



**Sweet Peas**

Kindergarten & Long Day Care Centre

# Parent Handbook

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*It is Law that a copy of your child's Medicare Immunisation record be submitted to the centre upon enrolment, as your child will not be able to attend without it.*

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Sweetpeas Kindergarten operates on Dharug land. We acknowledge the Dharug people as the traditional custodians of the Penrith region and pay our respects to Dharug elders both past and present.

In Relation to Children: At Sweetpeas Kindergarten we believe that children's interests, abilities, strengths cultures, knowledge are the foundation of our pedagogy. Educators focus on play-based learning to create purposeful and intentional programs and experiences. Educators believe that all children are diverse and have a wide range of knowledge based on the world around them. We strive to foster those thoughts and ideas to bring them to life in our play space. We recognise children needing a sense of belonging and connections to thrive in a learning environment and strive to provide a service which is, welcoming, fun and nurturing. Our service believes that all children's learning styles should be catered for and nurtured in a way that is comfortable for them. Our service provides children with play-based learning experiences which are a combination of natural and processed materials in imaginative and creative environments. We allow the children to explore, enquire, experiment and investigate in these environments which then promotes cause and effect, problem solving and hypothesising. Our inventive and intentional teaching programs are purposefully planned to support each individual child develop their learning by building confidence. At Sweetpeas St Clair we acknowledge and recognise each child's efforts and their individual achievements are celebrated. We strive to ensure that strategies used by children with additional needs are accommodated and supported in their learning while we endeavour to make all children feel safe and supported.

In Relation to Environments: At Sweetpeas St Clair we strive to create a comfortable, warm and friendly environment for all children. Through these environments' educators provide experiences which promote social interactions and meaningful conversations between children as well as with educators and families. The children are provided with opportunities to engage in experiences to care for the world around them such as tending to our garden, caring for our fish and worm farm as well as involved in recycling, and reusable sustainable practises. We encourage educators, children and families to engage in sustainable practises and appreciate the wonder of the natural world in our play experiences while protecting the planet for future generations.

In Relation to Families and Communities: We show commitment to involving families in all aspects of our service life such as programs, feedback, the development of their child and their ongoing learning and community engagement. We believe and acknowledge that family is the most important and influential aspect in the lives of young children and the significance of their relationships cannot be underestimated. We are committed to developing and maintaining positive, mutually respectful relationships with family members, as we strive to establish the best possible partnership with each of our families. We believe developing a sense of 'Belonging' through relationships with families, communities, cultures and environments promote safe, secure and supportive connections. Each child is able to develop an early understanding of their broader world and local community, the importance of self-regulation and achieving self-help skills as well as developing respect for diversity. Educators ensure that children at our service are educated about Indigenous culture and cultural learning materials are visible in literature, images, program and planning.

In Relation to Educators: We believe teamwork and effective communication are essential requirements for positive outcomes across all aspects of the services functioning. We believe using the National Quality Framework and Early Years Learning Framework assists us to strive for best practise We believe collaboration and upskilling are a part of our ongoing professional development and improvement journey to provide the best possible outcomes for children. We strive to provide a safe, happy workplace for our educators through support, respect and trust as we work towards achieving a shared goal. We recognise educator's knowledge and interests are a valuable resource and aim to provide our educators with a satisfying and safe working environment. Sweetpeas Penrith values the experience and skills of all staff through critical reflection of our actions we are able to access our own practises and identify areas they may need further development.

## Early Years Learning Framework Outcomes

### *Outcome 1 - Children have a strong sense of identity*

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

### *Outcome 2 - Children are connected with and contribute to their world*

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

### *Outcome 3 - Children have a strong sense of wellbeing*

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

### *Outcome 4 - Children are confident and involved learners*

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

### *Outcome 5 - Children are effective communicators*

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

## EYLF Principals

### **1. SECURE, RESPECTFUL AND RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Educators who are attuned to children's thoughts and feelings, support the development of a strong sense of wellbeing. They positively interact with the young child in their learning.

Research has shown that babies are both vulnerable and competent. Babies' first attachments within their families and within other trusting relationships provide them with a secure base for exploration and learning.

Through a widening network of secure relationships, children develop confidence and feel respected and valued. They become increasingly able to recognise and respect the feelings of others and to interact positively with them.

Educators who give priority to nurturing relationships and providing children with consistent emotional support can assist children to develop the skills and understandings they need to interact positively with others. They also help children to learn about their responsibilities to others, to appreciate their connectedness and interdependence as learners, and to value collaboration and teamwork.

### **2. PARTNERSHIPS**

Learning outcomes are most likely to be achieved when early childhood educators work in partnership with families. Educators recognise that families are children's first and most influential teachers. They create a welcoming environment where all children and families are respected and actively encouraged to collaborate with educators about curriculum decisions in order to ensure that learning experiences are meaningful.

Partnerships are based on the foundations of understanding each other's expectations and attitudes, and build on the strength of each other's knowledge.

In genuine partnerships, families and early childhood educators:

- value each other's knowledge of each child
- value each other's contributions to and roles in each child's life
- trust each other
- communicate freely and respectfully with each other

- share insights and perspectives about each child
- engage in shared decision-making.

