



Parent Handbook 2025

“Growth and Development through Play”
‘Education for Life’



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2025 Public Holidays:	
Australia Day	Monday 27 th January
Good Friday	Friday 18 th April
Easter Monday	Monday 21 st April
ANZAC Day	Friday 25 th April
Emerald Show Holiday	Wednesday 4 th June (to be confirmed)
Labour Day	Monday 5 th May
Monarch's Birthday	Monday 6 th October
2025 Terms:	
Term 1	10 weeks: Monday 28 th January – Friday 4 th April
Term 2	10 weeks: Monday 22 nd April – Friday 27 th June
Term 3	10 weeks: Monday 14 th July – Friday 19 th September
Term 4	10 weeks: Tuesday 7 th October – Friday 12 th December



Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten would like to acknowledge and pay respects to the Traditional custodians of this land the Western Kangoulu People of the past, and present on which our service is built and children are cared for and play.

We would also like to acknowledge and pay respect to the Elders of the past and present.

Introduction:

The Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten is a non-profit, community-based service offering educational programs to children aged between 3 years to 5 years. The Centre offers four Kindergarten sessional groups (pre-prep program based on the Queensland Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines) – Orange, Green and Yellow Rooms and services approximately 90 families in Emerald and surrounding districts. The Centre began operation in 1955 and celebrated 60yrs in 2015.

The Central Highlands Regional Council owns the building and grounds.

The Centre is fully affiliated with The Gowrie (Qld) Inc. Regulations & Policies from the Gowrie and those of the Office for Early Childhood Education & Care are upheld and maintained within the Centre.

Parents & Guardians are invited to discuss the activities & experiences provided as part of our learning programs and the goals to be achieved through our programs. Please see your Director or Teacher for more detailed information about your child's development, how we will provide opportunities to foster your child's development and our underpinning philosophy of learning that underpins our programs.

Funding:

We know that a quality kindergarten program offers lifelong benefits. Kindergarten participation encourages a love of learning and leads to positive long-term outcomes for children. Research has shown that early childhood education plays a crucial role in shaping a child's development and preparing them for future success. Kindy will be free for eligible-aged children who attend a government-approved program offering free kindy from **1 January 2024**. Families will benefit from free kindy regardless of whether they attend a sessional kindergarten or kindergarten in long day care. Free kindy is for the **15 hour a week** kindergarten program (600 hours a year) delivered by a qualified Early Childhood Teacher.

At the Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten, we recognise the importance of the Early Childhood years. We value parents as children's primary educators and promote an 'open door' policy where parents are welcome to call in at any time. Our centre is open to all families in the community. Values and beliefs of individual families are recognised and respected.

Our Mission Statement

We believe that our mission is to foster young children in a safe, caring and challenging environment. We believe that the Early Childhood years are a time where children are experiencing great growth and development. We believe children are active learners within their environment and with the support of the Qld Kindergarten Learning Guidelines and the Early Years Learning Framework 'Belonging, Being, Becoming', we believe that, through "hands on" exploratory play children gain a greater understanding of themselves and the world around them.

WE BELIEVE THAT PLAY FORMS THE FOUNDATION OF A QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM.



Philosophy of the Emerald Kindergarten

At Emerald Community Kindergarten, we believe that all children have the right to experience and engage in a quality Kindergarten program. We strive to provide safe, caring, inspiring and nurturing educational experiences for all children.

We strongly value each child's voice and family contributions. We include their ideas, views and interests into our daily program and practice. We appreciate and welcome diverse cultural backgrounds within our centre, providing many experiences for the children and educators to develop their cultural respect, knowledge and identity.

As Early Childhood professionals, we commit to providing a flexible and inclusive program that caters to the diverse needs of our children. We respect and recognize that children are individuals who learn and develop at their own pace, and we support children to grow as individuals. We aim to inspire lifelong learning skills in each child with a particular focus on social and emotional wellbeing.

We believe in the power of collaboration. We believe that creating strong and meaningful connections with families encourages the children to develop a deep sense of belonging and their individual identities. Inviting the wider community into our service also supports us in providing an effective and inclusive program that strongly benefits each child.

We believe in working collaboratively as a team to continually reflect on and improve our programs and practices to ensure that we provide our best in education and care for all our children and families.

We value the importance of sustainability and embed sustainable practices in our everyday curriculum. We support the children in learning skills that respect our natural environments and the world around us.

Here at Emerald Community Kindergarten, we truly believe that every child is successful, capable and competent and will flourish when they are provided with individualised support, role modelling, and encouragement from those around them.



Belonging.....

We recognise that children belong first to a family. We acknowledge that family are the child's first teachers and as such are very important in their life and learning journeys. Secure attachments, warm trusting relationships and interactions form the foundation of a sense of belonging within the family, kindergarten and the wider community.

Being.....

We believe that each child is a unique individual. We aim to provide a warm, supportive and caring environment that encourages self-expression, self-reliance and enhances each child's self-esteem and nurtures resilience. Children are viewed as successful, capable and competent learners. Equity, inclusion and diversity are celebrated and supported; and are deeply embedded within the culture of our service.

Becoming.....

We believe that children are active learners and they learn through their play, interests, intentional teaching and meaningful interactions with others. It is through a supportive play based environment that each child's ability to participate fully and actively in the community is fostered. We acknowledge that children actively construct their own learning.

This learning is dynamic, complex and holistic.

Educational Program:

Emerald Community Kindergarten embraces the [Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines](#). The QKLG makes a strong commitment to the many experiences and ways of thinking, doing and being that every child and adult brings with them. This curriculum is a process that allows space for initiative and inventiveness, adults and children share responsibility for the learning process through interaction and collaboration.

The curriculum is made up of five Learning & Development areas:

➔ **IDENTITY CONNECTEDNESS WELLBEING ACTIVE LEARNING COMMUNICATING**

Our Kindergarten Program supports children to:

- ❖ learn about themselves, others and their surroundings, supported by caring educators
- ❖ cooperate with others and be a part of a larger group
- ❖ listen and respond to directions
- ❖ communicate ideas to other children and adults
- ❖ increased-confidence
- ❖ develop independence, thinking and problem solving skills
- ❖ develop physical coordination
- ❖ build an understanding of the world around them

Objective:

We are strongly committed to the belief that Kindergarten should be a place where

CHILDREN COME FIRST;

At Emerald Community Kindergarten, our programming and curriculum is guided by the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines.

This means listening to the children, educators and parents with a purpose to:

- ❖ promote the importance of the early years in laying the foundations for success in life and learning
- ❖ critically reflect on our view of children, their place in the world and the values and aspirations we hold for them
- ❖ create an open & reflective curriculum framework to engage adults & children collaboratively in the process of learning to learn
- ❖ acknowledge parents as the child's first and primary educator
- ❖ affirm and foster meaningful partnerships with families and the community
- ❖ embrace the vision of the right for all children to be brought up in a spirit of peace dignity, tolerance and quality
- ❖ honour the aspirations of individuals and the unique nature of individual communities, just as we honour the uniqueness of each child
- ❖ recognise that particular groups of children may require additional consideration and specialist knowledge
- ❖ establish essential connections and promote continuities that recognise children's past, present and future living and learning experiences
- ❖ provoke reflection
- ❖ inspire possibilities and innovations



Every Kindergarten will be different.
No service will look the same,
but instead reflect
with individuality & uniqueness,
the community in which it is
embedded.

Planning for our Early Childhood Program:

When the teachers put their trust in children and truly respect them as confident, capable, and successful learners, then opportunities and possibilities arise that previously may not have been considered. In a curriculum that is embedded with possibility and therefore unpredictability, it is expected that educators adopt a reflective approach to planning whereby planning formats are open-ended, retrospective and shared; and planning decisions are tentative, flexible and open to possibilities that happen.

However, this does not mean that planning does not happen. Rather, it is happening continuously and collaboratively as children and adults together create opportunities for living and learning through the spontaneous and unpredictable encounters that occur in the here and now of every context.

In this approach to planning, teachers:

- draft and rehearse ideas and plan to think ahead
- open themselves to the unexpected
 - experiment together with children
- listen, observe and are thoughtful
- engage in professional dialogue
- develop a reflective and enquiring spirit
- become researchers of children's learning



Knowledge & skills will be developed through the program by teachers teaching through play.

Emerald Community Kindergarten follows the Queensland Kindergarten Curriculum. We recognise the value and richness of play as a catalyst for children's learning and their ongoing engagement in meaningful experiences. When children play, they approach experiences with interest, ownership, empowerment and possibility. Adults play a significant and powerful role in valuing and supporting children's play. They learn about themselves, others and the world around them.

THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN ARE MET THROUGH PLAY.

THEY LEARN ABOUT THEMSELVES, OTHERS & THE WORLD AROUND THEM.

National Quality Framework

In December 2009, all Australian Governments, through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), agreed to a partnership to establish a National Quality Framework for Early childhood Education & Care (National Quality Framework) for most long day care, preschool/kindergarten, family day care, and outside school hours care services in Australia. The NQF aims to raise quality and drive continuous improvements and consistency in education and care services and school age care through:

- The Education & Care Services National Law & the Education & Care Services National Regulations (National Law & National Regulations)
- The National Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education & Care Services School Age Care (National Quality Standards)
- A national quality rating and assessment process
- Streamlined regulatory arrangements
- A new national body jointly governed by the Australian Government and state and territory governments-The Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) to oversee the new system.

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA):

Phone: 1300 4 ACECQA (1300 422 327) or visit the website www.acecqa.gov.au

The new system replaces existing state & territory licensing & national quality Assurance processes.

The objectives of the National Quality Framework are:

- *to ensure the safety, health & wellbeing of children attending education and care services*
- *to improve the educational & development outcomes for children attending education & care services*
- *to promote continuous improvement in the provision of quality education and care services*
- *to establish a system of national integration and shared responsibility between participating jurisdictions and the Commonwealth in the administration of the National Quality Framework*
- *to improve public knowledge, and access to information, about the quality of education and care services*
- *to reduce the regulatory and administrative burden for education and care service by enabling information to be shared between participating jurisdictions and the Commonwealth*



Early Years Learning Framework

This is Australia’s first national Early Years Learning Framework for early childhood educators. The aim of this document is to extend and enrich children’s learning from birth to five years and through the transition to school.

The Council of Australian Governments has developed this Framework to assist educators to provide young children with opportunities to maximise their potential and develop a foundation for future success in learning. In this way, the Early Years Learning Framework (the Framework) will contribute to realising the Council of Australian Governments’ vision that: *“All children have the best start in life to create a better future for themselves and for the nation.”*

The Framework draws on conclusive international evidence that early childhood is a vital period in children’s learning and development. The Framework forms the foundation for ensuring that children in all early childhood education and care settings experience quality teaching and learning. It has a specific emphasis on play-based learning and recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development.

The Framework has been designed for use by early childhood educators working in partnership with families, children’s first and most influential educators. Observation notes are taken on each child. These are used to make up developmental profiles. Each child attending this kindy will have an individual child profile. In this way, we strive to make our program truly individualised!

The EYLF describes a vision of children’s learning characterised by:

Belonging: *recognising that knowing where and with whom you belong is integral to human existences, providing a basis for children’s interdependence and relationships with others.*

Being: *recognising and valuing the “here and now” in children’s lives and viewing childhood as more than simply preparation for adulthood or for the future.*

Becoming: *recognises the rapid and significant learning and development that occurs in the early years.*



It recognises the capability and potential of all children.

Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline

The *Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline* supports kindergarten teachers' professional practice in a range of contexts across Queensland. These guidelines are based on the *Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF)* and embraces the inclusive vision that "all children experience learning that is engaging and builds success for life". While the *EYLF* focuses on children from birth to five years, the *Queensland kindergarten learning guideline* aims to specifically enrich children's learning in the Kindergarten Year.

In Queensland, the Kindergarten Year is the year before the Preparatory Year of schooling. Throughout the Kindergarten Year, children's right to experience the joy of childhood is fundamental and learning is promoted through play, and emergent and planned learning experiences and interactions. The guideline recognises that parents are children's first educators and values the vital role parents, carers and family members play in children's lives and their ongoing learning. The term "families", throughout the guideline, recognises the range of people who take on parenting roles and build close and supportive relationships with children in their home environments.

The guideline describes a set of five learning and development areas that relate to the five broad learning outcomes identified in the *EYLF*:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators.

We are proud to deliver a kindergarten approved program as specified by the Queensland Government.



The Gowrie Queensland is our Central Governing Body (CGB)

Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten is proudly affiliated with Gowrie (Qld). Under the Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme initiative, Gowrie Queensland has been approved as one of five Central Governing Bodies by the Minister for Education and Training. Gowrie has a tradition stemming over 70 years of support in education and care for children and families. They have made a commitment to support Emerald Community Kindy in an individual & responsive way.

Gowrie is well known for their innovative and flexible practice, integrated service provision, meaningful partnerships with parents and evidence based practice. The Gowrie continues to be recognised in the broader community and the Government sector as a provider of high quality services for both children and families, acknowledging the contribution to education and care in all our programs.

The Gowrie Early Childhood Education & Care Consultant



The ECEC for this region is Brooke Kelly
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Phone: 07 3252 2667 Fax: 07 3252 2258

Gowrie Philosophy Excerpt

“At the Gowrie we believe that childhood is a unique time of life, to be valued and enjoyed in its own right. We also recognise that this is the time where foundations are laid for future health, learning and wellbeing. We value children growing up with the understandings, skills and dispositions to be caring people and effective learners, able to contribute to their world and to enjoy rich and successful relationships with others.”

Department of Education & Training, Early Childhood Education & Care Team

The Queensland Government is working with all Australian Governments to deliver national reforms and joint initiatives, including a National Quality Framework for services, early childhood development initiatives and Indigenous and health reforms, aimed at providing all children with the best start for life and learning.

ECEC Team is also responsible for approving services, assessment and rating of services and any compliance issues that arise in early childhood education and care services in Queensland.

Quality Improvement Plan: (QIP)

The National Regulations require that a Quality Improvement Plan be prepared by each service. In developing the Quality Improvement Plan, consideration needs to be given to all 18 standards and 58 elements of the National Quality Standard. The Quality Improvement Plan must include strategies to address those quality areas noted during the self-assessment or assessment process as not meeting the National Quality Standard or any regulatory requirement.



Section 1: Welcome



Welcome to Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten and congratulations on choosing an affiliated Gowrie Community Centre. Your family is now part of a long tradition in quality early childhood education and care. With 60 years of practical experience, curriculum development and proven positive outcomes for children, this enables The Gowrie to substantiate its claim to leadership in the early childhood sector.

To build genuine partnerships we believe it is important that staff value children and their families. Staff listen to parents and appreciate the ongoing support of families who give their time and skills generously. Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten aims to engage children and families in a sense of community, cooperation & collaboration. We encourage you to become actively involved in this centre. Your involvement will enrich your child's learning experiences and promote positive self-esteem.

Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten recognises that families are as individual as the people in them are. For brevity's sake, we use the term "parents" to encompass all primary caregivers.



Open Door Policy

At Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten, we have an "Open Door" policy. Emerald Kindy belongs to your child, but also to your whole family. We would like you to feel free to come & participate in the life of the centre at any level, whenever you are able to. Whilst we encourage families to share our Centre, please be reminded that it is a learning environment for 3 to 5 year olds.

We ask that parents please supervise young children at all times.

In the morning, the doors will be open from 8:30am to allow families to interact with their children. Please remember staff are still going about setting up. If inside first, you are encouraged to do puzzles, read stories or play in home corner/block area. If outside you may like to play on the equipment, dig in the sandpit; play in the water trough etc.

Please remember that you cannot leave your child until 8:30am.

We encourage independence at Kindy. Please support your child to do their jobs independently..

On arrival, please encourage your child to:

1. place their bag in their individual locker
2. remove shoes
3. place fruit snack and lunch boxes in the designated baskets
4. apply sunscreen

In the afternoon, the doors will remain shut, as this is a story time and a saying goodbye time. The staff will open the doors at 2:30pm and the children will wait on the mat until an adult comes to collect them.

Visitors to the Centre

All visitors to our centre must sign in at the office in the 'Visitor & Contractor' book please. Whilst at our Kindergarten, we ask that visitors wear a lanyard containing information about our centre.

Not for Profit Association

Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten is a community-based association, with all profits re-invested to benefit children and the community. Unlike private centres or other corporate childcare services who must make profits for shareholders, our centre is not for the profit or gain of individual members and the Association's constitution prohibits it from making financial distributions to its members. This association and its assets are owned by the parent body, which elects a management committee each year to operate the Centre effectively.



Section 2: Living and learning - Children's programs

Making learning fun and meaningful

Our approach to curriculum (educational program) is born out of a long held tradition of early childhood philosophy and practice and is supported by contemporary international and national research and theoretical perspectives around children's learning, health and wellbeing. In our services, children are valued and respected as competent and capable co-contributors in the learning process. Our teachers work alongside your child to actively encourage and support them in the learning process.

