

Parent Handbook 2023

Little Peanuts Early Learning Centre

Parent Handbook

Address: 215 Haly Street, Kingaroy QLD 4610

Ph: (07) 4163 6928

Email: admin@littlepeanuts.com.au

Opening times 6.00am to 6.00pm

52 weeks per year

Welcome to our Service,

The Parent Handbook outlines important information you will need to be aware of while you are a part of our Service family. It is important that you read over this booklet and ask questions about matters you do not understand. You will find a form at the back of this booklet which you must sign and return to the Service to indicate that you have read the information in this booklet and your enrolment pack.

Our Service has an open door policy. You and your family are welcome to visit the Service at any time.

Our Policies

All our policies are available in the policy folder located in the bookshelf in the foyer.

Please feel free to look and comment on our policies at any time.



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Introduction

Welcome to Little Peanuts Early Learning Centre. Finding a new education and care Service for your child can be a daunting task. At Little Peanuts Early Learning Centre our aim is to provide a secure and happy environment where children can develop their intellectual, social, emotional, physical, aesthetic skills to become competent and confident individuals. And for you as a parent/guardian, feel safe in the knowledge that your child is receiving the best possible care.

We believe the best way to work with you and your child is by building a **partnership of care**. To do this we want you to feel:

Welcomed, recognised, acknowledged and respected by all our Educators.
That your child is really known by, and really knows, the people who care for him or her. You are given lots of information about what is occurring and are asked for your views.
You are involved in making decisions about your child's experiences.
You and your child are received and greeted upon arrival.
Your child is happy, secure and engaged. Your child is not just looked after but really cared for.

Contact Persons

Approved Provider: Little Peanuts Pty Ltd Nominated Supervisor: Louise Taylor

Manager: Amber Morris

Educational Leader: Amber Morris, Teresa Heim

Regulatory Authorities

Our Service complies with the National Quality Framework (NQF) including the National Quality Standard (NQS), the Early Years Learning Framework (or other Approved Framework) and the National Regulations (Education and Care Services National Regulations).

Our Service is regulated by the new national body for early education and care – the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) as well as the state licensing department in our State/Territory. To contact our Regulatory Authority, please refer to the contact details below –**Queensland**
Office for Early Childhood Education and Care Department of Education, Training and Employment
www.education.qld.gov.au
1800 637 711/46163791, ecec@det.qld.gov.au, PO
BOX 15033 CITY EAST QLD 4002

Education, Curriculum and Learning

We will be following the Early Years Learning Framework (or other Approved Framework) as per our Education, Curriculum and Learning Policy.

All Educators at our Service are trained and experienced in areas of early education and care. Due to our high standard and commitment of our Educators, we are able to provide developmental and educational programs for each group of children.

The Educators will develop a daily program, observe the children in their care and plan their programs around the needs and interests of the children in child free time.

Early Years Learning Framework Learning (EYLF)

Learning Outcomes:

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

- Children 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

If your child's Educator feels there is an area of concern, they will inform you and advise where help may be sought, e.g. speech therapist. It is always your decision to follow this up. Educators are willing to discuss any aspect of development with parents.

Philosophy

CP1

At Little Peanuts, Early Learning Centre, we pride ourselves in providing high quality care for all children. Educators implement a holistic & inclusive approach to positively support children's growth of identity, self-esteem, and critical thinking. The resulting curriculum creates endless opportunities for children to grow.

Educators believe children learn through play and in an appropriately arranged space that provides opportunities to extend on their interests, needs and overall development.

CP 2

Educators are committed to and strive to support and nurture each child in a welcoming and caring atmosphere. Little Peanuts provides a learning environment that will support and foster the health and wellbeing of each child who attends the service.

CP 3

Our goal is for each child to feel like they belong in this environment, are able to be in the moment and become who they are by exploring their identity, and developing their interests and ideas. Little Peanuts has a Sustainability Action Plan and a Reconciliation Plan embedded in the service's curriculum to support optimum outcomes for each child.

CP 4

Our team is made up of appropriately experienced and qualified individuals who collaborate with each other to support children's learning and wellbeing. Our educators work with reference to The National Quality Framework, the Code of Ethics, the centres Code of Conduct, this Philosophy, The Early Years Learning Framework and The Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines.