Partnerships also involve educators, families and support professionals working together to explore the learning potential in everyday events, routines and play so that children with additional needs are provided with daily opportunities to learn from active participation and engagement in these experiences in the home and in early childhood or specialist settings.

### **3. HIGH EXPECTATIONS AND EQUITY**

Early childhood educators who are committed to equity believe in all children's capacities to succeed, regardless of diverse circumstances and abilities. Children progress well when they, their parents and educators hold high expectations for their achievement in learning.

Educators recognise and respond to barriers to children achieving educational success. In response they challenge practices that contribute to inequities and make curriculum decisions that promote inclusion and participation of all children. By developing their professional knowledge and skills, and working in partnership with children, families, communities, other services and agencies, they continually strive to find equitable and effective ways to ensure that all children have opportunities to achieve learning outcomes.

### **4. RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY**

There are many ways of living, being and of knowing. Children are born belonging to a culture, which is not only influenced by traditional practices, heritage and ancestral knowledge, but also by the experiences, values and beliefs of individual families and communities. Respecting diversity means within the curriculum valuing and reflecting the practices, values and beliefs of families. Educators honour the histories, cultures, languages, traditions, child rearing practices and lifestyle choices of families. They value children's different capacities and abilities and respect differences in families' home lives.

Educators recognise that diversity contributes to the richness of our society and provides a valid evidence base about ways of knowing. For Australia it also includes promoting greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing and being.

When early childhood educators respect the diversity of families and communities, and the aspirations they hold for children; they are able to foster children's motivation to learn and reinforce their sense of themselves as competent learners. They make curriculum decisions that uphold all children's rights to have their cultures, identities, abilities and strengths acknowledged and valued, and respond to the complexity of children's and families' lives.

Educators think critically about opportunities and dilemmas that can arise from diversity and take action to redress unfairness. They provide opportunities to learn about similarities and difference and about interdependence and how we can learn to live together.

### **5. ONGOING LEARNING AND REFLECTIVE PRACTICE**

Educators continually seek ways to build their professional knowledge and develop learning communities. They become co-learners with children, families and community, and value the continuity and richness of local knowledge shared by community members, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders.

Reflective practice is a form of ongoing learning that involves engaging with questions of philosophy, ethics and practice. Its intention is to gather information and gain insights that support, inform and enrich decision-making about children's learning. As professionals, early childhood educators examine what happens in their settings and reflect on what they might change.

Critical reflection involves closely examining all aspects of events and experiences from different perspectives. Educators often frame their reflective practice within a set of overarching questions, developing more specific questions for particular areas of enquiry.

Overarching questions to guide reflection include:

- What are my understandings of each child?
- What theories, philosophies and understandings shape and assist my work?
- Who is advantaged when I work in this way? Who is disadvantaged?
- What questions do I have about my work? What am I challenged by? What am I curious about? What am I confronted by?
- What aspects of my work are not helped by the theories and guidance that I usually draw on to make sense of what I do?
- Are there other theories or knowledge that could help me to understand better what I have observed or experienced? What are they? How might those theories and that knowledge affect my practice?

## Sweetpeas Kindergarten Centre Details

**Operating hours:** Monday to Friday 7.00am - 6.00pm.

The centre operates for 50 weeks of the year closing for 2 weeks over the Christmas period.

The centre closes for all public holidays.

Please ensure that you pick up your child before 6.00pm. The centre has a late fee of \$7.50 per 5-minute intervals (per child) from 6.00pm.

**About the Centre:** Sweetpeas staff and educators are qualified, friendly and caring. Our curriculum is play-based and guided by the current interests, knowledge, cultures, abilities, strengths and ideas of the children in our care, with focus on their cognitive, language, creative, physical, social and emotional development. Our curriculum also reflects Belonging, Being & Becoming - The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF), the EYLF Principals and Practices as well as the National Quality Framework and Standards to ensure the most positive outcomes for our children, families and our community.

### **Car park:**

- We ask that you drive safely and slowly in our car park.
- Park in correct parking bays.
- Do not leave children in the car unattended.
- When exiting the car park please be mindful of pedestrians.
- Please encourage road safety with your child while using our car park.
- Please ensure you close the gate in the bay area behind you when entering and exiting our service.

**Staff:** We have qualified and experienced staff who are highly dedicated in early childhood education and care. Our staff hold various levels of qualifications and we extend our service to assist in the training of workplace students in our community. All of our staff hold current first aid certificates and Asthma/Anaphylaxis training and Working With Children's Check. Our centre cook is fully qualified and is advised on menu planning by Feed Australia. We also have access to a special advisory service which assists us with any additional needs your child may have. Our staff attend regular professional development sessions and courses to stay up to date with early childhood education practices and further develop their own skills.

**Children:** Sweetpeas caters for children ages 2 to 6 years with a full complement of 30 children each day. We have nappy change facilities and are happy to assist families with toilet training. We do have a nappy wipe donation system if your child is in nappies and we kindly ask you to supply your child's nappies for the days they attend.

**Phone calls:** Please feel free to call the centre and check on your child during the day when they are settling in or out of sorts. Educators are happy to give you an update throughout the day and will advise you the best times to call based on the room routine.