Staff regularly undertake professional development to ensure the most up-to-date research is used as a basis for shaping curriculum decisions.

The curriculum offered is a collaborative venture, negotiated with children and developed by fully qualified early childhood professionals. The physical environments, mood and feel of the Centre are designed to support and enhance your child's learning. Your child's curiosity, enthusiasm and love of learning will continually be encouraged by staff. As teachers and children engage in inquiry together, children are learning to observe, ask questions, reflect on their actions and engage in meaningful and self-directed activity.

Our well-respected tradition of encouraging family & community involvement ensures that our curriculum:

- supports and affirms parents in their parenting role
- acknowledges the individuality of family aspirations & traditions
- optimises learning for children
- engages parents in cooperative decision making
- is relevant to the children, families and community
- facilitates networking among families within the local community



'The essence of our role as educators is to add complexity to children's thinking by posing a question: "What do you think?" In doing so adults provide the child with a possibility, acknowledge them as a thinker and constructor of knowledge and at the same time, indicate to the child that they are ready to listen'. (Carla Rinaldi 2005)

Documenting your child's learning through Story Park

When we stop to ask children what they think, the possibilities abound. Not only are they active seekers of knowledge but also ardent, and sometimes surprising, carriers of knowledge. At Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten, our University qualified teachers strive to make this knowledge visible to you by capturing your child's learning and thinking through Story Park. Story Park is more than a memory or keepsake of your child's time at Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten. Not only does it provide an insight into your child's learning, Story Park also makes the quality of our teaching practice visible to you. Story Park provides children with an opportunity to revisit and reflect on past experiences; record their learning, including their emerging literacy and numeracy skills as it occurs in our rich, socially responsive and interactive learning spaces; and provide our teachers with the knowledge they need to ensure your child's time with us is full of wonder and possibility.

Through careful observation & documentation, teachers gather information to determine the appropriate amount of challenge to offer your child in order to further enhance their skills, abilities & comprehension.

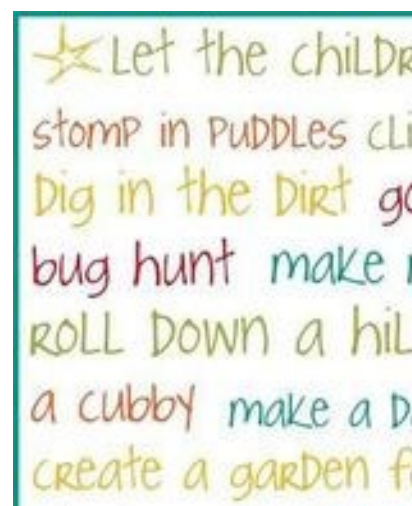
Observation and documentation forms the foundation for additional experiences to be planned, and provides crucial information for the environment to be arranged to extend learning. As an understanding of your child grows through observation, teachers are able to plan for interactions that best support your child's interests, needs, ideas and questions.

The use of Story Park, allows teachers to gain an in-depth understanding of your child's development in action. The use of concrete illustrations through the inclusion of photos and work samples provides a unique opportunity for focused discussion between you and the teachers. This allows for deeper partnerships to grow and for shared goal setting to occur. Story Park is a way of providing information to families about their child's Kindy experience. XAP (Storypark Manage) includes invoicing, maintaining your child/ren's records and signing in and out of the Centre.

In Term 4, every family will be given a *Transition Statement* containing information to pass on to their child's teacher to assist with the transition into Prep for the following year.

Learning through play

Much of the debate in early year's education focuses on how educators should be teaching our children. Just as a baby has to crawl before they can walk, so too do children have to pay their dues in the "sandpit trenches". Children must be allowed to naturally progress through their own unique stages of learning. A curriculum that features child-initiated experiences ensures young minds continue to develop. To make sure we nurture and develop our future generations of thinkers, play is an essential component of a quality early childhood educational experience. Research has shown play is the best exercise for the brain because it provides the perfect stimulus needed for brain development.



The Canadian Government's *Early Years Study* (McCain & Mustard 1999) concluded:

“Play based problem solving with other children & an adult is an early learning strategy that has a crucial effect on early brain development & should be the format for children entering the school system.”

Play that encourages problem solving offers children an array of opportunities to explore, discover and create. Play fosters qualities such as curiosity, perseverance and risk taking, to name a few. It is believed these qualities motivate lifelong learners but are difficult to invoke if not self-discovered when young.

“If we remove play from children’s lives we remove a possibility for learning”. (Carla Rinaldi)

The role of art

The visual arts are an essential part of children’s educational experiences and an integral component of the curriculum in Gowrie kindergartens and preschools. Offering a strong visual arts program for young children stems from our understanding that the child has an intense desire and will to make sense of their world. Drawing, painting, collage, clay work and construction are some of the most effective ways children have to construct and convey their understanding of the world in which they live.

“Rather than thinking of children’s image-making as ‘art’, it may be more helpful to see it in a different light. Just as adults use notes and diagrams to assist understanding, so do children use images to make sense of things and play with ideas.” Rapunzel’s Supermarket (2001) *Ursula Kolbe*



Behaviour Guidance

Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten and The Gowrie Qld have worked with qualified and experienced behaviour change experts to develop our Guiding Children’s Behaviour Policy and staff practices.

Our teaching staff analyse the children’s behaviour to attempt to understand their needs. Our practice is guided by our philosophy that is based on the internal control psychology of Choice Theory by Dr William Glasser.

Staff use strategies such as directional language, guidance and behaviour teaching processes to encourage children to understand and choose appropriate behaviour.

The concept of guidance is an important one in the area of behaviour. A guidance approach to behaviour teaching and management requires the interactive participation of the child and adult. The goal of the guidance process is for the adult to interact with the child in a caring & understanding way, empowering and enabling the child to develop self-respect, self-responsibility and self-control. When staff observe challenging behaviours, they make notes for the child’s records so that a clearer picture can be obtained. Staff try to establish reasons for a particular behaviour and plan experiences and activities that will assist the child to achieve self-regulation.

Families are consulted about any issues or problems regarding their child’s behaviour. In circumstances of recurring behaviour, educators will discuss guidance strategies for individual children with the family and actively seek information to assist with the response to this inappropriate behaviour.

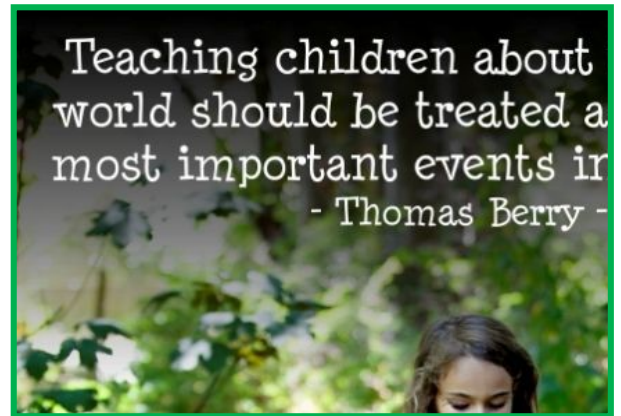
Family input is sought, where possible, for a solution in guiding the child. If very challenging behaviours continue, the Executive Committee will be consulted as to how the service is meeting the needs of the child in a group setting.

If very challenging behaviours continue and staff members have demonstrated that all steps possible have been taken to assist this child with their behaviour, then the child's placement at the Centre may need to be reviewed by the Director, Committee and the Gowrie Early Education Consultant.

Sustainability and Recycling

Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten aims to take an active role in caring for its environment and contributing towards a sustainable future. Here, we aim to develop life-long attitudes and values towards the environment and sustainability in the children that attend our Centre.

Educators look for ways to promote sustainability and children's respect for, and engagement with, the environment on a daily basis. We learn songs and read stories about sustainable practices, lifestyles, recycling and environment issues. Where possible, we purchase or use natural materials and resources for children to work with. We encourage families to bring in reusable materials such as boxes, yoghurt containers to be used in the craft area and we teach the children about using the recycling bin here at our Centre. We aim to increase the children's understanding of water saving practices and have water tanks on the grounds. Children are actively taking care of the worm farm and vege pods on the grounds.



Environment

Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten actively promotes environmental awareness and encourages children and families to protect the environment through modelling and education. We strive to cultivate a lifelong respect of environmental awareness and care.

Native wildlife is treated with care and respect and is allowed to remain free while appropriate observation for children's information is made.