CP 5

Educators are respectful of children and communicate with them to build confidence, and nurture children's ability to form strong and positive relationships with adults and peers at the centre. We work to understand each child, how they communicate best and support each child, to develop those skills for lifelong learning.

CP 6

We encourage family involvement as it is integral to a high-quality program. We recognise parents as their child's first and most important teachers and seek to work with families to support children to achieve optimum outcomes. We do this through a curriculum that is developed with involvement from Children, Families, Educators, and the wider community. Our aim is to work in collaboration and share strong partnerships with families to ensure we maintain the quality of care we provide.

CP 7

All educators are provided with ongoing professional development opportunities and are actively involved in reflective practice and the development of the Services Quality Improvement Plan. We document all aspects of care and education to ensure we meet the requirements of legislation and best practice standards we continually strive for. We actively promote organisation and leadership strategies to support our continuous improvement approach.

Links: QA 7

Grievances, Complaints and Feedback

If for any reason you are not happy with the Service's level of care or care environment we want to know immediately. You can discuss this with Educators or formally write a letter. When any matter is raised the Service will be following our Grievance Procedure Policy. All Service policies are made available to parents. Positive feedback is most welcome too.

Child Care Subsidy

A family subsidy (Child Care Subsidy) is available from the Family Assistance Office (FAO). The Family Assistance Office will assess parents' taxable income and a scale will be used to determine the amount of assistance each family will receive. The assistance may be claimed at a reduced Service fee or at the end of the financial year. Every family regardless of their income is entitled to this assistance. For further details please speak to our Nominated Supervisor or contact FAO on 13 6150.

The Service is opened for **12 hours** per day, **52 weeks** per year and caters for children 6 weeks-6 years.

The Daily Routine

Although the routines of each room and age group will vary, the same aspects are contained in each. We endeavour to provide a home and family environment at the Service where the children feel comfortable and secure at all times and our daily routines reflect this.

Throughout the day the children will be experiencing a number of different activities which are part of the educational and developmental programs operated by all of our Educators.

Each room will display their routine in the rooms and these are available for parents to read and questions regarding this can be answered by the appropriate Educators. In place are both summer and winter routines, which adapt to weather conditions.

Services Offered

*Long Day Care Registered Kindy Program Morning Tea
Lunch Afternoon Tea
Special Needs Catered For*

Age Groups

The Service will boast five rooms which will promote a spacious, warm and inviting environment for all our children at the Service. The rooms will be offered as followed:

- 6 weeks – 2 years
- 15 months – 2 ½ years
- 2yrs – 3 years
- 2 1/2 years – 4 years
- 3 1/2 years-6 years

Children

Those First Weeks

The introduction into long day care can be difficult for children and parents. Children's welfare and happiness are the priority for Educators when welcoming new children to the Service and when assisting the family to settle into the Service environment. It is recognised that family's needs will vary greatly in the orientation process and individual needs will be met as best is possible.

The following outlines some helpful hints for parents on settling their child into care:-

- Make sure you familiarise your child with the environment and the people in the environment (children and adults) by coming in for visits before commencing care.
- Ease your child into care with short stays to begin with.
- Provide a favourite toy, blanket or comforter to support your child when they are separating from you or settling to sleep. This can help your child feel more secure.
- If your child is unsettled, short visits with you will help your child to gain trust with an unfamiliar environment. These visits can be made on a day when your child is not booked to attend.
- Interactions between Educators and parents or Educators and other children can produce positive role models and be reassuring. This experience can help to establish trust in an unfamiliar setting.
- Try to talk at home about child care. Mention the names of the Educators and other children. Talk about the things the child will be able to do at child care that are fun and enjoyable.
- Talk to the Educators about your child, for example, what they like to do; successful ways of settling them to sleep; foods they like and dislike and so on. This helps Educators to get to know your child.
- When leaving your child it is best to make sure you say goodbye and then leave. Hesitating and not going after you have said your goodbyes, if a child is upset, only confuses them. Reassure your child that everything is alright and you will return later, this can help them to settle.
- It sometimes helps to establish a routine when leaving. For example, giving your child a cuddle and giving them to a Educator or sitting down with them for a short play or reading a book together then leaving.
- At first some children protest strongly while others may take a day or two to realise that you are leaving them and begin to protest after several days. Children soon learn that you do return and in the mean time they are well cared for.

