adjustments to their practices and educational program.

Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policies and Procedures *(Including administration of first aid and dealing with infectious disease)*

Aim

This policy is the guide to children's health issues, it informs parents how we can work together to maintain our children's health. We follow the guidelines from a book sent to us by the Department of Communities called "*Staying Healthy in Childcare, preventing infectious diseases in childcare*". This is kept in the sign-in desk of the Van Gogh and Renoir room's and in the medication box in the Monet room. We use the book for the exclusion of some children and staff. Parents are welcome to have a look at it at any time. Please leave it on the premises.

Policy on administering first aid

All staff hold a current first aid/CPR and anaphylactic training certificate or are in the processing of updating their training.

Bringing a child's temperature down

Staff will take the child's temperature and notify the parent/guardian if their child is unwell. We would appreciate that you pick your child up as soon as possible. Staff will remove the child's clothing and sponge with Lukewarm water, we won't let the child shiver. To prevent dehydration, we encourage the child to drink water. Staff will not leave the child unattended. We will fill in an Accident/Illness/Trauma report for the parents.

Temperature ranges

36.5°C - 37°C	Normal
37.1°C - 37.5°C	Needs Monitoring
37.6°C - 37.9°C	Needs action to reduce the temperature and continue monitoring (call parents).
38°C or above	Needs quick action to reduce the temperature.

Head lice policy

Children with head lice will be excluded from close contact with other children until parents/guardians have picked up their child. Once treatment has been effective, they are welcome to come back. Please check your children's head regularly.

Tick bite

We will notify the parent/guardian to pick up their child if we find a tick. An Accident/Illness/Trauma report will be filled in and your child will be monitored until you have picked your child up.

Accident/Illness/Trauma report (process to notify families about this whilst in our centre)

Accident/Illness/Trauma reports are confidential. These forms are used if a child injures him/herself or feels sick (fever) on the premises or have somehow been affected by trauma, e.g., saw a child hurt themselves. Staff will make a record in the above report; the report will be filled in with as much detail as possible, including child and educator's full names. This will be given to the parents or guardian on their arrival or folded in half with the child's name on it and placed in the child's room pocket. All relevant parties are to sign the form and it is to be left on the premises. Parents may have a photocopy of the form if they ask. If a child is sick or has an injury requiring the child to go home ASAP, families will be notified, they will be separated from the other children and made comfortable within the view of the staff, we will ask the parent or guardian to come as quickly as possible to collect their unwell/injured child.

Infectious diseases and sickness policy

Sickness and infectious diseases can spread rapidly in a centre if the right precautions are not taken. If your child is sick, or has an infectious disease, please keep them away from the centre. Please notify the centre and we will see if any other children have similar symptoms. This will be helpful to the centre as well as to your doctor. If your child has been ill during the night before attendance at the centre, please advise the educators. In the case of minor ailments, parents are asked to use discretion about whether a child is fit to attend the centre.

Centre guidelines for the exclusion of ill children and staff

The following symptoms could alert you, or the educators, to the fact that your child could be unwell. Please consider whether you would like to work with the same symptoms:

- Unusual spots, blisters, or rashes
- Unusual behaviours (the child is less active than usual, cries more than usual, feels general discomfort, or just seems unwell)
- Feverish appearance
- Conjunctivitis (tears, redness of eyelid lining, irritation) followed by swelling and discharge.
- Breathing trouble
- Mucous discharge from the nose (thick, green, or bloody)
- Diarrhoea – increase in the frequency, runniness, or volume of the faeces.
- Vomiting or loss of appetite
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Severe persistent or prolonged coughing (child goes red or blue in the face after she/he coughs)
- Frequent scratching of the scalp or skin
- Headache, stiff neck
- Unusually dark, tea coloured urine
- Grey or very pale faeces
- Herpes Simplex Type 1 (cold sores or fever blisters)
- Broken skin areas (fresh unhealed or burns) must be covered with a waterproof adhesive dressing.
- School sores, weepy sores

If your child has symptoms, please keep them away from the centre and consult your doctor. The early childhood educators have the right to request for the child to be kept at home if he/she has a transmissible health problem. Please inform the centre and we will put up a sign on the entrance gate alerting other parents of the condition. We also have an infectious and notifiable Diseases book that we use to notify the health department of any transmittable diseases, this is kept in the office. Staff will also follow the same guidelines for staying at home.