**Arrival/departures:** We require a phone call if your child will be arriving later than 10am as our centre cook also begins her day at 10am and begins cooking for the number of children signed in at this time. Please remember to close the gates behind you for the safety of your children and others. For increased safety measures, the front door will be locked at all times. Please ring the doorbell and an educator will unlock the door for you on arrival to the centre. Please lock the door behind you as you enter and leave the premises.

### **Communication**

Our Centre email is [sweetpeaskindystclair@gmail.com](mailto:sweetpeaskindystclair@gmail.com), we are also on Facebook and we have a communication/feedback box located in our foyer where we encourage parents and families to leave feedback or ask questions. We also encourage family and community input as we have a Quality Improvement Plan wall with questions surrounding our service. In the foyer we have parent pockets for each family for communication from the centre to the families, such as birthday invites, notes from educators, letters from management etc, so please check these pockets daily.

**Keep Informed:** To remain up to date and informed with changes in the service please check notice boards, signs displayed around the centre. Educators complete Eat and Sleep charts daily which is kept on the sign in desk for you to gather information around your child's routine. Educators take photos and display them in our Day Book so you are able to see snapshots from your child's day. Updates and upcoming events are also posted to Facebook, Instagram, e-mails and newsletters.

## Fee Information

**Fees:** On confirmation of enrolment, Sweetpeas requires a bond of our daily fee of \$98 per day, for each day your child will be attending. This is an upfront fee that is applied without the Child Care Subsidy. This one-week fee:

- Is non-refundable if you choose not to enrol at the centre after confirming your position,
- Is applied directly to your account, payment plans are available
- Secures your position at the centre, no position is secure unless this one-week fee is paid
- Can be paid by direct deposit, EFTPOS or cash only
- Must be accompanied by your completed enrolment form, with your family's CRN numbers.

### Additional fee information

- Fees are billed fortnightly in advance.
- Fees can be paid by direct deposit, cash or EFTPOS.
- The Centre is closed over the Christmas/New year holidays. No fees are payable during this period.
- Fees are payable for the 50 weeks of the year as the centre does not close for school holidays.
- Fees are payable for all Public holidays (other than the Christmas break) and for all sick days.
- Fees are also payable for children who are excluded for non-immunisation reasons on the advice of the Health Department.
- Two weeks of unpaid fees could result in your child's position being terminated from the centre.

### Account to transfer fees to:

**Account name:** Sweetpeas Group

**Account number:** 488989763

**Account BSB:** 112-879

**Reference:** Your child's full name

### Make Up Days:

These are extra days that may be able to be provided when your child's permanent scheduled day falls on a public holiday. Make up days are not required to be given by law, but it is something we try to do to assist Our families. Parents will be contacted with a date that can be used as a make-up day or on the particular day if days are full and no notice can be given.

Where possible, you will have two opportunities to take this make up day. If you are given a date and say no on both occasions you forfeit your day. If you are given a makeup day and your child does not turn up or you do not call in, this day will be forfeited.

### Child Care Subsidy:

Families are encouraged to apply to the Family Assistance Office (FAO) for Child Care Subsidy (CCS) eligibility. CCS is based on your Assessed Family Income (AFI) as well as your activity. Proof of income will be required by the FAO. The assessment may take place at any FAO or over the phone if your family is already registered with the FAO. This information may be updated on your Centrelink app.

It is your responsibility to notify the FAO if there is change in your circumstances. The amount of fees to be paid will vary and your eligibility for any benefit or subsidy may change as a result.

CCS is paid for 42 absences a year that includes public holidays. After 42 absences fee relief is withdrawn and the family will revert to full fees.

## Enrolment Details

**Enrolment forms and HUBWORKS:** When you have paid your bond to secure a position at Sweetpeas, you will be given a new enrolment form. This form includes specific information needed to enter your child into the HUBWORKS system and our terms and conditions to be signed. Please ensure this form is returned as soon as possible BEFORE your child's start date. We will then enter in your child's details and e-mail you specific and personal log in details for you to connect to HUBWORKS. You are required to fill out ALL information asked in the enrolment form online, which we will then print off and get you to sign. This is the process needed to enrol your child into our centre. Once you have logged into HUBWORKS, you will have access to your child's attendance records, enrolment form to update when needed, payments made and payments owed. Here you will find your child's observations and photo records of your child. You can also message management through HUBWORKS online.

**Family Details:** Ensure that your details are always up to date e.g., New mobile number, address etc. It is your responsibility to keep these details up to date.

**Withdrawing a child:** If you need to reduce your child's days, or cancel your child's position at the centre for any reason, you are required to give no less than two weeks' notice in writing. However, for the month of December, your child's enrolment is unable to be changed. *Please note if you decide to take your child out and not see the two weeks through your bond will go towards payment for those two weeks.*

**Absentee notes:** if your child is absent because they are sick you are required to, where possible, provide us with a doctor's certificate as each child is allocated a certain number of days off. This is a Family Assistance Office requirement.