What to Bring

Nursery

- Formula and bottles
- Changes of clothes
- Security items 2-6 years
- A change of clothing that is weather appropriate (younger children- especially those toilet training- will need extra changes)
- A hat – a full brimmed wide hat.
- A security item for rest time.
- Sheet Sets.
- Nappies

Birthdays

Your child's birthday is a special event in his/her life. To celebrate your child's birthday, you are welcome to bring a cake. Due to food allergies please check with your child's teacher prior to birthday.

Clothing

Parents are advised to send their children to the Service in comfortable, inexpensive clothing. The children need to be able to move around during their play period and should be unimpaired by clothing. While paints, etc will come out in the wash, accidents do happen so it is best to send the children along in their "less than good clothes". Young children enjoy and need "messy" play with paint, clay, sand, water and mud.

The Service will only have a limited supply of spare clothing. Please supply at least one change of clean clothing and underclothing in case of accidents, for 3-5 year olds.

Please mark your child's clothing and replace name tags if they fade in the wash. Ensure clothing is weather appropriate.

Please ensure that toddlers have about three complete changes of clothing and plenty of training pants.

Clothing Safety

Please do not dress your child in clothing with cords e.g. shorts, hats etc. As these have the potential to become caught on equipment and may cause serious harm to your child.

Belongings

Please ensure all belongings are clearly labelled such as dummies, clothes etc. Lost property will be displayed for parent collection in your child's room. Parent co-operation in labelling assists the Service in keeping your child's belongings together.

The Service discourages toys from home and we will not hold any responsibility for any personal belongings. Please be reassured security and news items are acceptable.

Possessions

A soft toy or security item are acceptable for rest time. It is appreciated if personal possessions are not brought to the Service e.g. guns, toys etc. Any possessions brought must come entirely at the parent's own risk with regards to breakage or loss.

Lockers

Each child is allocated a locker. Please place bags etc in your child's locker. If your child attends less than five days per week, they will share their locker with another child.

Guidance and Discipline

Educators follow a Behaviour Guidance Management Policy which extends across the whole Service giving consistency of expectation in all rooms. This policy allows children to develop self-discipline, a respect for others and for property and respect for self.

The policy aims are:-

- To give all children the opportunity to expand their experiences of life in a productive, safe environment that allows individuals the right to safety, tolerance, self-expression, cultural identity, dignity and the worth of the individual, along with honesty in dealing with peers and caregivers.

- To be taught to respect the rights and needs of others by foreseeing the outcome of their behaviour and the consequences of their behaviour.
- To encourage the individual social development of each child.

If you require further information on this policy please ask Educators and refer to the policy book.

Rest and Sleep

Rest time routine varies according to individual needs. We aim to make rest time a relaxed, pleasant time for all children. We provide stretcher beds for children. Your child may wish to bring a security item, pillow or blanket to have at rest time. Please feel free to discuss your child's rest needs with Educators.

Parents

We believe the best way to work with you and your child is by building a **partnership of care**. To do this we want you to feel

You are given lots of information about what is happening and you are asked for your views

Communication Communication Communication

What is the best way to communicate with you?

Everybody has a different communication style and time for communication. We understand that mornings and afternoons can be a little rushed, and not the best time to discuss your child. We have many types of communication we use for families in the Service just like you. 2.1.9

Confidentially and Discretion

Information received through written and spoken communication with families will be treated with discretion.

At any time if you require a **private discussion with our Educators**, please inform us. This can happen face to face or by phone.

How do you like to be communicated with?

