



Parent Information 2017

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Kew and North Balwyn Playcentre

*Kew and North Balwyn Playcentre acknowledges Wurundjeri people
As the Traditional Owners of the Land of Boroondara and we pay our
respects to their Elders, Past and Present.*

North Balwyn Playcentre is an independent, not-for-profit centre that provides quality occasional childcare for the local community.

The centre has been operating in excess of 35 years and we are proud to have provided respite for parents and care for so many local children (now adults!) living in the area.

Children ranging in age from 6 weeks to 5 years are cared for in our mixed-age environment, creating a unique family-feel to their experience at Playcentre. The older and younger children learn to play, share and make friends with each other over time as they attend regular sessions each week.

The mixed-age environment allows the older children to act as role models to the younger ones which develops their confidence and self esteem. The mentoring and friendships that develop often inspire the younger ones to try new things (painting, construction, make-believe dress-ups) by watching how the older ones play.

These early friendships help the children to feel a sense of belonging and they settle very quickly into their weekly routine. Often they're having so much fun that they don't want to go home at the end of the morning!

The indoor and outdoor play spaces are filled with toys and activities and, usually, noisy, happy children!

What Is Occasional Childcare?

Essentially occasional childcare is like a specialized playgroup for your child except you can leave your child to be cared for by professional, qualified staff.

Occasional childcare provides a safe, happy, nurturing place for your child for a few hours while you take a short break to attend to other needs. It's great for pre school-age children who are cared for in a stimulating early childhood learning environment.

Our centre is run by a committee of management formed from parents of the children who attend our centre. We are a non- profit organisation and provide this community service for local families.

The children play, paint, draw, sing, dance, laugh and learn to socialise with each other while they build their confidence, resilience and skills with each session they attend. Sessions run for 5 hours and are usually booked on a term by term basis. We are also able to take casual bookings depending on availability.

What Are the Benefits?

The most important benefits of regular attendance at occasional care are that it:

- stimulates the overall gross and fine motor skill development in your pre-schooler;

- builds their confidence, resilience and independence away from home;
- acts as preparation for kindergarten;
- helps with socialisation issues (such as playing together, being in a group and following simple routines);
- teaches your child how to share (this is especially important if you have an only child);
- creates an opportunity to prepare your little one for a new baby by instilling a routine in the soon-to-be older sibling's week, and,
- last but by no means least gives you a short break so you can return refreshed to parenting

North Balwyn Playcentre aims to give your child the best care possible in a stimulating, fun and friendly environment.



Playcentre Philosophy

In relation to children:

- All children are unique individuals with their own needs, interests and strengths
- All children are given equal opportunities regardless of their gender, culture and socio-economic background.
- Children learn best through play and staff will support development by providing experiences that are meaningful to the children and most importantly reflect their interests.
- Learning is promoted through experimentation, investigation and role play.
- Staff will follow children's interests and provide open ended play and creative experiences within a comfortable, relaxed and home like environment.
- Children develop and learn at their own pace; therefore staff will ensure their expectations of children's development are specific to each child and their experiences.
- Staff will ensure children have a positive self concept, high self esteem and social competence, as these are the basis for successful learning.
- Staff will ensure children are given meaningful praise for efforts, success and positive reinforcement.
- Staff will consult with parents in regard to behaviour management.
- Staff will support each child's background within the environment, using experiences across all learning and curriculum areas.
- Staff will support the inclusion of children with additional needs, working in conjunction with the family and other support services.

In relation to families:

- Families are the most important people in their child's life and have valuable information to share with us.
- We will make parents feel welcome and encourage them to become involved at the centre in whatever way they feel comfortable.

- Individual families have their own parenting and childcare practices which staff will recognise and respect.
- We encourage feedback, suggestions and opinions regarding the centre's procedures, policies and the general running of the centre.
- Families are able to complete surveys in relation to the centre's Guidelines and Procedures.
- Families need to feel secure in knowing that their child is in a caring nurturing environment.
- Families have the right to confidentiality and respect for privacy.

In relation to staff:

- Staff recognise and respect that every staff member is an individual with diverse needs, interests, skills, knowledge and experience to contribute to the centre.
- We believe and respect that we are all individuals therefore we all learn at our own pace and individuality will be valued and respected.
- Staff will work as a team by motivating and supporting each other. Staff will help to build an atmosphere of trust and respect through open communications, respecting different points of view, using constructive methods of conflict resolution, and maintaining confidentiality.
- Staff know when to guide and assist a child's play and when to step back and observe.
- Staff will document and record children's development throughout the year using written observations, photographs and work samples.
- We believe that a positive working environment is fundamental to providing quality care. Therefore, we aim to maintain open, honest relationships between all staff members. We also aim to contribute equally to the centre, both professionally and personally, as this will help to form effective cooperative teamwork.
- We recognise and suspect that every staff member brings unique experiences, ideas, customs, values, skills and interests gained from their cultural background.
- We believe that staff need regular opportunities to develop and extend their skills, knowledge and enthusiasm through attending various courses of interest to them.