**Sickness:** If your child has been ill from a contagious disease you must provide us with a doctor's clearance before your child will be accepted back to the centre. Your child is not permitted to attend the centre whilst in their **first 24 hours of antibiotics**, if they have been vomiting or had diarrhoea **in the past 24 hours** or if they have had Panadol or medication that morning to make them well. Once it wears off, we then have a sick child on our hands. *The best place for a sick child is in their own bed.* We do not administer non-prescribed medication unless accompanied with a doctor's certificate and a medication form is filled out. Due to COVID-19 there is new procedures in place to ensure all children, educators and families are safe and healthy. Please contact the service to discuss the new policies in place during this time.

### **Immunisation records:**

Upon enrolment your child's Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) Statement will need to be produced and a copy will be kept on file. Your child's ACIR must be updated at all times. Unfortunately, ACIR exemption forms are no longer excepted as all children must be immunised in accordance with the Public Health Act 2010, from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018.

If your child is not kept up to date without the appropriate documents shown, your child will not be permitted to attend the Centre until we receive these. Also, your CCS entitlements will cease within 2 weeks of the appropriate birthday. Make sure your child has their shots well in advance of the expected date. The easiest way to access your child's Immunisation register is through mygov or Express plus Medicare mobile app.

### **Birth Certificates:**

Upon enrolment you must provide your birth certificate. A copy will be kept on file.

### **Proof of Address:**

Upon enrolment you must provide proof of your current address which we will take a copy of for our files. Current Drivers licenses will be accepted.

### **Signing in and out:**

You are required by law to sign your child in on arrival and out on departure every day they attend the service. This is our legal record of your child's attendance and is required by law. All centres are audited and can be fined for breach of these requirements. Sweetpeas use an electronic sign in system "Hubhello" on the iPad which is located on the counter in the foyer. As mentioned above this is connected to your child's enrolment form and experiences which have been documented by an educator. If you have not signed your child in and out then a staff member will do this for you. You will be advised on your next visit to the service as the sign in iPad will alert you an educator signed your child in or out and you will need to confirm this action.



### **Collection of your child:**

If your child is to be picked up by someone other than yourself, this person must be named on the enrolment form as having authorization to collect your child and must be over 18 years of age. Photo ID will be requested from any family member who has not been identified beforehand. If you need a person to pick up your child who is not already on the enrolment form, this person's details need to be added to the enrolment form upon drop off. If you are running late to pick your child up, please call and notify the educators. Educators will call at 5.55pm if you have not arrived.

Late fees are payable at \$7.50 per 5-minute intervals. Time in between each interval will be rounded up. (Staff will have to be paid overtime).

## **General Information**

### **Room Groups:**

During the day the children engage in planned learning experiences within their assigned groups. The groups are organised loosely by age.

- Monkeys are children aged 2-years old.
- Giraffes are children aged 3-years old.
- Lions are children aged 4-6-years old (preschool group) who are enrolled in school for the following year.

As early education professionals, we believe children thrive in safe, secure learning environments in order to achieve this we encourage families to consider enrolling their child for a minimum of two days per week. This supports your child to settle in to our setting, understand and transition into our room routine and make strong connections with children and educators. All educators are experienced in early education and care and are confident when catering to each child's needs. Our curriculum is play based learning which allows educators to identify each child's current knowledge, strength, ideas, culture, abilities and interests and ensure this is the foundation of our programs. Educators are experienced and confident when using play-based learning experiences to provide the children with intentional teaching experiences, child directed learning and scaffolding play.

We have a number of resources available to parents on hand in our parent library or if we are unable to assist you on the spot, we will always look into it and discuss with you at an appropriate time.

Our educators are enhancing their education by undertaking professional development workshops and constantly kept up to date with changes in the profession and sector.

### **What we offer:**

- A clean and safe environment,
- Nutritionally balanced meals,
- High level of parent and centre communication,
- A large indoor play space, with 3 separate learning areas for our focus groups and a large outdoor play area, with Softfall, artificial grass and gardening areas.
- A wide range of learning resources including Intentional Teaching experiences, programs, indoor and outdoor equipment and exciting incursions each year. Our resources, activities and experiences reflect and support individual and social diversity.
- Opportunities for self-learning and teacher directed learning through a curriculum designed by our highly qualified and experienced staff. Our programs are planned according to the children's needs, interests and abilities, leaving plenty of room for spontaneity,
- A preschool program which allows the pre-schoolers to engage in activities designed around transitioning to 'big school'. We have developed this program in consultation with local schools and their expectations in preparation for school,
- Feeding bibs and wash cloths for beginners,
- Aprons for messy play,
- Sunscreen,
- Children's portfolios, progress, half yearly and yearly reports and a USB stick for photos of your child. The USB is \$9.50 and is added to your account,
- Annual end of year celebration at no cost to you,
- Memorable Graduation evening for the preschool children and their families.

### **Early Years Learning Framework:**

*Belonging, Being, and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF)* is a key document for educators to help develop quality early childhood settings. It describes principles, practice, and learning outcomes that are essential to support and enhance children's development from birth to 5 years of age and also help support transition to school.

The Early Years Learning Framework is part of the Council of Australian Government's (COAG) reform agenda for early childhood education and care is a key component of the *National Quality Framework* for early childhood education and care. It underpins universal access to early childhood education and is incorporated in the *National Quality Standard* in order to ensure delivery of nationally consistent and quality early childhood education across sectors.