Procedure for dealing with a serious accident or health related emergency, including infectious diseases.

If a child falls sick in our care, early childhood educators will call you or your nominee, to come as soon as possible to collect your unwell/or injured child. We will make your child as comfortable as we possibly can while in our care. For minor illness/accidents/trauma, the symptoms will be recorded on the Accident/Illness/Trauma form and parents will be informed when they arrive. For more serious illnesses or accidents, if parents or contact persons cannot be contacted the director/nominated supervisor and educator will decide whether to gain immediate medical attention by calling an ambulance. Some diseases require a medical certificate before the child can return to the centre. Some of these diseases are chicken pox, measles, diphtheria, hepatitis A, polio tuberculosis, typhoid, and paratyphoid.

Procedure for notifying families of cases of infectious illness in the centre

Notification of any infectious disease will be put in writing on the double gates or the sign-in sheets of each room. In some cases, we will email you regarding the infectious illness.

Head injury guide and procedures

All head injuries parents will be notified ASAP. Staff will give First Aid to the person who has head trauma. **Call 000 if any** of the following signs or symptoms may indicate a serious head injury:

- Severe head or facial bleeding
- Vomiting
- Headache
- Change in consciousness for more than a few seconds
- Black-and-blue discoloration below the eyes or behind the ears
- Not breathing
- Confusion
- Bleeding or fluid leakage from the nose or ears
- Loss of balance
- Weakness or an inability to use an arm or leg
- Unequal pupil size
- Slurred speech
- Seizures
- Persistent crying
- Refusal to eat
- Agitation

Treatment for mild head injuries

If it is a small bump/graze and staff saw it happen and the child is not upset staff will treat with the centre First Aid. Applying a cold pack to the area and monitor, we will not let child have a sleep.

Notifying ACEQUA ASAP for serious incident

Notify them via the form system for serious incident. Contact the director straight away for any Incident involving serious injury or trauma to a child which required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner, or if the child attended a hospital, or death.

Examples:

- ◆ A broken limb.
- ◆ Severe asthma attack, seizure or anaphylaxis reaction.
- ◆ Any emergency for which emergency services attended.
- ◆ Appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for.
- ◆ Appears to have been taken or removed from the education and care service premises in a manner that contravenes these Regulations; or
- ◆ Is mistakenly locked in or locked out of the education and care service premises.

Administer the following first-aid steps while waiting for emergency medical help to arrive

- **Keep the person still.** The injured person should lie down with the head and shoulders slightly elevated. Don't move the person unless necessary and avoid moving the person's neck. If the person is wearing a helmet, do not remove it.
- **Stop any bleeding.** Apply firm pressure to the wound with sterile gauze or a clean cloth. But don't apply direct pressure to the wound if you suspect a skull fracture.
- **Watch for changes in breathing and alertness.** If the person shows no signs of circulation - no breathing, coughing or movement - begin CPR.

Medical Conditions Policy

Aim

The aim is to make sure children with special health needs feel safe and supported at Montessori Journey. We keep an ongoing communication with families to work together for the best benefits of children.

Children with special health needs must have a medical management plan for all staff to follow. These plans must be updated quarterly in consultation with the parents. The program is modified if necessary, to ensure maximum safe participation of all children. If a notice is put up about your child's medical condition an authorisation form will need to be filled in by the parent/guardian. The centre also requires a risk minimisation plan in consultation with the child's parents and the best way for ongoing communication for staff members and the parents regarding the child's medical condition.