The planting of and tending to trees and shrubs is a valued aspect of our services. They provide us with effective natural shade and maintain habitats for birds and other native wildlife. Where practical and possible, hygienic composting of lawn clippings and fruit waste is practised, along with recycling of plastic, paper, metal and glass materials.



Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten has a policy on "minimising harsh elements in early childhood settings" which encourages hygiene practices without the use of harmful chemicals.

Interviews

The Gowrie encourages staff to have interviews with families to provide a time to share information about the child, family and about the Centre.

Two interviews will be available to parents:

- (1) Will be the initial interview held before the child attends kindy. Approximately 15 mins.
- (2) The second will be during term 2 or 3. This interview is to talk to parents & guardians about the child's progress. Interviews are approximately 15 mins.

Parents & Guardians are invited to request an interview at any time the teacher is available. Please ask the staff to arrange a time for you to meet with them. Talking during session can be hard, our staff are responsible for all children at this time and we prefer not to discuss issues at this time. Please see your Teachers they are more than willing to sit down and have a chat before or after Kindy sessions.



Rest, relaxation and sleep

We believe it is important to incorporate a balance of experiences for your child, including opportunities for rest and relaxation. There are many ways a rest/relaxation time can be incorporated into the day. These may include resting on a bed or a variety of quiet experiences such as reading, drawing, puzzle work, as well as other relaxation techniques.

Consideration is given to creating a restful atmosphere that is flexible and responsive to each individual's needs. **You are encouraged to discuss the specific needs of your child**, in relation to rest/ relaxation time, with your child's teacher.



Wet Days

During the summer months when the weather warms up, each group has a weekly 'wet day'. Wet days are held outside during the first session upon arrival at Kindy. We ask that children come ready in their sun smart swimmers and protective shirt over the top, with a spare set of dry clothes packed in their bags. No plastic bags please.

Excursions

From time to time, we take the Kindy children on an excursion. Excursions may include visits to a farm, school, theatre, the dam or other destinations. We endeavour to give you at least four weeks' notice so that you can arrange to join us, if possible. Children will only leave the Centre if there is one adult to every two children. Children must wear comfortable footwear that provides adequate protection (not thongs) and a broad brimmed or legionnaire's style hat. Parents must sign permission slips for each excursion or guardians prior to the departure and any excursion fees must be paid before the due date. When visiting schools, Emerald Kindy does not show preference to any individual school or prep. We ask that you visit the schools and decide with your heart and the information provided which school is most suitable for your child and family.



Visiting Shows

During the year, we have a number of shows that visit our Centre. These shows are interactive, fun and very enjoyable. The visiting shows vary each year depending on availability but can include The Animal Farm and RESTA Educational Services. Younger siblings are welcome to attend; however, they must remain under their parent's supervision at all times. Siblings in attendance generally incur an additional fee.

Section 3: Family involvement

We value your input

Our Centre values your involvement throughout the Centre program. We have an “open door policy” which means you are welcome to visit and spend time with your child throughout the day, in consultation with the Centre staff.

Before your child starts at Emerald Kindy, you are encouraged to visit and observe the program in operation and to speak with the teaching staff about any queries or concerns you may have.

Once your child begins the pre-prep program, please feel free to spend time settling your child in and becoming familiar with the staff and program.

We appreciate any relevant information you can share about your child with the teacher. This enables the staff to understand your child’s and family’s needs better.

When you collect your child, please speak with the teacher, or assistant, to gather information about your child’s day.

Ways to get involved:

**AGM & Family BBQ
Held February each year**



A Gowrie experience provides you with numerous opportunities to be actively involved in your child’s learning. Getting involved, to whatever extent and in any particular capacity, can be a very rewarding experience. Support & effort from all families is valued and essential in the running of the Centre.

You can take an active role in the Centre by serving as a member of the Management Committee which is an integral component of Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten. Rosters and home visits provide other opportunities to be involved.

Additional ways to be involved include sharing your skills (cooking, storytelling, music, woodwork, puppet making, and art), helping with excursions, participating in parent rosters, fundraising or social functions. Please feel free to offer suggestions or ideas of how you would like to be involved.

Family information nights and morning teas provide other opportunities for involvement and are a great way to meet with other families.

Parent responsibilities

It is the parent’s responsibility to:

- notify the Director of any change regarding information recorded about a child
- read all information relating to the centre in order to become familiar with policy information
- comply with relevant health and hygiene policies of the centre
- sign all enrolment forms, including the indemnity clause (a condition of enrolment) and return these to the Director
- update the Director regularly about the immunisation status of their child

Management Committee

Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten values your involvement



and participation. One way you can participate is through the Management Committee. Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten is a Community owned Centre operated by a Parent Committee. All profits are put back into the Centre. We are affiliated with The Gowrie Qld Inc.

What is the Management Committee and what is its role in the centre?

Parents of current Kindy children and interested members of our Community form the Management Committee. There are usually (approximately) seven positions on the Management Committee. The Management Committee meets once a month and are responsible for approximately nine Committee Meetings per year, as well as:

- general management and financial matter of the Centre
- following the rules of the association/constitution lodged with the Office of Fair Trading
- ensuring the centre is meeting The Gowrie affiliation standards so the centre continues to receive funding
- the employment of all necessary staff and compliance with the provisions of any awards or other industrial requirements
- legislative requirements affecting the centre including the Child Care Act (2011), the Child Care Regulations (2011) & other legislation such as Child Protection & Workplace, Health & Safety legislation
- building and playgrounds
- promoting the Centre within the community

Elections take place at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) usually early in the year and any decisions made by the Management Committee are based on a majority vote of the Management Committee. The Executive of the Committee consists of the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Other positions that involve varying levels of commitment and specific skills also play an important role within the group.

Roles and responsibilities

The Kindergarten Administration Team supports all of the following roles:

President

General Responsibilities:

- attend and participate in monthly Committee meetings
- keep informed by reading the agenda, reports, minutes & any other relevant information
- follow correct meeting procedures
- share responsibility for and support Committee decisions
- respect the confidentiality of information
- accept the responsibility of Committee membership
- ensure any task allocated to you are completed or in progress by the next Committee meeting
- abide by the policies of the kindergarten
- act as a spokesperson for the Committee when necessary
- chair committee meetings
- know & understand the kindergarten's Philosophy, policies & history
- co-ordinate the work of the Committee
- ensure effective & open communication with parents & staff on important decisions
- represent the Committee in negotiations with government departments, councils, staff etc.
- present the Annual Report at the Annual General Meeting

Vice President

General Responsibilities:

- supports the role of the president and adopts the president's role in their absence
- accepts the delegation for special projects as required (e.g. maintenance, marketing & promotion)

Secretary

General Responsibilities:

- draw up a calendar of Committee meeting dates for the year and distribute to all committee members and staff as well as display on the general noticeboard. Consultation with the President and other pertinent committee members (e.g. Administration Officer) will be important
- make up a list of contact details for the Committee and distribute to all members
- where possible, attend all Committee meetings and accurately record the minutes & related actions. Ensure that a copy is distributed to every Committee member, each staff member and that an additional copy is displayed on the general noticeboard
- prior to each Committee meeting develop and Agenda in conjunction with the President. Distribute to all Committee Members and to staff members
- maintain a file of the Committee minutes and store these at the service for future reference
- act as a central communicator for the Committee
- keep an up to date membership list with addresses and telephone numbers
- record all incoming and outgoing correspondence in a Register (you may, in addition, be responsible for some mail outs, writing letters and invitations)
- present actual correspondence to the meeting and respond to the correspondence as agreed by the committee
- be a signatory for bank accounts
- ensure that the Office of Fair Trading, The Gowrie and the Office of Early Childhood Education and Care, have up to date records of office bearers and motions carried that affect any of these organisations
- follow correct meetings procedures
- respect the confidentiality of information
- accept the responsibility of Committee membership
- ensure any talks allocated to you are completed or in progress by the next Committee meeting
- abide by the policies of the kindergarten

Treasurer

General Responsibilities:

- keep up to date records as well as an audit trail for all transactions
 - ensure an external auditor has been appointed and reviews the previous year's audit to ensure you are satisfied with their work and note any recommendations
 - protect the kindergarten against fraud and theft, ensuring safe custody of money, and prompt banking
 - protect the Kindergartens' assets, through asset register, adequate depreciation, insurances (ensure adequate to replace and reflect current valuations and fraud risk minimization)
 - make sure the organisation complies with tax regulations, such as GST, payroll tax and fringe benefits tax
 - review all internal processes and reporting methods at least annually
 - maintain detailed accounting records and prepare financial statements
 - present monthly financial reports that are appropriate and accurate
- These reports must:

1. be clear, concise and detailed
 2. identify all sources of revenue and expenditure
 3. provide budget verses actual comparisons
 4. clearly identify trends an special areas of concern
 5. highlight exception items
- provide a copy of the financial and auditor's report if requested by any member of the association
 - maintain records of all fees and levies
 - prepare and lodge all financial statutory and government returns (e.g. BAS/IAS, claim forms and Work Cover)
 - review procedures and financial reposting
 - These will include:
 1. controls on expenditure - such as who can authorise spending, upper limits before board approval is needed and who can sign cheques
 2. controls on income generation - including appropriate and inappropriate ways of raising money
 3. systems for ensuring cash and cheque books are kept securely
 - Keeping track
 1. how much the organisation owns
 2. how much money can be easily accessed
 3. the organisation's main sources of income
 4. what the organisation is spending money on
 5. how much is owed
 6. any risks that may arise
 - attend and participate in monthly Committee Meetings
 - keep informed by reading the Agenda, Reports, Minutes and any other relevant information
 - follow correct meeting procedures
 - share responsibility for and support Committee decisions
 - respect the confidentiality of information
 - accept the responsibility of Committee membership
 - ensure any tasks allocated to you are completed or in progress by the next Committee meeting
 - abide by the policies of the kindergarten

Committee Members

- form part of the Management Committee and have input into the management of the centre by attending meetings regularly
- will be involved in the social, fundraising and maintenance activities
- may be part of any necessary sub committee
- respect the confidentiality of information

Marketing/Newsletter/Promotions Officer

- needs to be accessible to the media/community
- works with the Director, under The Gowrie guidelines and Gowrie communications coordinator to promote the centre
- responsible for drawing up a monthly newsletter which outlines main items discussed at committee management meetings. This informs the parent body of the decisions made by the management committee
- attends meetings regularly

Liaison Officer: Support Staff – Vice President

- responsible for communication between the committee and staff
- helps Director with performance management reviews

Section 4: Inclusive services

Inclusive philosophy

Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten welcomes respects and encourages individuality and interdependence of all children, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability or an additional need.

Children with additional needs

Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten provides an inclusive environment and program to meet the different and diverse needs of all children and their families accessing our service. Each year, the committee applies for an amount of money to support these children with additional needs. Following an interview with the parent and child, the Director, together with the parent/s, will collaborate to make program plans and modifications where appropriate. The Director will communicate with the Early Education Consultant and related services in order to make an appropriate decision regarding funding requirements and any environmental alterations required. The Centre will arrange appropriate additional support and training for the staff, families and children as the need arises. The sharing of information between the teaching team and the child's medical and support services is encouraged in order to support the child's total inclusion.

Cultural diversity

Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten recognises and celebrates the multicultural nature of our community and aim to create an environment and curriculum that embraces cultural diversity. We value each child and family's culture and beliefs. All parents are encouraged to communicate any concerns or considerations with staff upon enrolment and on a daily basis.



Equity

Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten is committed to and firmly believes that experiences in the early childhood period have a significant impact on later childhood and adult life. In order to improve life, education and career choices for all children, we encourage them to participate in a range of activities that will promote their optimal development.

Our inclusion & anti-bias policy underpins the entire philosophy of the service. It is reflected in the consistent and active right of every individual to develop his or her fullest potential. The provision of relevant and appropriate programs and activities will ensure that children find expression for their individual needs. It provides opportunity for children to learn of the many different options and alternatives a viable to them.

“Educators who are culturally competent respect multiple cultural ways of knowing, seeing and livings, celebrate the benefits of diversity and have an ability to understand honour differences. This is evident in everyday practice when Educators demonstrate an ongoing commitment to developing their own cultural competences in a two way process with families & communities”.


(Early Years Learning Framework, p.16).

“Activities, routines, the materials we use and our daily interactions with children need to reflect positive attitudes, and perceptions about all people, in all their diversity”

(Paul, A. p. 226 (1995) The Anti-Bias Approach to Early Childhood).

Children's rights

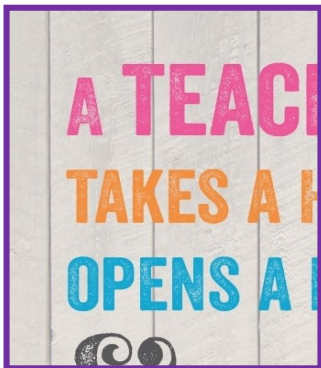
UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child

- The right to affection, love and understanding. 
- The right to adequate nutrition and medical care.
- The right to free education and full opportunity for play and recreation.
- The right to protection from all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation.
- The right to name and nationality.
- The right to special care, if disabled.
- The right to be among the first to receive relief in times of disaster.
- The right to learn to be a useful member of society and to develop individual abilities.
- The right to be brought up in a spirit of peace and universal brotherhood.
- The right to enjoy these entitlements, regardless of race, colour, sex, religion, national or social origin.



Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten believes children are citizens and therefore should be treated with dignity and respect. We believe children should be entitled to the same rights as adults and supported by qualified and experienced staff in making healthy choices in safe and clear boundaries as they explore and investigate the world.

Section 5: Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten Teaching Team



Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten Teaching Team

One of the key indicators of a quality early years program is highly qualified staff. All staff directly working with children at Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten are qualified (or studying towards) an appropriate early childhood qualification. The Office of Early Childhood Education & Care require that all permanent staff have a current senior first aid and CPR certificate. All staff working in the Centre will also have a current positive notice, more commonly referred to as a blue card.

Full position/role description statements are available upon request.

Director/Responsible Person/Nominated Supervisor:

As part of an application for service approval, an Approved Provider must identify the Nominated Supervisor for the service and provide evidence of that person's consent to fill the role.

The Director is the person in charge. The Director will hold a three or four year university Early Childhood teaching qualification. All aspects of the effective day-to-day operation of the Centre rely on the Director.

They have a wide range of teaching and managerial skills in relation to:

- supporting families by providing high quality education and care
- overseeing the development, implementation & evaluation of the curriculum
- implementing sound policies and high quality practices
- supporting, mentoring and managing of staff
- supporting staff growth – professional development
- promoting a sense of community within the centre
- marketing the centre and The Gowrie to the wider community

Early Childhood Teacher/ Responsible Person

Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten employs University qualified early childhood teachers who are registered with the Queensland College of Teachers. The early childhood teacher develops and implements an educational program in collaboration with children and families.

Please remember all rooms follow the Centre's Philosophy and the Queensland Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines, however each Teacher has their own set of beliefs and goals for each group, therefore you will see different things happening in each group and in each room.

Educators

Educators work with a specific group of children, supporting the teacher in implementing the care and education program. All of the Educators at Emerald Community Kindy will hold, or be actively studying towards, an early childhood certificate/qualification.

Inclusion Educator

Sometimes an Inclusion Support Educator is employed to help facilitate the inclusion of a child with additional needs into the kindy environment. The Educator works in cooperation with the teacher and Educator, and may hold a variety of qualifications including an early childhood certificate or human services qualification.

Teacher/child ratio

The legal requirement for kindergartens is to have two teaching staff for every 22 children.

Staff professional development

Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten believes that ongoing staff professional development is essential for high quality practice. Professional development provides staff with the opportunity to learn new skills and to challenge current practice. We actively promote and support the ongoing professional development of all staff members by encouraging their attendance at courses, seminars, workshops and conferences. All staff at Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten are encouraged to develop an ongoing approach to their own professional development.

Student placements

Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten recognises the importance of contributing to the ongoing

training and development of high quality children's services staff by accepting student placements in our centre. Students are supervised by Centre staff, the Director and by their placement coordinator.

Students, as well as volunteers and any other Centre visitors, are constantly supervised during their visit to the Centre and are not permitted to be alone with children at any time. Acceptance of students is always dependent upon the present needs of the children.

Work experience and other students

Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten supports the inclusion of school students on work experience in the educational program. Work experience can be arranged upon request from a School Liaison Officer and in consultation with the Director.

Volunteers

EPACK may accept placement of volunteers, following an investigation of their commitment and personal qualities, background and attributes. All volunteers must hold a current blue card. Volunteers work under the guidance of qualified staff.



Section 6: Ensuring quality care and education

Service Approval

Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten operates under the *Education & Care Services National Law (QLD) Act 2011* and follows the *Education & Care Services National Law Act 2010* and the *National Regulations (2001)*. These regulations are freely available at the centre for parents and staff to access at any time and the centre's service approval will be displayed in a prominent place. The Centre must meet the requirements about activities, experiences and programs, numbers of staff members and children, and staff members' qualifications according to the legislation.