The EYLF describes the principles, practice and outcomes essential to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school. The EYLF has a strong emphasis on play-based learning, as play is the best vehicle for young children's learning, providing the most appropriate stimulus for brain development. The EYLF also recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development. Further information can be found at: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/>

#### **Portfolios:**

- Each child receives a digital portfolio on a USB at the end of the year. Observations, photos, as well as artwork will be part of the portfolio and will be accessible to parents and families to view throughout the year if requested in advance, as it is on the computer. Please see staff to arrange an appropriate viewing time.
- A progression report will be issued half yearly and yearly using age-appropriate developmental checklists. If you have any concerns with the information you receive please feel free to speak your child's educator at an appropriate time.
- Online observations and online programs are sent periodically sent to parents through hub hello.

#### **Parent Library:**

Our centre has a selection of resources accessible to families, please see staff if you would like to borrow an item. There is also a variety of pamphlets and flyers of local services and businesses related to families available in our entrance area.

#### **Rest Time:**

Beds are provided for all children, except those in the preschool program. If your child is enrolled in the preschool program and you still wish them to sleep, we will provide them with a bed. All children will be given the opportunity to rest after lunchtime. We believe that children need time to wind down and engage in self-regulation as they rest their bodies and brains as is suggested by leading research in regard to brain development. A variety of relaxing music will be played, and story books will be provided.

We ask for all children who sleep to bring a set of cot sheets and a blanket during winter. If your child requires something such as a dummy or a toy to comfort them during sleeping, you are welcome to pack that in their bags.

#### **Menu:**

Our menus are implemented and evaluated with children's and staff interests and FEED Australia. A copy of our menus is displayed for viewing on the wall outside.

We ask all parents to bring a piece of fruit per day of attendance so we can ensure there is fresh fruit for children at all times.

If your child has dietary requirements based on your family's religion, culture, ideology, or beliefs, this will be organised, and our menu will be adjusted to meet your child's individual needs.

If your child has any food allergies or intolerances these need to be acknowledged by a doctor or health care professional and we will ensure our menu is adjusted to meet your child's individual needs.

#### **Mealtimes:**

7.00am-8.00am----- Breakfast foods are available if requested

9.00am-9.30am----- Morning tea is served

11.30am-12.30pm---- Lunch is served

2.30pm-3.30pm----- Afternoon tea is served

5.30pm----- Milk and biscuits are offered

#### **Health & Hygiene:**

The children are encouraged to wash their hands:

- On arrival and departure,
- Before and after Outdoor play
- Before and after meals/snacks,
- After wiping their nose,
- After toileting,
- After messy activities.

## Preschool program

Our preschool curriculum involves many opportunities for the children to become ready for their transition to school through sharing stories, group experiences, music, physical movement, drawing, colouring, and cutting, matching, plus much more. The preschool children have their own routine in the late morning, separate from the younger children in the service.

### Preschool group routine:

10.00am - Welcome

- Yarning circle - children discuss recent news, current interests and ideas for learning
- Hello song - "How are you today" (Emotions)
- Acknowledgement to Country
- Brain Gym (Self-regulation)
- Dharug Days

10:45 am - Main group work - will change each day/week depending on children's interests, abilities and skill levels. May include: reading books; group discussions; investigations; projects; art; writing; outdoor play; construction; music; planned play experience and more

11:00am - Transition to bathroom for handwashing and go outside to play.

The following are ideas for fostering your child's independence and preparing them for school:

- Encourage them to dress themselves - assist verbally where needed
- Encourage them to put their own shoes and socks on
- Encourage them to help with daily tasks, e.g. setting the table for dinner, pack away toys, make their bed
- Involve them in conversations (extends vocabulary, confidence, communication skills and curiosity)
- Read to them each day whenever possible (e.g. bedtime stories)
- Draw with them and use NSW Foundation writing when writing their name for practice - see below (NB. Always write their name with an uppercase letter to begin then lowercase letters, e.g. Rebecca)
- Play board games (great for early numeracy skills (counting, one-to-one correspondence, subitising), understanding rules, turn-taking, emotional resilience when winning or losing, etc)
- Play travel/car games like 'I Spy' using letter sounds or colours (great for early literacy skills, colour recognition, understanding rules, turn-taking, emotional resilience when winning or losing, etc)
- Discuss routine - what day it is, what you're doing that day (great for establishing a sense of time, understanding of days and months, communication skills, sense of security, understanding of routines)

### NSW Foundation Handwriting:

Below is an example of NSW Foundation writing, which is the style taught in primary schools:

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQqRrSsTtUuVvWwXxYyZz  
0123456789

## Starting Sweetpeas Kindergarten and Long Day Care Centre

### Orientation:

We like to personalise our orientation day to each individual family, as this allows us to cover all your child's needs and requirements. An appointment will need to be made so we can ensure we give you all the time required.

We understand how hard it can be for parents and children attending childcare for the first time and welcome you to come in at different times of the day to give your child a chance to be familiar with the environment and educators before they start.