Process for administration of medication

When possible, medication should be administered by the parent/guardian at home. A child requiring medication will not be able to attend the service without it. Staff will give prescribed medication if they can follow the directions on the label. The label must show child's name, medication name, and dosage, frequency of administration, the date of issue and expiry date and must be in the correct and original bottle. Educators are not allowed to administer the first dose of a new medication as a child may have an allergic reaction to it. Educators will not administer drugs more frequently, or of a higher dosage, than stated on the medication unless accompanied by a doctor's letter. Early childhood educators will not administer medication for more than three days unless given instructions by a doctor. With chronic problems (e.g., Asthma) a control program over three to six months will be given to the educators regarding the management of the condition.

All medication instructions should be written on the medication form in your child's room and handed to an educator. The medication must be put in the kitchen fridge in the lockable box in your child's room. No medication is to be left in your child's bag, this includes vitamin tablets, which must clearly have the child's name on it and dosage. Parents can ask staff where the medication forms are kept. No medication will be given unless all the above things are done. Staff will always administer medication with a witness. Both educators will sign the medication form.

Health forms used within the centre.

- Staff and children's Immunisation record
- Confidential medication form
- Accident/Illness/Trauma form
- Enrolment form has the immunisation details, allergies etc.
- Authorisation to display a child's medical form.
- Risk Minimisation form

All these forms are fully confidential. The only persons permitted to see this information are the parents or legal guardians, centre educators, and the licensing body.

Anaphylaxis Management Policy

The aim of this policy is to:

- Minimise the risk of an anaphylactic reaction occurring at the childcare service.
- Raise awareness about diagnosis throughout the childcare community through policy implementation.
- All relevant staff will do training on anaphylaxis emergency procedures to ensure staff are confident in the procedure and able to act in an emergency.
- Relief staff will be made aware of any children with an anaphylaxis plan.
- Prior to enrolment or as soon as an allergy is diagnosed, we will develop an Individual Anaphylaxis Health Care Plan for the child in consultation with the child's parents/guardians and appropriate health professionals. This will be updated in consultation with the family quarterly.
- Whenever a child with severe allergies or newly diagnosed as having a severe allergy, is enrolled at our centre, all staff will be informed of:
 - Where the child's ASCIA Action Plan will be located.
 - Where the child's adrenaline autoinjector is located.
- The child's ASCIA Action Plan will be placed in a prominent position. This will ensure it can be regularly read by all staff.
- Staff will routinely review a child's ASCIA Action Plan to ensure they feel confident in how to respond quickly in an emergency.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for supplying the named adrenaline autoinjector and ensuring that the medication has not expired and is in good working order.
- After each emergency incident, the Individual Anaphylaxis Health Care Plan will be evaluated to determine if the childcare service's emergency response could be improved.
- The child's adrenaline auto injector (and any other medication) must be labelled with the name of the child and recommended dosage. Medication must be in a position that is out of reach of the children, but readily available to the staff. Consideration must also be given to the need to keep the adrenaline autoinjector away from excessive light, heat or cold when deciding on a suitable location.
- Staff will advise the parents/guardians at the earliest opportunity if the adrenaline autoinjector needs to be replaced.
- Where it is known, a child has been exposed to their specific allergen, but has not developed symptoms, the child's parents/guardians will be contacted. The staff will closely monitor the child until the parents/guardians arrive. Immediate action will be taken if the child develops symptoms.

The aim of this policy is to reduce your anxiety and feel confident that your child is safe.

Nutrition and Food Safety Practices

Aim

The aim is to ensure the dietary needs of the children as well as the requirements of food safety and hygiene are met. We recognise the importance of healthy eating to the growth and development of children and are committed to supporting healthy food and drink choices of children in our care. Our centre also recognises the importance of supporting families in providing healthy food and drink to their children.

Our centre endeavours to establish healthy eating habits in the children by incorporating nutritional information into our program. The centre incorporates discussion about various food groups and the effects of on our bodies from nutrition to dental. Staff will encourage children to eat more nutritious foods provided in their lunchbox, such as sandwiches, fruit, cheese before eating any less nutritious food provided.