Department of Education and Training Information Service:

Early Childhood Information Service: Telephone: 13QGOV (137468)



There are notices on display about groups and staffing in the kindy administration area. The service approval outlines the maximum number of children that can attend the centre at any one time.

A copy of the Education & Care Services National Law (Queensland) Act 2011 & The Education & Care Services National Law Act 2010 & The National Regulations are accessible to families at the Office.

Giving information to parents and guardians

- (1) The Approved Provider of a child care service must ensure that, when a child first receives child care at a childcare centre, a parent or guardian of the child is given written information about the following:
 - (a) that the child care service –
 - (i) is approved under the Act
 - (ii) must comply with the Act and this regulation, including, for example, with requirements about activities, experiences and programs, numbers of staff members and children and staff members qualifications
 - (b) the telephone number for the department’s information service about child care
 - (c) the ages of the children in the group in which the child will receive care
 - (d) the name, position and qualifications of each of the child’s carers
 - (e) the content and operation of the program in which the child will be involved
 - (f) that notices stating current information about groups and staffing at the centre are displayed at the centre
 - (g) that the parent or guardian can ask for information about the following –
 - (i) a general description of the activities and experiences given by the service
 - (ii) the service’s philosophy about learning and child development outcomes and how it is intended the outcomes will be achieved
 - (iii) the goals about knowledge & skills to be developed through the activities & experiences
- (2) Written information given under this section must appear, in prominent and legible characters, in print no smaller than 12 point.

First aid

Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten believes that all staff must be skilled in first aid to ensure the children are provided with a safe environment in which to play.

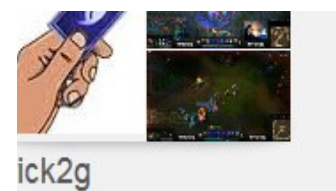
Although the Child Care Regulations 2003 do not require all staff to hold a senior first aid and resuscitation certificate, all of **Error! No text of specified style in document.** permanent staff members are required by The Gowrie QLD to hold current senior first aid and resuscitation certificates. All staff who have a senior first aid certificate are required to renew their CPR every 12 months and their first aid every three years.



Suitability/Blue card

The *Child Care Act 2011* includes a requirement for all staff and volunteers working with children to hold a current suitability/blue card. The blue card is issued by Blue Card Services to an individual after a criminal history check is conducted and the staff member, having no criminal record, is therefore deemed suitable for working with children.

Blue cards must be current at all times and are renewable every three years.



When Staff are sick or away:

When Educators are ill or away, we try to find:

- 1) Early Childhood Teachers to replace them.
- 2) If we cannot find any EC Teacher, we will employ Primary trained teachers or Diploma trained staff to replace them.
- 3) If we cannot find Diploma trained staff, we will employ staff that hold a Certificate III in Community Services.
- 4) Then we use Committee Members with a Blue Card.
- 5) If all of the above fails, we **must** close the Centre.

Parent Surveys:

Throughout the year, families will be asked to participate in surveys. We would appreciate it if you could complete these as they provide vital feedback to the Centre on where we can improve and what you like about us. No names are required on any parent surveys. These surveys guide Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten's Quality Improvement Plan.

Section 7: Enrolment, fees and administration

Enrolment bond and administration fee

An enrolment bond of \$50.00 is required at the time of acceptance of the child's position. The enrolment bond is non refundable. There is also a Membership fee of \$5.50. This is paid at the time of accepting a position at our Kindy.

Giving notice

Parents are required to give two weeks' notice in writing to the Director if it is their intention to leave the centre, otherwise two weeks' fees will be charged in lieu of notice. Where notice is not given, full fees will be charged for the two weeks' notice that is required.

Payment of kindergarten fees

Invoices for term fees will be issued as follows for **6 Day fortnight and Pre-Kindy Groups only**:

Term fees & levies for:	Invoice issued	Payment due
Term 1 – 10 weeks	First week of Term 1	End of week 3 (Term 1)
Term 2 – 10 weeks	Last week of Term 1	End of week 1 (Term 2)
Term 3 – 10 weeks	Last week of Term 2	End of week 1 (Term 3)
Term 4 – 10 weeks	Last week of Term 3	End of week 1 (Term 4)

Fee payments are required within the stated timeframe – 21 days from date of invoice. Failure to make fee payments in accordance with the due dates could result in loss of your child's place in the centre.



The administration procedure for fees in arrears is as follows:

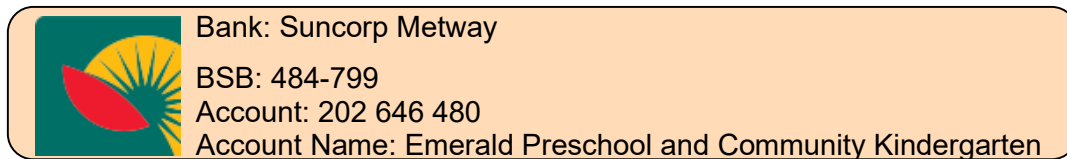
- 1) A reminder letter will be generated for all accounts that remain unpaid once the invoice due date passes.
- 2) The child's place at the centre will be in jeopardy if the account remains unpaid two weeks after the due date.
- 3) Accounts that remain unpaid will be placed in the hands of a debt collector.

Please note: If you are experiencing difficulties making payments, please contact the Administration Staff to discuss how and when your account can be settled.

Payment options

The different options for payment and all information required are specified on the term invoice. Please see the Director or Administrative Staff if assistance is required. Eftpos/Credit Card payment is also available.

To pay via Direct Deposit, please use the following bank details:



Health Care Cards:

If your child has a **current** health care card, please see the Administration Staff as a copy is required.

Fundraising

There will be times when fundraisers such as a raffle, market day or a pie drive will be organised in order to raise additional funds for special projects, children's entertainment, excursions and parent functions.

Please participate if you feel that you are able to give the time.

Holidays, sick days and public holidays – 6 Day fortnight and Pre-Kindy only

Fees are payable on all holidays, sick days & public holidays that occur during the kindergarten terms. (School Holidays are not included in fees)

Notification of sick days

If your child is going to be away from kindergarten due to illness, please notify the centre of this absence and the reason for the absence. This helps with awareness of infection risks. Fees are payable on all sick days. Make-up days or swap days **are not offered** to replace absences for any reason.

Sign-in/out – XAP in 2025

Parents are required (by law) to sign their child/ren in and out of the Centre when in attendance at the Kindy. In 2025 this will be done via XAP. IPADS will be set up at the Administration office to sign in and out. Should there be a change to the person collecting your child; staff must be notified prior to pick up time. If the change in person is not a person on the 'Authorisation to Collect' section in the enrolment form, an additional form must be completed.

Late Collection Procedure

Staff at Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten understand that on the odd occasion there may be a genuine reason that you are late to collect your child; however, **punctuality is very important at pick up time**. Parents or guardians must phone the Centre to advise of their delay as late fees can be imposed. When the parents have not contacted the Centre ten minutes after the normal completion of the program, staff shall call the contact numbers listed on the enrolment forms. During this time, the child is re-assured that staff will remain with them and engage the child either in play or in suitable jobs with staff in preparing the service for closure. Should the parent/guardian not have arrived at the service, or called the Centre by 3:00pm, a \$5.00 per minute fee will be charged for time after this that they are late to collect their child and a 'Late Collection' form will be completed.

Communication

Parents are encouraged to speak with their teacher about their child's progress, development and the experiences provided as part of our learning programs. If at any time you have concerns please feel free to make contact. Open communication between parents and staff facilitates positive home/kindergarten relationships based on trust and positive co-operation.

Where discussion is needed, it is important to make an appointment to speak with the teacher outside of session times rather than to take the teacher's attention away from the children. This also gives the teacher the opportunity to refer to developmental records and observations in discussing any concerns. **Events in family life** e.g. major illness, accident, or death of relatives, friends or pets, visits from grandparents, can be a major concern or excitement for children and markedly affect their behaviour. **It is important for the home and Kindy to share information, which may influence the children, so we would really appreciate if you could let us know of unusual happenings or any such events.**

Certificates

On display in the foyer are the following Certificates:

- ✓ Certificate of Incorporation
- ✓ Name of the Educational Leader
- ✓ Name of the Nominated Supervisor
- ✓ Approved Provider certificate to operate under QLD Legislation
- ✓ Current Rating for each Quality Area in NQS - TBA
- ✓ Certificate of Registration of an Industrial Workplace
- ✓ Contact details for the Regulatory Authority



Section 8: Keeping our children happy, healthy and safe

THIS CENTRE IS A NON-SMOKING CENTRE
SMOKING IS PROHIBITED WITHIN 5M OF THE KINDERGARTEN ENTRY



Protecting our greatest asset

As most parents are well aware, a healthy child is a happy child and at Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten, we do everything we can to make sure children in our centre are happy, healthy and most of all, safe. Whether this is helping them cope when mum or dad drop them off in the morning, making sure they have their hat on when going outside, or knowing what to do if they have an allergic reaction. Do not hesitate to tell your teacher about anything that will make your child's day happy and safe.