- ┆ Newsletter
- ┆ Phone calls to your work
- ┆ Emails
- ┆ Letters
- ┆ Face to face

Ways we will be communicating the events of the Service by:

- ┆ Face to face verbal interactions at arrival and departure times.
- ┆ Regular newsletters which will be sent home via the children's individual pockets.
- ┆ A message section on the day book, where brief notes can be left between Educators and parents.
- ┆ A notice board where various messages and notices are displayed advertising current issues and upcoming events.
- ┆ A fees/communication box is located in the Service. Parents are able to leave more detailed written messages, for the purpose of expressing concerns, positive or evaluative input that they feel they need to let Educators know about. These can be anonymous if so desired.
- ┆ Occasionally Educators will ask parents to complete short surveys in order to maintain up to date records and seek parent feedback on various topics.
- ┆ Each family will be allocated an individual pocket in which newsletters, accounts and other written communication will be placed. ***It is the parent's responsibility to read these notices and ensure they are aware of current issues and events in the Service.***
- ┆ Policies will be regularly reviewed in a variety of ways (sign in area, newsletters and via files to enable parent comment on Service practices).

Communication and Educators

What can you expect from Educators? Educators will make efforts to communicate effectively with families.

- ┆ Educators will inform families promptly and sensitively of any out of the ordinary incidents affecting their child.
- ┆ Educators will share with children's families some of the specific interactions they had with the children during the day.
- ┆ Information on children's eating and sleeping patterns at the Service will be provided to families through verbal communication and through the room sign in sheet.
- ┆ When families and Educators make joint decision that affect children's progress, interest and experience, a record will be kept in the appropriate form. (These may include new events like toilet training.)

Please feel free at any time in person, by phone or email to discuss your child's progress, relationship, interest and experiences.

Hours of Operation

Service hours are from 6am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, 52 weeks per year.

Priority of Access

Please refer to our Enrolment Policy for more information about the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations' (DEEWR) requirements for Priority of Access.

Court Orders

Parents must notify the Service if there are any Court Orders affecting residency of their children and a copy is required for the Service. Without a Court Order we cannot stop a parent collecting your child.

Arrival and Departure

For safety and security reasons ALL children must be signed in on arrival, and signed out on departure. The times must be noted. No child will be allowed to leave our Service with a person who is not stated on the enrolment form, unless prior arrangements are made with Nominated Supervisor. **Digital Sign in and out. Upon enrolment you will be issued with a pin.**

Parent Involvement

This is vital to ensure maintenance of a quality service. Your contribution of ideas, experiences and skills are welcomed and greatly valued. You may be able to share your skills and experiences in Music, Craft, Cooking and Storytelling etc to enhance your child's program at the Service. Please complete your availability or what you can offer the Service on the enrolment form.

Parents are welcome to visit or call the Service at any time. If you have any talents or hobbies, we welcome and encourage to please share them with the children.

If you have any concerns, please see your child's teacher or the Nominated Supervisor. We have a grievance policy and procedure if you would like to formally raise any concerns

Service Fees

9 Hour Session:

Junior Fee: \$111 Kindy Fee: \$111

10 Session:

Junior Fee: \$112 Kindy Fee: \$112

All Day Session (12 hours):

Junior Fee: \$113 Kindy Fee (All Sessions): \$113

Session times are flexible to accommodate your and your child's needs. Please see the Nominated Supervisor for our session times.

Accounts

Any change of financial income will alter your fee structure, please advise our Service and FAO (13 6150) if this occurs. Payments can be made via cash, cheque, EFTPOS, CENTREPAY or DEBIT SUCESS.

It is Service's policy that all accounts are to be at a nil balance each week.

Accounts in arrears will be subject to care being cancelled.

Late Fees

If your child is collected from the Service after 6.00pm, you will be charged a late fee. This will be added onto your account.

Attendance and Absence

Once a child is enrolled at the Service, payment of fees must be continued during the child's absence for illness, **public holidays**, holidays, etc. When a child is absent for any reason we must be notified. The Service is open for fifty two weeks per year; the only period during which we are closed is Public Holidays.

We offer half price fees for Holidays, but notice must be given to the Nominated Supervisor.

Allowable Absences

Refer to the Department of Human Services.

Waiting List

When our rooms have full enrolment, children's names will be put onto a waiting list. Once a position is vacant, parents are then contacted about placement. When parents wish to change days to other days, this can be effective immediately provided the group enrolment is not full. If it is full the child's name will be placed on a waiting list. Once a position is available, days will then be adjusted. Our waiting list does give priority to working parents as per Priority of Access Guidelines.

Health & Safety

The Service provides a healthy and safe environment for children, Educators and families to grow and develop in – as such the Service has a health and safety and hygiene policy regarding illnesses and medications. Children with contagious illnesses are required to be kept at home and a doctor's certificate must be presented to show that the infection cannot be passed when the child returns to the Service.