Centre policy

- Snacks that are better as a treat will be returned for your child to enjoy at home.
- No lollies or chocolate are allowed in the centre as it can make the child hyperactive and disruptive in the classroom.
- We would prefer fewer dairy desserts that are full of sugar and additives to be bought into the centre.
- All opened food that your child has touched will be thrown out and written in the daybook.
- Any leftover unopened shop packaged food will be placed in your child's bag. All unopened meat products or dairy products will be thrown out.
- We have been advised by Nutrition Australia against heating food.

Fostering nutritional awareness

The centre fosters awareness and understanding of healthy food and drink choices through including in the children's program a range of learning experiences encouraging children's healthy eating. These experiences include:

- Cooking
- Food preparation experiences
- Discussion about healthy food and drink choices

Mealtimes at the centre

Mealtimes are an important time, and we use this time at our centre to:

- Promote healthy and nutritious food.
- Encourage children's self-help skills.
- Encourage manners.

Some children enjoy setting up the lunches with the staff. All children are encouraged to wipe the table and wash their containers when they are finished and put their lunch bag away.

Small groups of children are sat at tables which encourages mealtimes to be relaxed and the time for conversation and social interaction with the staff and other children. Children are always supervised at lunchtime. Children's food preferences are respected and the utensils that they feel comfortable with are welcome. Water is readily available for children to drink throughout the day in both indoor and outdoor environment.

Morning and afternoon tea

Two pieces of fruit or vegetables are requested to be placed in the fruit basket in the classroom. Fruit and vegetables are washed and shared within the room.

Allergies and your child

- On your enrolment form all allergies or foods you do not want your child to eat are noted down and given to your child's teacher.
- Our centre is aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances and special diets and we will consult with families to develop individual management plans. This will be reviewed quarterly.
- Please ensure not to try new foods on your child while they are at the centre in case of an allergic reaction.
- Our centre is a NUT AND SEED FREE ZONE. This includes Nutella and peanut butter sandwiches.

Cooking at the centre

All classes do cooking, most of the meals that staff will prepare with the children will be nutritious. It is also a great time to introduce multicultural meals for the children to enjoy.

Birthdays

Birthdays are a special occasion and therefore celebrated at our centre. If you wish you can provide some morning tea to mark the occasion. Fruit platters, fruit kebabs or cupcakes are preferred over a large birthday cake. If you do not wish your child to participate in the celebrations for any reason, please let a staff member know and we will find the best solution for your child without making them feel excluded.

Communicating with families

- All families will be provided with a copy of the Nutrition Policy upon enrolment.
- Families are welcome to contribute to the Nutrition policy.
- In our centre reception area, we have several nutrition handouts available for parents. These include lunchbox idea that will encourage the child to have the five food groups while they are in our care.
- Staff will work in partnership with families to develop an appropriate response so that children's individual dietary needs are met.
- Staff will regularly discuss food and nutrition related experiences when needed and provide up to date information to assist families to provide healthy food choices at home.
- The centre would like to see no litter lunch boxes, to help our environment more containers and less pre-packaged food. It could be a healthier alternative as well.

Privacy and Confidentiality of Records Policy

Aim

Montessori Journey respects every family and staff's rights and choices about privacy and confidentiality. We ensure all the personal information is accurate, updated and secure. It is only used or disclosed to achieve the outcomes for which it was initially collected and protected under Australian privacy laws and guidelines.

Professionalism and confidentiality of records

All early childhood educators are aware that confidentiality of all matters concerning the centre and its users will be maintained. Any child records e.g., enrolment forms, developmental checklist, observation sheets, etc. are fully confidential. The only persons permitted to see this information are the parents or legal guardians, centre educators, and the licensing body.

Collection of personal information

We collect personal information only for the necessity of complying with our legal obligations as well as centre's operations. This includes information required to comply with the National Education and Care Law and Regulations and to promote learning under the Early Years Learning Framework. Information may also be collected to comply with other laws including State or Territory Health Laws.