Other ways to help your child is by driving or walking past the centre and discussing it with them. Having your child participate in choosing the school bag, bottle and sheets also gets them excited and is an opportunity for you to discuss going to childcare. The more you share with your child about starting Sweetpeas the easier it will be for them to adjust to life at the centre.

A few tips that may help:

- Establish a morning routine both prior to Sweetpeas, and when you arrive so your child can become familiar and anticipate what will happen next,
- Assist your child to choose an activity on arrival
- Give your child notice of when you will leave them, e.g. “After we put your bag away, put your drink bottle in the container and your fruit in the basket I will go and you will stay and have a fun day!”
- Do the same with pick up time; tell them you will either pick them up after afternoon tea (at 3.30pm) or milk and biscuits (at 5.00pm). (Ensure of course that you choose one of the options to avoid confusion),
- Make their first day a short day if possible,
- When picking them up make it positive and excited about knowing what they did. Show them how proud you are of them,
- Don’t give your child false hope, e.g. “I’ll get you early” and turn up late, or “I’ll get you before your brother or sister” and the show up with the older sibling.

**What to bring to Sweetpeas:** *(ALL items should be labelled with your child’s name)*

**Monkey Group:**

- Bag labelled with your child’s name,
- Nappies (at least 5)
- Nappy cream if necessary, (cream requires a medication form)
- Bottles with lids made up with formula or breast milk if needed,
- At least two sets of spare clothes,
- Dummy in enclosed airtight container, if needed,
- Security toy for sleeping, if needed,
- One set of cot sheets,
- Sweetpeas bucket hat, or own broad brimmed hat,
- Covered drink bottle with water,
- One piece of fruit for our fruit basket.

**Giraffe Groups:**

- Bag labelled with your child’s name,
- At least two sets of spare clothes including socks and underwear,
- Covered drink bottle with water,
- One set of cot sheets,
- Sweetpeas bucket hat, or own broad brimmed hat,
- One piece of fruit for our fruit basket.

**Lion Group:**

- Bag labelled with your child’s name,
- At least two sets of spare clothes including socks and underwear,
- Covered drink bottle with water,
- Sweetpeas bucket hat, or own broad brimmed hat,
- One piece of fruit for our fruit basket.

**What NOT to bring to Kindergarten:**

- Toys: Toys are not to be brought from home. Toys brought from home can result in unnecessary conflict and our educators cannot guarantee that they will return home in the same state that they arrived in. Educators will not take responsibility for toys brought in from home.
- Food: Food is not to be brought to Sweetpeas for health and safety reasons. All food requirements will be met by the centre, unless your child is on a special medically supervised diet. Please make sure your child has no chips, lollies, chewing gum, or food in their bags.
- Medication: Please never leave medication in your child’s bag. If your child requires medication while attending Sweetpeas it should be handed to a member of staff and an appropriate medication form should be completed.

**Settling your child:**

Your involvement will help with the settling of your child into the centre environment and will provide continuity of care between home and the centre.

We would suggest you leave enough time for a daily chat with your child's educator about any changes or events happening at home that may affect your child's day. Educators will provide you with daily information about your child and how they have spent their day upon pick up.

If your child is having trouble settling talk to their educator and discuss the best way to leave them. Some children need to be forewarned and left quickly and others need their parents to stay and read a book, play a game, do a painting etc. before leaving.

Children who are unsettled on arrival generally relax quite quickly after the family members have left. If there are any issues, the educators will give you a call. Feel free to call the centre at any time throughout the day to see how your child has settled and how their day is going.

#### **Bottles, Dummies and Sipper Cups:**

- Bottles for formula must be made up by the parent and put in the fridge. All bottles must be marked with labels. Educators will rinse these bottles out afterwards but will not sterilise them.
- Dummies must be labelled and have a small Tupperware type container (labelled also) in which to store them.
- All children will need a drink bottle upon enrolment - this needs to be filled with fresh water every day and this will be left at the service. Educators will wash them and have them ready for their next day. There may be times when we need them to be replaced due to hygiene or damage.
- Drinks bottles must have a covered lid at all times. If you're unsure what is a good choice of a drink bottle please see an educator for assistance.

**Baby wipes:** If your child is in nappies you need to donate one packet of wipes for each day your child attends, every three months. E.g. Child attends Monday & Tuesday - donates two packets in January, April, July & October.

#### **Nappies:**

Nappies are not supplied by the centre. Children needing nappies are required to bring a minimum of five (5) per day.

#### **Toilet Training:**

We will happily assist all children and parents with toilet training. During this time the consistency between home and the centre is very important. For successful toilet training please discuss any issues with our educators so our program can be adapted to suit your child's needs. In most cases children must be 100% toilet trained to move into our preschool program.

### **Policies and Procedures**

We have developed comprehensive policies to assist in providing consistent quality care for you and your child. These policies determine how our centre operates and are available for you to view in our parent library at any time. Educators refer regularly to the policies and we encourage families to read them as well. We have a process where we review our policies due to:

- Educator meetings,
- Changes from Government,
- Changes in practices,
- Review dates - every year.

Parents will be kept up to date with policy changes through our notice board and reminders that policies are up will be mentioned through our newsletters. Parents are encouraged to read our policies and notify educators of any changes that should be made.