The Gowrie has demonstrated its commitment to children through the employment of a special needs and child protection consultant. The consultant is involved with policy implementation, staff training, resource development, linking with government and community services and providing all services with current child safety information and strategies. All early childhood professionals will be offered regular training on legislation, best practices, risk management, education and reporting of harm. This supports the development of knowledge, skills and confidence for all staff members and the development of safe environments for the children.

Initial separation

Some children become distressed when their parent/s leave, which is quite normal at first. Separation anxiety usually disappears as the child becomes familiar with the surroundings and staff. Often the tears stop as soon as the parent/s leaves and therefore, a swift departure (after saying good-bye and reassuring the child that you will be back soon) can avoid prolonged stress.

To assist your child in the adjustment period, try to arrange for some time when you and your child can be together at the centre. Staff will always offer extra support during these difficult times. As your child becomes more secure in the knowledge that you will return, separation becomes less stressful.

Please feel free to ring the centre at any time to reassure yourself that your child has settled. Phone number: 49821285.

Kindy's Facebook Page

Emerald Preschool and Community Kindy has a Facebook page where we place term calendars, upcoming events, reminders and general information. Please use this page with thoughtful consideration to our Kindy Community.

Photos at Kindy

When taking photos of your child during his/her time at our Kindergarten, please be aware that other children are not to be included in your photographs. Our Centre's Enrolment Form, gives each family the opportunity to allow/disallow permission regarding photography and we try our best to accommodate each decision. Please be mindful if adding your child's Kindy photos to Facebook or any other social media that there are no other children in the background.

What to bring to Kindy:

PLEASE CLEARLY NAME ALL OF YOUR CHILD'S BELONGINGS

Please be sure that your child has:

- a Kindy bag (that can fit into our lockers) – for lunchboxes (NO INSULATED lunch boxes), water bottle (in the side pocket), spare clothes (kept in the front pocket), hat
- a broad-brimmed, bucket or legionnaires hat for great protection against the sun
- a water bottle (500 – 750 ml) – **must** be easily opened & closed by your child, clearly labelled with your child's first name (lower case letters please, not all capitals). In warmer weather, freeze ¼ of water in bottle to keep water cool
- fruit break – fruit/vegetable/cheese or healthy snack



What you can send from home: (small/medium pieces): orange, watermelon, rockmelon, honeydew, pineapple, carrot, celery, cucumber, capsicum, mandarins, mango and cheese.

Other yummy suggestions: strawberries, bananas, sultanas, apricots, grapes, beans, snow peas, cherry tomatoes, plums, peaches, broccoli, rice crackers, plain water biscuits, beetroot, boiled eggs (peeled please) and apple (we will cut up).



The centre discourages sweet biscuits, cakes, roll ups, lollies, fruit sticks, muesli bars, coloured popcorn, chips, chocolate covered biscuits, poppers & packaged foods with high sugar content.

- a healthy lunch. Lunchboxes are stored in fridges and it is the children's job to place their lunch box in the fridge. (Please see attached list from Dept Health and Ageing).

We do not re-heat children's food due to Work Place Health & Safety Reasons.

- clothes that do not restrict children from climbing and are allowed to get dirty
- preferably shoes that can be put on/taken off by the child
- a spare set of clothes in the front pocket of your child's bag (in case they're needed)

Shoes are to be removed for outdoor play.



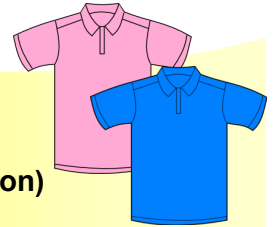
Sheets

All children need to bring sheets for rest time. The mattress is the size of a standard sized towel. Size of mattress is: 120cm long x 57cm wide x 5cm depth. Please be sure that each item is clearly named.

Please **DO NOT** use the all in one sheet sets, or large bed rolls as they are too big and we do not have the storage and are far too hard for the children to put on their beds. Please see staff if you are unsure.

For sale at the Kindy office:

Kindy Hats \$25
Kindy T shirts \$40
Sheets sets \$40 (incl: bag, top & bottom sheets, cushion)



Clothing

Your child should wear comfortable and safe clothing, appropriate to the weather and activities during their day at kindergarten. Clothing needs to be sun safe (i.e. shirts and dresses need to have sleeves to protect their shoulders). They also need comfortable clothes that allows them to develop self-help skills for dressing and undressing.

Staff will try to ensure children are dressed appropriately for the weather at all times.

For specific clothing requirements for your child, please talk with your Director/Teachers.

Plastic Bags

Plastic bags must be inaccessible to children whilst they are at the centre. Please send clothing, swimwear and other items in cloth bags or other containers (not plastic bags).

A soiled items bucket can be found in each unit's bathroom for soiled clothes. Parents will be advised of wet clothes & soiled items for collection on the sign in sheets each day.

Wet clothes will be placed in a named plastic bag and hung out of children's reach on the veranda.

Birthdays

We acknowledge the importance of special occasions such as birthdays in a child's life and we invite you to celebrate your child's birthday at Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten. Should you wish to do this, please provide a large, suitable cake or enough cupcakes for all the children to share. Your family is more than welcome to join us. Ice cream cakes or ice blocks are another idea for Birthday celebrations.



Maintenance roster



Working Bees:

1. Date and sign the register on arrival at the working bee
2. Wear protective footwear (not thongs)
3. Read the Manual Handling Guidelines
4. Use personal protective equipment during times where it is necessary for protection against potential hazards.
5. Record all accidents or injuries in the Accident/Incident Register
6. Use of private electrical equipment brought to working bees must be restricted to the owner of that equipment
7. Dogs are not allowed on the premises for health reasons
8. Children with you whilst performing tasks are your responsibility
9. We suggest that children do not attend working bee, especially if electrical items are being used



Centre maintenance

Our cleaners clean our Kindy every afternoon/evening. In addition, major cleaning of both internal/external walls, ceilings, floors, carpets, fans, etc. are conducted regularly throughout the year.

Our playground is kept mowed, watered and fertilised by our gardening contractor.

The Centre is sprayed for cockroaches and spiders yearly or as often as needed in both the playground and building – Central Highlands Regional Council is responsible for this upkeep.

Most repairs and ongoing maintenance of equipment is carried out by a contract handyman or the Kindy appointed maintenance person upon request of the Director. The sand and soft fall material is replaced or topped up annually or on a needs basis. We encourage parents to participate in working bees to assist with maintenance issues and to support the Centre in keeping operational costs down.

Authority for treatment

A child may only be enrolled at Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten when the parent has authorised the service to seek emergency, medical, hospital and ambulance service. All costs involved in emergency medical treatment are the responsibility of the parent.

If the Director authorises ambulance attention, transport or medical treatment, the parent will be notified as soon as possible.

Injuries

If a child sustains an injury at the service, first aid is delivered immediately and the Director is informed of the incident. In the case of an incident requiring an ambulance or doctor, the director will immediately authorise such help. Parents **must** agree to this upon enrolment.

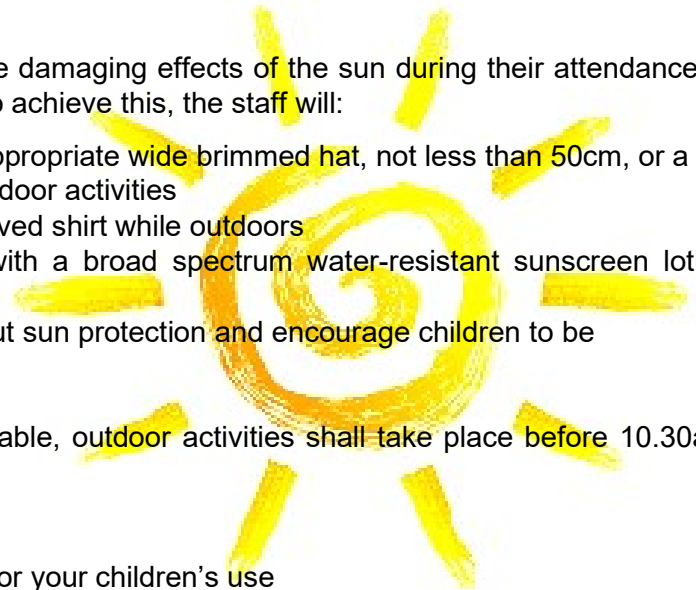
All incidents are recorded and parents are asked to sign these forms when the staff members have informed them of the incident. If the incident is serious and/or requires parent or medical assistance, a parent will be notified as soon as possible after the incident. Small knocks and scrapes will be reported to the parent at collection time.