Information collected upon the enrolment process

- Child's information: first name, last name, date of birth, gender, nationality, CRN (if applicable), immunisation records, medical information and medical management plans. Also, the child's strengths, interests, preferences and needs, including special needs.
- Primary contacts' information: names, date of birth, CRN (if applicable), gender, phone numbers, occupations, cultural background, home language, religious beliefs, payment details and CCS information.
- Authorised pickup people's information: names, phone numbers and relationships to the child.
- Permissions of taking photos or video for the purpose of social media use.

Personal information is collected via

- The waiting list form which is filled by parents or guardians.
- The enrolment form which is filled by parents or guardians.
- Verbally informed or advised by parents or guardians.
- Emails from parents or guardians
- The child protection agencies
- Family law court orders or agreements
- Special needs agencies and training courses

All the relevant information will be collected under the consent of parents or guardians.

Secure management of personal information

Our centre takes reasonable steps to secure all the personal information and protect it from misuses, unauthorised access, modification or disclosure. Our secure management includes:

- Ensure all the records are securely stored in the filing cabinets in the director's office where only the authorised personnel have the access to.
- Ensure confidential conversations with parents or with staff are conducted in a quiet area away from other children, parents and staff.
- Ensure all the staff are aware of their obligations in relation to the collection, use and disclosure of personal information, through activities like teaching, mentoring, monitoring, staff meetings or training courses.
- Ensure information technology systems have appropriate security measures including password protection, anti-virus software and data backup systems.
- Ensure all the information is checked regularly and updated if necessary.
- Ensure records which we don't need to keep or fall outside of the record keeping timeframes are destroyed in a secure way as soon as possible.
- Ensure all the staff comply with our Social Media Policy regarding taking photos or videos of children.

Please inform the office if:

- Any changes regarding your address, telephone number, and custody/access arrangements
- If someone different is picking up your child
- If your child is absent, sick, or going on holidays
- If your personal circumstances change which may affect your child and you think we should know
- Any updates of your child's immunisation and changes in health

Concerns or complaints

Should any families or staff have concerns or complaints about the privacy or confidentiality, they are welcomed to discuss directly with the director, put a note in the suggestion box, or email the director. The director will investigate as soon as possible. All the communications will be performed confidentially.

Partnerships with Families and Communities Policy

Aim

The aim is to make sure that all families are welcomed and supported at the Montessori Journey. Their culture and values are respected by all the staff and will be involved in decision-making as well as the educational program. All the families are free to share their suggestions, advice, and concerns.

Once your child has settled family or extended family members are welcome to stay and watch their child at work, we do have a parent roster on the wall in your child's room and ask that there be no more than one parent or extended family member observing their child in a room at a time. Please do not attempt to teach your child any of the Montessori materials whilst at our centre as you may hinder the next stage of their learning process. We have lots of jobs that you may help us with while still observing your child.

Parent committee

We have a parent committee within the centre. Parents are involved with the reviewing of our policies and statement of principles, assisting us with our service improvement plan, organising our parent gathering, fundraising, addressing health and safety issues or any other concerns, advising/consulting, or assisting us with decisions that need to be made. If you would like to be on the committee or if you would just like to be part of updating our systems, please see the office.

Parent/Teacher/Management communication plan

- There are opportunities for confidential discussions between educators/management and families. Please feel free to ask and a mutually suitable time will always be arranged.
- Parent/teacher interviews will be held on request either by the child's family or the teacher to discuss your child's development and progress.
- A suggestion/comments slot is available through the reception desk.
- Emails, phone calls can be arranged with your teacher if you cannot make it into the centre. Please let us know if our communication methods are not reaching you and what would your preference be.
- Our annual Christmas functions.
- Please take the time to read any notices on our notice board.
- We encourage all parents with any concerns or suggestions to express them (no matter how small). We are all working together in the best interest of your child.
- We have publications and pamphlets relating to childcare, safety, behaviour, or nutrition.
- Families, please tell us how best you would like to receive information on your child's progress and children's participation, learning and development is accessible and understandable. Your input into your child's learning and documentation is always appreciated.
- Staff rosters change weekly so that all early childhood educators have regular opportunities to share information with families about the child's progress/interest, experiences and significant events during drop-off and pick-up times.
- There is always a staff member available if you need to talk, or we can source suitable support groups for your needs.
- Newsletter.