In relation to the program:

- The program encourages children to make choices and have control of their own learning through individual interests.
- Learning centres are added to and changed according to the children's interests.
- The program provides opportunities for simultaneous indoor/outdoor play that promotes child initiated small group experiences and fosters nurturing and sibling relationships. The program is based on the concept of the emergent curriculum. where the children's interests are the focus and staff work within these interests to assist with the child's development.
- We believe that the role of adults within the centre is to be facilitators that guide and encourage children's learning at their level.
- All staff will be given opportunity to have input into the program with ideas and suggestions.

In relation to the environment:

- We recognise the importance of providing a safe, secure and consistent environment that supports trust and familiarity as well as active exploration of learning.
- Staff provide a calm, friendly and positive atmosphere at the centre at all times.
- Staff will use positive forms of behaviour guidance to maintain a consistent environment and manage challenging behaviours, with continual consultation with parents.
- Staff recognise and support the importance of maintaining a high standard of hygiene and actively encourage children to become involved in hygiene practices.
- The environment will reflect a 'home like atmosphere incorporating a realistic, natural environment the child can relate to. We do this by providing baskets, home like furnishings such as tablecloths throughout the environment.

Playcentre Hours:

The Playcentre will be open five days per week in 2017. Our 2017 hours are:

Monday - Friday 9am—2pm during School Terms

PLEASE NOTE: You may notice that the centre is open when you arrive however, Staff use the time before 9am to set up the room for your child. **Please understand that we will be unable to care for your child outside the above operating hours.**

Term Dates:

The playcentre terms are divided in a similar way to those of the school system.

Term dates for 2017 are as follows:

Term 1 6th February – 31st March

Term 2 18th April(Tues) – 30th June

Term 3 17th July – 22nd September

Term 4 9th October – 20th December

The Playcentre will be closed during all school holiday periods

Public Holidays:

The Playcentre will be closed during all public holidays

Session Fees:

(from February 2017)

Fee for each five hour session \$56.50

Fees are issued prior to the start of the term and are due the Friday immediately before the commencement of term. Session fees are not refundable for non-attendance due to illness or leave.

Administration Levy:

In order to cover additional administrative costs, all enrolments will incur an administrative levy of \$10 per child at the commencement of their enrolment each year.

Childcare Benefit:

North Balwyn Play Centre is an 'Approved Care' provider and as such fees paid for child care can be reduced by claiming Child Care Benefit. Child Care Benefit is a payment from the Australian Government that helps you with the cost of your child care. Child Care Rebate is also available providing your family meets the eligibility requirements.

To claim Child Care Benefit you must first register with Centrelink by completing and lodging the Claim for Child Care Benefit. Following lodgement, your family will be assessed for the applicable rate of Child Care Benefit. Please refer to <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/child-care-benefit> for further details.

The Playcentre can only give you a fee reduction for child care once Centrelink has assessed your rate and all relevant details have been supplied to us. It is recommended that all families contact the Department of Human Services on 136150 prior to enrolment in order to determine their eligibility.

What information is required for enrolment?

You will be asked to complete an enrolment form prior to commencement each year with the following information:

- Name and address and a contact number in case of emergencies.
- Name and address of another adult responsible for your child in case you cannot be contacted in an emergency
- Allergies or any health issues the carers should be aware of, especially food allergies.
- Any additional needs your child may have
- Name of family doctor.
- Authorization to administer prescription medication and to seek medical, hospital or ambulance care.
- Languages known and languages spoken at home.
- Parent Occupation details
- Details of any court orders in relation to your child.
- Immunisation record for your child. Families are required to provide an immunisation status certificate from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register. This certificate should outline that all immunisations are up to date.
How do I obtain an immunisation status certificate?
- **From the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register phone 1800 653 809 or email acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au go to www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/online Or visit your local Medicare Office.**
- Please ensure you complete a separate enrolment form for each of your children in care.

Signing In and Out Procedure:

We ask parents to ensure that children are brought into the CARE OF THE STAFF by a responsible person (at least 15 years of age) and similarly collected after the session.

Upon entering the playcentre, the person responsible for the child, MUST in the Daily Attendance Book, write the CURRENT TIME, SIGN their name and print clearly the first and last name of the person who will be COLLECTING the child and. At the end of each session, children must be again signed and timed out by the adult collecting them.