Food Allergies

We are an allergy aware Service.

Please inform the Nominated Supervisor if your child has any allergy.

Illness

NO CHILD will be admitted with obvious signs of any highly contagious infection or illness. Our policy states the incubation period, symptoms and exclusion periods of such diseases. Children who are not immunised will be required to be exempt from the Service.

Medication

Educators will be able to administer medication to children who are recovering from illness.

A medication form must be completed and signed by parents before any medication will be given. All prescription medication must be prescribed for your child and not another family member- unless stated otherwise by a doctor's certificate. Medication must be in date and in its original packaging.

The medication must be handed to an Educator to store in a locked container in fridge. Please DO NOT leave medication in your child's bag.

The Educator who gives medication requires a medication form to be completed by the parent,

E.g. tablets, mixture, creams.

Any child who has commenced an antibiotic must not attend the Service for 24 hours from commencement.

Asthma

The Service aims to provide a safe environment for children who have asthma. It is Service policy that an "Asthma Record Plan" be completed by parents/guardians in consultation with the family doctor. It is also a requirement that the record plan be reviewed by your family doctor annually or as circumstances change. This must be completed and returned before enrolment commences. These will be available at the time of enrolment.

Sun Protection

Our Service's policy is "no hat, no play". This policy will be enforced. Parents are asked to provide a wide brim hat to wear during outside activities. These must be named. The most suitable hat is one, which shades the ears and neck, as research is showing a high incidence of skin cancer on people's ears.

Accidents

In case of an accident or illness occurring at the Service, the Nominated Supervisor will contact parents if deemed necessary. As a matter of extreme importance parents must ensure that the Service has up to date emergency contact numbers. An incident report will be filled

out, outlining the accident and signed by the Educators who observed and administered first aid, as well as any witnesses. The Nominated Supervisor's and parent's signature will also be required.

Emergency Drills

Throughout the year the Service will hold emergency drills which occur at any given time throughout the day. These are carried out in a well-organised and orderly manner. Educators will be trained in using the fire extinguishers that are in the Service. A emergency escape plan will be in every room.

Using the Service Safely

Never leave children unattended in cars while collecting children from the Service.

Cars parks are dangerous places for children, always hold children's hands when arriving and leaving the Service

Never leave a door or gate open.

Never leave your children unattended in a room.

Children are not permitted into the kitchen and laundry areas.

Workplace Health and Safety Feedback

We welcome all feedback regarding the safety of our Service. If you see something that concerns you regarding safe work practises, the safety of building and equipment or general WHS, please contact the Nominated Supervisor immediately.

Educators

Suitable qualified Educators are employed in all age groups and the child Educator ratios are adhered to according to our legal requirements. All Educators will have their Senior First Aid Certificates, Working with Children Checks completed and attend monthly Educator meetings. Our Educators are regularly involved and encouraged to attend further development and training.

We aim for our Service to be unique in that all our Educators will have had training and experience in the child care profession. For further details on the qualifications of the Educators, please see our Nominated Supervisor.

Conclusion

We guarantee your child will have a happy, safe and secure relationship with the Service and its Educators and that the time he or she is in our care will be positive and fulfilling.

Important Contacts and Information for Families

The Service provides families with current information on child and family resources and services accessible in the local community.

Our Service has a parent library with resources you may find helpful.

ACECQA is the new national body ensuring early childhood education and care across Australia is high quality

Address: Level 15, 255 Elizabeth Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000

Postal Address: PO Box A292, Sydney, NSW 2000

Email: enquiries@acecqa.gov.au

Phone: 1300 422 327

Family Assistance Office

Phone: 13 61 50

Australian Childhood Immunisation Register

Phone: 1800 653 809

Local Contacts

South Burnett Community Health / Kingaroy Hospital

07 4162 9220

Burnett Speech Pathology

0409164061

I Hear Kingaroy

4162 1555

Nadine Hinchliff Therapy Services

- Occupational Therapist

0408 369 103

Emergency Services Police, Fire, Ambulance 000

Kingaroy Hospital

07 4162 9200

Fire Station

07 4162 1989