The centre's policies and procedures

All policies have been compiled using information sourced from experts and relevant Government authorities. We have included input from parents, children, and educators. All policies are subject to an annual review or sooner if needed. We recommend parents and guardians to familiarise themselves with these important documents. All policies and procedures are available through the parent library, or we can email them to you.

Recommended reading for parents/guardians

Parent library

We have a parent library in the staff room that carries valuable reading and viewing material as well as copies of all our policies and procedures.

Other useful resources

These are not available through the parent library but please ask and I can direct you to where you can get them.

- *The Secret of Childhood* by Maria Montessori
- *The Absorbent Mind* by Maria Montessori
- *The Discovery of the Child* by Maria Montessori
- *The Montessori Method* by Maria Montessori
- *Montessori Play and Learn* by Lesley Britton
- *Teaching Montessori in the Home* by E.Hainstock
- *Nurturing the Spirit* by Aline D.Wolf

If you require a translator

The centre uses Lifeline Community Care Queensland for any inclusion of different cultures for parents and children. Phone 13 11 14 if you need any help. We also use Multicultural Development Association (MDA), who provides a free service to assist us with the inclusion of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Networking

The centre networks with Queensland Health for promoting health in early childhood environments, Happy Teeth for dental issues, inclusion support for children with impairments and cultural issues. We also network with other Montessori schools and centres.

Partnerships with communities

As a community, we can create, encourage, and increase awareness of environmental responsibility and guide centre practices with families, staff, and the children. The centre tries to purchase as little plastic and tries to only use things that can be recycled. Our resources outside are all natural, e.g., Logs, rocks, bark, natural trees for shade. A timber cubby houses was donated by a family. Old clothing is used for dress ups. Unused keyboards and old phones for office play. Unwanted cooking pots, pans and kettles used in the sandpit. A donation of a large tyre from a farm which is thoroughly enjoyed by the children. Recycled paper given to us by local businesses and families.

Strategies for achieving environment sustainability.

Educators will make sustainable practices a part of the daily routine by including recycling or reusing in their everyday practices at the centre. Involve parents to bring in their unwanted things.

- Rainwater tanks for our gardens and daily play, when it is used up children know to wait for the rain and that's why it is so important not to waste what's in our tank.
- Solar panels have made a big difference to our electricity bills.
- When we close for the two weeks all switches are turned off including fridges, microwaves, and any other power points.
- Dual flush toilets.
- Plant trees that do not require that much water but provide lots of shade.
- Resources that parents are throwing out that can be used for collage and other art experiences.
- Promoting awareness of "no litter lunchboxes" e.g., more containers that can be washed and sent home used so parents can buy food in bulk and less packaging is used.
- Using the heating and cooling appropriately with opening windows and doors in hot weather and keeping appropriate clothing on children in the cooler months.
- Staff know the times to turn off the heating and cooling so they are not being overused.
- Using the Sun to dry our wet washing and articles of clothing.
- We use spray bottles not aerosol cans.
- Teaching the children not to waste water inside or outside.
- Educators will role model energy practices of turning off lights and electrical items when not in use.
- Teaching the children to empty water play containers onto the gardens and just not tip it anywhere.
- Soaking paint equipment.
- Children help sort the rubbish into the different bins e.g., food scraps for the chickens, general waster in the bin with the lid and paper in the bin with no lid.
- Children handle equipment and furniture correctly and if it gets broken, they know we try and fix it before it gets thrown out.
- The centre mainly uses recycled paper and cardboard within the centre and the office. Any used paper is appreciated within our centre.
- Show and tell animals/insects are returned into their environment.
- Encourage children to close doors behind them when the heater and aircon is on.
- The centre limits the use of plastic and uses more resources that will be biodegradable in the future.
- All our children mats are recycled mats.
- The educators will show and discuss with the children at opportune moments the centre's practices on how we reduce, re-use and recycle, teaching children and families how to become a more sustainable community.