Safety:

Children should be brought to the Playcentre and collected at the end of the session by an adult. All adults must ensure that ONLY their child is escorted out of the gate at the end of the session.

*****PLEASE MAKE SURE THE PLAYCENTRE GATE AND DOOR IS SECURELY CLOSED AT ALL TIMES*****

A doorbell is located at the front area for parents to gain access whenever they require this. All current families will also be given a code in order to gain access through the locked gate at arrival and pick up times.

Playcentre Parking:

Parallel parking is available in the streets surrounding the centre. Please check parking signs for details.

Absenses (Holidays And Ill Health)

If your child is going to be absent from Playcentre, or has an infectious disease, we require you to notify us promptly.

Please keep your child at home if he/she is not well.

EVEN IF HE/SHE WANTS TO COME TO PLAYCENTRE

Infection spreads rapidly amongst young children.

In fairness to others, a child should not attend if they have:

- * a heavy nasal discharge
- * sore throat
- * vomited, or had diarrhea or a fever within previous 24 hours

CHILDREN SHOULD ONLY COME TO PLAYCENTRE IF THEY ARE WELL ENOUGH TO PARTICIPATE FULLY. ie. play outside, eat their snack, lunch, etc.

Please refer to our ACCIDENT, ILLNESS and EXCLUSION POLICY for further details.

Medication

Medication Procedure

If children require medication while at the centre, parents must

- Advise staff of their child's needs in relation to the medication
- Provide the medicine in the original container with the child's name printed clearly on the container
- Personally hand the medicine to a staff member for safe keeping out of the reach of children.
- **Under no circumstances is medication to be left in your child's bag.**
- Fill in the details of dosage, time of administration, etc on the Medication form and sign.

- Please make sure that each dose to be administered is entered individually and signed.
- NOTE: Staff will only administer dose as defined on the bottle. On collection of children, parents must check the Medication form, sign and ask staff for the medication.

Clothing:

We provide smocks to protect children's clothing, however, it is wise to dress children in clothing that can be easily laundered. Children should also wear clothes which they can manage with minimal assistance, when going to the toilet.

Children should also be dressed appropriately for outside play all year around.

What Does Your Child Need To Bring?

Your child needs to bring with him/her each session:

- Nappies and Nappy rash cream (if applicable) and a change or changes of clothing
- A warm coat for outside play in cooler months
- A drink. A snack and lunch, (*both meals must be packaged separately). Please also provide any cutlery your child may need for their meal.*
- If your child requires a bottle of milk, please ensure this is prepared at home and provided to staff on arrival for refrigeration.

(No eggs, nuts, nut or egg products, or nut spread please)

All of your child's belongings, eg bag, food container, drink bottle, etc must be clearly labelled with your child's name

Where your child requires the use of a dummy for comfort, please ensure it is also clearly labelled.

Essential Sun Protection

A sunhat is required for outdoor play every day **until May 1st and then again from September 1st** each year.

Parents are required to apply sunscreen to their child **prior to the start of each session** during the above dates. Sunscreen is also available at the centre for your use. **If you have not applied sunscreen to your child please inform staff on arrival.**

Birthdays and Celebrations at Playcentre

We are happy to celebrate your child's birthday or other special event at the centre. We request however that you **only** bring non food related products to assist with this celebration. This could be a balloon, a whistle, a party hat etc. This is limited only by your imagination. Unfortunately we are unable to accept food items due to food related health concerns. Please also ensure that your items are safe for children under three years of age.

Children Under 2

Younger children find five hours of care very tiring and often need a quiet place to sit for rest and respite during part of the session. **We therefore ask you to provide a pram and a comfort toy or blanket for your child if they are under two years of age.**

Children's Belongings

Children should not bring toys, etc. to Playcentre as they will invariably be lost or broken. However, if your child is dependent on a certain toy, blanket etc in times of distress, please pack this safely in their bag and alert staff that this is available if needed.

Committee

The Playcentre is a community run program that relies on parent involvement. Any assistance you can provide or suggestions you may wish to make are appreciated.

The Playcentre is run by a committee of parents who are elected at each AGM (held early each year). If you are interested in joining the committee, or if you do not have time to be on the Committee but would like to help out in specialty areas, please advise staff or contact a current Committee member. See staff for details.

Fundraising

The centre relies on fundraising in order to provide funds for the purchase of new equipment and upgrades to our facilities. We realise that all of our families lead very busy lives therefore it is our intention to keep fundraising to an absolute minimum. In order for us to do this a fundraising levy will be applied to each families account in terms 2, 3 and 4. This allows us to minimise all fundraising to a maximum of 2 activities per calendar year. It is an expectation that all families participate in assisting with our fundraising activities. Please refer to our *Fee and Debt Management Policy* for further details

Questions, Concerns and Complaints

We are happy to assist you with any concern that you may have regarding the running of the Playcentre or your child's involvement. If you have a problem or difficulty, please raise it with the Director, or a member of the committee. However, if your problem remains unresolved, all complaints must be in writing to the President, who will then refer the matter to the complaints Sub-Committee.

Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns with the Director in the first instance. She is available during the session or by telephone during session time, or via email. All discussions will of course be confidential.

We look forward to welcoming you and your child to Playcentre soon!

School Exclusion Table

Statutory rule

A person in charge of a primary school or children's services centre must not allow a child to attend the primary school or children's services centre for the period or in the circumstances:

- A. specified in column 2 of the Table in Schedule 7 if the person in charge has been informed that the child is infected with an infectious disease listed in column 1 of the Table in Schedule 7; or
 - B. specified in column 3 of the Table in Schedule 7 if the person in charge has been informed that the child has been in contact with a person who is infected with an infectious disease listed in column 1 of the Table in Schedule 7.
- The person in charge of a primary school or children's services centre, when directed to do so by the Secretary, must ensure that a child enrolled at the primary school or children's services centre who is not immunised against a vaccine preventable disease (VPD) specified by the Secretary in that direction, does not attend the school or centre until the Secretary directs that such attendance can be resumed. (Note: VPDs are marked in the table with an asterisk (*). Contact the Department on 1300 651 160 for further advice about exclusion and these diseases.)

Schedule 7 Minimum Period of Exclusion from Primary Schools and Children's Services Centres for Infectious Diseases Cases and Contacts (Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009)

In this Schedule, medical certificate means a certificate of a registered medical practitioner.

Condition	Exclusion of Cases	Exclusion of Contacts
Amoebiasis <i>(Entamoeba histolytica)</i>	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.	Not excluded.
Campylobacter	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.	Not excluded.
Chickenpox	Exclude until all blisters have dried. This is usually at least 5 days after the rash appears in unimmunised children, but may be less in previously immunised children.	Any child with an immune deficiency (for example, leukaemia) or receiving chemotherapy should be excluded for their own protection. Otherwise not excluded.
Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased.	Not excluded.
Diarrhoea	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.	Not excluded.
Diphtheria	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received following at least two negative throat swabs, the first not less than 24 hours after finishing a course of antibiotics and the other 48 hours later.	Exclude family/household contacts until cleared to return by the Secretary.
Hand, Foot and Mouth disease	Exclude until all blisters have dried.	Not excluded.
Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)	Exclude until at least 4 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed.	Not excluded.
Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness.	Not excluded.
Hepatitis B	Exclusion is not necessary.	Not excluded.
Hepatitis C	Exclusion is not necessary.	Not excluded.
Herpes ("cold sores")	Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing, where possible.	Not excluded.
Human immuno-deficiency virus infection (HIV/AIDS)	Exclusion is not necessary.	Not excluded.
Impetigo	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing.	Not excluded.
Influenza and influenza like illnesses	Exclude until well.	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary.
Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has	Not excluded.

Condition	Exclusion of Cases	Exclusion of Contacts
	been given by the Secretary.	
Measles*	Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash.	Immunised contacts not excluded. Unimmunised contacts should be excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case. If unimmunised contacts are vaccinated within 72 hours of their first contact with the first case, or received NHIG within 144 hours of exposure, they may return to the facility.
Meningitis (bacteria - other than meningococcal meningitis)	Exclude until well.	Not excluded.
Meningococcal infection*	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed.	Not excluded if receiving carrier eradication therapy.
Mumps*	Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner).	Not excluded.
Pertussis* (whooping cough)	Exclude the child for 21 days after the onset of cough or until they have completed 5 days of a course of antibiotic treatment.	Contacts aged less than 7 years in the same room as the case who have not received three effective doses of pertussis vaccine should be excluded for 14 days after the last exposure to the infectious case, or until they have taken 5 days of a course of effective antibiotic treatment.
Poliomyelitis*	Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Re-admit after receiving medical certificate of recovery.	Not excluded.
Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (head lice)	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced.	Not excluded.
Rubella (german measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of rash.	Not excluded.
Salmonella, Shigella	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.	Not excluded.
Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is produced.	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary.
Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well.	Not excluded.
Tuberculosis	Exclude until receipt of a medical certificate from the treating physician stating that the child is not considered to be infectious.	Not excluded.
Typhoid fever (including paratyphoid fever)	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Secretary.	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary.
Verotoxin producing <i>Escherichia coli</i> (VTEC)	Exclude if required by the Secretary and only for the period specified by the Secretary.	Not excluded.
Worms (Intestinal)	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.	Not excluded.