Please read the policies located in the library at your own leisure.

#### **Clothing:**

Please ensure that all clothing and belongings are labelled. Children should wear comfortable but practical clothing consisting of covered shoulders, manageable pants, sandals or sandshoes (no thongs). Please don't send your child in special clothes as we have a lot of messy fun at Sweetpeas.

All soiled or wet clothes will be bagged and hung in the bathroom out of reach of children and parents will be advised of these when they pick up their child. If there are no spare clothes in your child's bag the centre will provide spare clothing where possible that will need laundering by the parents before its return.

#### **Parent/Family Involvement:**

We encourage parents/guardians, grandparents, aunts, uncles and family friends to become involved in the centre's daily activities, families are always welcome at our centre. When parents/guardians are visiting the centre

all interactions with our educators, children and other visitors need to be respectful at all times. *See parent and visitor conduct policy.* Some areas you can become involved in are:

- Read our daily diaries so you can discuss your child's day with them,
- Return our questionnaires,
- Collect your information from your parent pocket,
- Visit your child's area to see their work e.g. Lion corner,
- Talk to your child's educator,
- Attend parent/grandparent days such as Easter hat parade, Mother's Day events, Father's Day events, grandparent's day, Christmas concerts or any incursions/excursions we may have,
- We encourage children in learning different about different countries and cultures and we welcome families to share aspects of their culture with the children. Some examples could be, teaching the children a song in another language, some words or even a cooking experience. (Please check with educators first due to allergies),
- If you have a skill such as playing a musical instrument, dancing or creative with art we encourage you to ask our you can get involved,
- **Read our newsletters and notices and updated policies,**
- Give feedback on programs and observations posted on Hubworks,
- Come and play!

### **Illness:**

We hope your child will enjoy good health all year, but we realise that all children usually have some periods of illness. If your child has any contagious illness, we ask you keep them at home for the period of time set down by the Department of Health. If your child becomes ill at the centre or develops a temperature, we will contact you or your chosen contacts to have them collected.

We do not have a separate facility to care for sick children so please do not send your child if they are unwell. Children are **not** to attend Sweetpeas if they have had a temperature, been given a painkiller that masks symptoms, vomited in the **past 24 hours** or has some form of gastro in the **past 24 hours**: we will send them home if they come.

- A child is not to come to Sweetpeas if a parent has had to administer Paracetamol or ibuprofen (Panadol, Nurofen etc.) to the child before arrival to the centre for the day. Once the paracetamol wears off the child will be miserable and also they will be spreading the infection.
- If a child exhibits signs or symptoms of illness an educator will inform the Nominated Supervisor or management and then contact will be made to the child's parents.
  - Where the parent cannot be contacted emergency contacts will be asked to collect the child.
  - If the parent can collect the child within one hour no Panadol will be administered.
  - If the parent will take longer than one hour to collect the child the educator will ask the parent if they want Panadol administered to their child.
  - If the parent requests Panadol the educator will complete an Illness Monitoring Form and the parent will sign the form on collection of their child.

### **Asthma:**

An asthma action plan will need to be completed by your doctor if your child has asthma. Changes to asthma management will require new asthma form to be filled out by your doctor. All children who suffer from asthma need to bring their own asthma medication to Sweetpeas each day of attendance.

### **Allergy and requirement of EpiPen:**

If your child has some sort of allergy and requires an EpiPen or some form of antihistamines, please ensure you complete the right information provided on your enrolment form. An action plan by your doctor must be completed. All medication to assist with allergies requires a medication form to be completed and you must notify staff of any special instructions. If your child requires an EpiPen (as per their allergy/anaphylaxis action plan) please ensure you leave one with us at all times that your child is enrolled with us.

We can adjust our menus to ensure meals do not harbor the triggers, and so your child is not affected.

### **Risk minimisation plans:**

Any child with asthma or allergy will have a risk minimisation plan that requires parent signature.

### **Prescription Medicine:**

Prescription medicine can only be administered to your child when you have completed a medication form. This prescription medicine must be in its original container with the pharmaceutical label with the dosage amount and your child's name on it. This form must be completed every day your child needs medication. If your child has a medical condition that requires medication over a long-term period, we can provide you with a long-term medication form which will need renewing every three months.

**You must specify the name of the medicine, amount, and times to be administered, then print your name and sign your entry.**

Two staff members will be administering the medication. The medicine must be stored in its correct container with your child's name and dosage on it.

This should be handed with the medication form to an educator to store appropriately. A parent/guardian's confirmation signature is then required on the medicine form upon pick up.

A child on antibiotics is not to attend the centre unless they have been on the antibiotics for 24hrs, as it takes 24hrs for antibiotics to take effect. E.g., if the medicine states 3 doses a day and your child received their first dose at lunchtime the day before attending kind the child cannot come back till, they have had all 3 doses.

**UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD MEDICINE BE LEFT IN YOUR CHILD'S BAG (as it will be accessible to all children)**

#### **Accidents and Injuries:**

All accidents at the centre are recorded and the form needs to be sighted and signed by you, and returned to educators on pick up. If you require a copy please inform our educators. An ambulance will be called for any emergencies. Parents must accept full responsibility for any fees involved in treating your child. (Please refer to our Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy)

#### **Sun Protection Policy**

Too much of the sun's UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Infants and toddlers up to four years of age are particularly vulnerable to UV damage due to lower levels of melanin and a thinner stratum corneum (the outermost layer of skin). UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

- To assist with the implementation of this policy, educators and children are encouraged to access the local sun protection times via the SunSmart widget on the service's website, the free SunSmart app or at [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au).
- The sun protection measures listed are used for all outdoor activities during the daily local sun protection times. (The sun protection times are a forecast from the Bureau of Meteorology for the time-of-day UV levels are forecast to reach 3 or higher. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types. In NSW, UV levels regularly reach 3 or higher from mid-August to the end of April.)
- Children are required to wear loose-fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible. Clothing made from cool, densely woven fabric is recommended. Families are asked to choose tops with elbow-length sleeves, higher necklines (or collars) and knee-length or longer style shorts and skirts for their child. If a child is wearing a singlet top or shoestring dress, they will be asked to choose a t-shirt/shirt to wear over this before going outdoors.
- SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is supplied by the service and/or families.
- Sunscreen is applied in accordance with the manufacturer's directions (which state to apply at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours, or more frequently if sweating or swimming).
- To help develop independent skills, all children are given opportunities to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of staff, and are encouraged to do so.
- See full policy for more information

#### **Parent/Guardian Complaint or Grievance:**

**Procedure for handling complaints:**

##### **For Parents:**

- Speak to your child's educator and bring the question, complaint or concern to their attention.
- In the event that no action is taken to resolve this matter, please raise this with the Responsible Person in Charge (photo located in entrance) and/or the Director. If preferred, the matter can be emailed to the service ([sweetpeaskindy@gmail.com](mailto:sweetpeaskindy@gmail.com))
- The Nominated Supervisor/Director will respond to the concern within 24 hours (where reasonable), as there may need to be an investigation.
- If the problem or concern is still unresolved the parent is required to put the concern in writing and address it to the Approved Provider of the centre.
- The Approved Provider will ensure that steps 1, 2 and 3 have been followed, and then meet with the parent. Following the meeting the Approved Provider will respond to the parent in writing.
- If the parent is still not satisfied with the outcome, they can report the concern to the NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate on 1800 619 133 and follow their protocols. However, it is the policy of Sweetpeas that this step need not be taken.

- See full policy for more information

### **Confidentiality Policy**

#### **Families and Children:**

- What information do we collect, why and how it is used?
  - Basic details are usually collected directly from parents such as names and the names of authorised persons (authorisations) to collect or contact in case of an emergency, address, phone contacts but it is also necessary for educators/staff to collect details regarding a child's name, date of birth, medical details, health, routines, likes and dislikes which make up a personal profile.
  - In addition, we are required to hold information regarding a child's Child Care Subsidy entitlements.
  - All this information is vital in assisting us to provide the best possible individual care for a child and for processing payments. Some of the information we collect is to satisfy the service's legal obligations under the National Regulations.
  - The Education and Care Service from time to time may disclose personal and sensitive information to others for administrative purposes. This includes to the Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate, NSW Department of Education and Communities, Family Assistance Office, Department of Health, Family Law Court and other Education and Care Professionals.
  - Naturally, much of this information is of a personal nature and some of it might be regarded as 'sensitive' and not the sort of information that you would wish to have unnecessarily disclosed to others.
- We assure you that:
  - This information will only be used by our educators and other staff members in order to deliver your child's care to the highest standards.
  - It will not be disclosed to those not associated with the care of your child without your express consent.
  - You may ask to seek access to information held about you and your child and we will provide access without undue delay.
  - This access might be inspection of your child's records or providing copies of the information.
  - We will take reasonable steps to ensure at all times that the details we keep about your family are accurate, complete, and up to date.
  - We will take reasonable steps to protect this information from misuse or loss and from unauthorised access or disclosure.
  - Our educators and other staff are committed to respect these principles at all times.
  - If a student has a valid training requirement, that involves the gathering of certain information pertaining to your child or family, the student must have written consent from the parent/guardian and the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor.
  - All documentation will be stored in safe and secure area at Sweetpeas Kindergarten.

### **Guiding Children's Behaviour:**

Sweetpeas Kindergarten will provide a secure, loving and stimulating environment which encourages children to co-operate enhances their self-esteem, encourages their ability to interact with others, and where acceptable behaviour is promoted, any reprimands are kept to a minimum. Where a child continues to behave in an unacceptable manner, parents/guardians will be consulted and asked to work with the educators/staff to ensure discipline techniques are consistent and clear.

Educators/staff by using a positive approach in guidance and discipline will recognise why a child behaves in a certain way and will encourage more acceptable forms of behaviour.

**If there are any other questions or concerns, please see staff.**

**Thank you and we hope you and your family enjoy your time with us at Sweetpeas Kindergarten.**

### **Sweetpeas Bank Details**

**Account name:** Sweetpeas group

**Account number:** 488989763

**Account BSB:** 112-879

**Reference:** Your child's full name