Children's Safety Policy

(Please refer to the Staff Health Safety and Hygiene Policies and Practices for more information)

Aim

The aim is to ensure all children at Montessori Journey are safe and secure. This includes the authorisation of drop-off and pick-up of the children and while they are at the premises.

The outdoor playground equipment is selected according to the age group of the children. Educators check it to ensure that it is safe and in good working order. The soft fall areas within the playgrounds are regularly attended to and comply with safety regulations. Educators are conscious of fostering within the children safe playground behaviours through the appropriate use of equipment. The centre has information about the selection, installation and maintenance of play equipment and children's furniture in the parent library.

Injury prevention

The aim is to provide an environment that prevents injury to all those who attend the centre to the best of staff ability inside and out. Equipment will be set out in a way that is safe for use with either soft fall or matting. Children will be encouraged to use the equipment safely. Set up and pack up time is a good time to help each other out. Staff will, through adequate supervision, ensure to the best of their ability children use equipment in an acceptable manner to prevent any injury to themselves or others. Staff will explain to the children in a way they understand why they can or cannot use equipment e.g., Jumping onto matting rather than hard surfaces or jumping where children or toys are.

Outdoor safety procedures

The outdoor playground equipment is selected according to the age group of the children. It is to be checked by staff to ensure that it is safe and in good working order. The soft fall areas within the playgrounds need to be regularly raked to comply with safety regulations. The layout and maintenance of all indoor and outdoor equipment and surfaces should be carefully selected to minimize the possibility of injury to children. Staff to be conscious of fostering within the children safe playground behaviours through the appropriate use of equipment. The centre has a checklist for the buildings and equipment that needs to be filled out each term. Staff will be encouraged to practise safe lifting procedures of equipment and children.

Outdoors

- All movable equipment is stored in a safe and orderly fashion when not in use or at the end of each day. At least two staff help set and pack up.
- The playground will be kept clean of band aids, tissues etc.
- Outdoor storage areas are to be kept tidy and always shut.
- No children to enter the storage areas.
- Check safety gates are always secured.
- Safety checks will be carried out by all staff that are setting up the outdoor or indoor area, anything that is broken or needs attention must be left in the office or the director must be notified.
- Educators are vigilant in supervising the children.

Safety of the building

Any broken or protruding areas of the building need to be brought to the director's attention straight away.

Sandpit management procedure

- Our sandpit is either washed beach or river sand.
- The sandpit is adequately shaded when used by children but also gets the sunshine to disinfect the sand.
- The sand is raked daily and is regularly exposed to sunshine and fresh air which are the most effective disinfectants.
- We remove with a shovel and plastic bag to dispose of any contaminated sand or dangerous/foreign matter which could cause illness or infection in children or educators and the area is bleached. Gloves can be worn.
- We change the sand at least annually or sooner if needed. The sand is also topped up when it runs low.
- All toys are removed from the sandpit at the end of each day, covered to prevent contamination.
- Children and adults wash their hands with soap and water after playing in the sandpit.

Water safety policy

Water Play is so much fun with so many children, especially in the warmer months. All water play will be done in a safe manner. The water play consists of buckets with brushes, water troughs, our very shallow wading pool, and hoses to cool down. We ask that parents dress their child in clothes that will allow for water play and provide extra clothes that your child can change into afterwards. Water play will occur either in the morning or afternoon. If we have water play in the morning, the children will be changed when all children and staff go indoors. However, if we have water play in the afternoon, we ask that parents/carers change your own child into dry clothes when you arrive to collect. This is due to staff supervision of the remaining children still engaged in water play. If you do not want your child to have water play, please advise a staff member.