In the event of a child requiring transportation by ambulance to hospital, a staff member will accompany the child in the absence of a parent.

Sun protection

The staff will attempt to protect children from the damaging effects of the sun during their attendance at the centre. Our Centre is a Sun smart Centre. To achieve this, the staff will:

- try to ensure that all children wear an appropriate wide brimmed hat, not less than 50cm, or a legionnaire's cap, at all times during outdoor activities
- require children and staff to wear a sleeved shirt while outdoors
- ensure that all children are covered with a broad spectrum water-resistant sunscreen lotion rating not less than 30+
- include in the program discussions about sun protection and encourage children to be independent in sun safe behaviour
- model sun-protective behaviour
- ensure that wherever/whenever practicable, outdoor activities shall take place before 10.30am (particularly in Spring & Summer)



We ask you to:

- provide appropriate protective clothing for your children's use
- have your child dressed in shirts/dresses with sleeves and hats with 2" (50cm) brim or a legionnaire's cap and to be clearly named please
- apply sunscreen to your child 20 minutes before arriving at the centre
- model sun-protective behaviour yourself. Children who do not have sunscreen on will be restricted to play in shaded areas.

For more information, please refer to the Gowrie Sun Policy that is located in the Gowrie Policy Manual at the Kindy Office.

Dealing with sick children

The problem of sickness and infectious diseases is very serious, especially when so many children are in contact with each other. It is extremely difficult for staff to provide the appropriate care for children who are ill and still give attention to the rest of the group.

Children with diarrhoea, vomiting and bad colds are sick and therefore, should not be brought to the Centre. It is a condition of enrolment that you have alternative care arrangements when your child is sick.

If your child becomes ill at the Centre, staff will contact you immediately. Infection can move swiftly through a group, therefore, we ask you or your nominated contact person to come as quickly as possible to collect your child. Permission

Gowrie policy on dealing with sick children

- Children with contagious illness will not be admitted into the Centre.
- Parents must contact the Centre to report contagious illnesses.
- In the event of a child taking ill in a Centre, the parent will be contacted. For this reason, it is essential that the Centre has current work and emergency contact numbers.
- If at home a child is unwell, parents/guardians are expected not to bring the child to the service.

Exclusion times for communicable diseases – See attached 'Time Out' Poster



Common concerns

Vomiting

If your child is suffering from vomiting, regardless of the cause, he/she must remain at home for 24 hours from the completion of the last vomiting attack.

Diarrhoea

If your child is suffering from diarrhoea, regardless of the cause, he/she must remain away from the Centre for 24 hours from the last attack and have a normal bowel motion before they return.

Conjunctivitis

If your child is suffering from conjunctivitis, he/she must remain away from the Centre from the time medical treatment has started until the discharge has stopped.

Colds

If your child suffers from a cold and is still able to cope with and enjoy a normal day, he/she will not be excluded from our Centre. However, in the case of more severe symptoms developing such as:



- thick green discharge
- persistent or deep cough
- wheezing
- fever OR
- listlessness or lack of appetite

your child must be kept away for a minimum of 24 hrs or until well enough to cope with a normal day.

Ear infections

If your child suffers from an ear infection where there is a discharge, the child will be excluded.

For all other excludable illnesses, please refer to the Department of Health's 'Time Out' document at the back of this handbook.

The Gowrie policy on giving of medication

Prescribed medication

In the interest of children's safety and wellbeing, medication will only be administered if it is prescribed by a Doctor, in its original container with the original pharmacist's dispensing label with details of:

- 1) child's name
- 2) name of Medication
- 3) dosage
- 4) frequency
- 5) how it is to be administered
- 6) date of dispensing
- 7) expiry date

Medication will be administered to the child ONLY if the parent/guardian has completed and signed a **Medication Permission Form**.

Children with allergies require a letter of confirmation from their doctor advising what the child's reaction may be and what actions staff should take if an allergic reaction occurs.

Medication is required to be handed to a staff member so that it can be stored securely (out of children's access) and at the recommended temperature. Medication is not to be left in children's bags.

Head Lice Policy

Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten have a strict policy where head lice are found on a child, the child will be sent home immediately. The child can then return to Kindy once the lice have been treated. This policy overrides the Department of Health Time Out Policy.

Non-prescribed medication (including alternative therapies)

Non-prescribed medication (i.e. over the counter medications and alternative therapies) **will not** be given to any child unless prior written permission and instructions from your child's doctor have been received by the Director/person-in-charge.

Paracetamol

High temperature in young children is often the first symptom of illness or infection. As children are often unable to explain symptoms if they feel unwell and staff need to be aware of signs and symptoms of illness, children's temperatures can alter rapidly. As a high temperature is precursor to an illness or infection, it is recommended that parents seek medical attention. Prior written consent is required for **one** initial dose of liquid paracetamol to be administered when the temperature of a child has exceeded 38°C. **If the temperature reaches 39.0, the Nominated Supervisor will ring the ambulance.**

Following the administration of one only dose of paracetamol, the parents/contact person of the child will be notified to collect the child as soon as possible. **No further doses will be administered without a doctor's written instruction.**

*Authorisation for the initial dose is included in the enrolment booklet.

Please note:

All medication must be left in the designated areas for medication storage and a staff member informed. For the safety of children, under no circumstances is medication to be left in the child's bag, on top of lockers or any other unsecured location.

Clearance letters

A clearance letter may be required if the Centre staff are in doubt as to whether a child's health is of a suitable standard to return to the Centre. We are at liberty to ask for a second opinion if we are concerned.

Asthma Policy

Gowrie policy in relation to puffers, spacers and nebulisers:

- All staff will be trained in Asthma treatment each year.
- All asthma medication is to be administered as per the requirements of Prescribed Medication in the Giving of Medication policy. A letter from a Dr or pharmacy instructions label is required.
- Parents must provide an **Asthma Management Plan** for their child that has been compiled in consultation with their child's doctor. This plan must advise staff of the child's triggers, symptoms and appropriate management techniques. It is a responsibility of the parent to update this Asthma Plan every six months.
- The individual spacer or nebuliser is to be supplied by the parent.
- A spacer must be used with a puffer for all children and a facemask is required for children under three years.
- Nebulisers will not be administered more often than four hourly. If use that is more frequent is required, the child should not be attending the Centre.
- The doctor's letter must be renewed every three months if ongoing use is required.
- In the case of the child having an acute asthma attack or showing no improvement after the use



- of the nebuliser/puffer, the parent will be contacted or the child will be taken to hospital.
- You are required to show the staff member the procedure for using the nebuliser so that both staff member and child feel secure in using the machine.

Please refer to the Gowrie Asthma Policy located in the Gowrie Policy Manual in the office.

Immunisation

Immunised children

Upon enrolment, it is a requirement that parents provide a copy of their child's **UP TO DATE** Immunisation History Statement (provided by Medicare) showing their child's current immunisation status. This Immunisation Statement is kept in the child's confidential file at Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten.

It is the responsibility of the parents to keep our Centre up to date with their child's vaccination status by submitting new Immunisation History Statements after each immunisation.

Current immunisation schedule

Please see attached "Immunisation Schedule".

Qld Government COVID-19 Hotline – Phone: 134268

Celebrations throughout the Year

Emerald Kindergarten celebrates the Australian celebrations throughout the year. These celebrations include Easter, Mother's Day, and Father's Day & Christmas.

If you do not want your child to participate in these celebrations, please let staff know. We also love to celebrate other cultures' celebrations. If you would like to share any of these celebrations with us please do so.



Music & Movies

From time to time, we sometimes watch a children's movie. These may be classified as 'General' or 'Parental Guidance' e.g. Frozen movie. Staff will let parents know what movie will be played the week before it is shown. This then gives parents the option to decide if they allow their child to watch the movie, or if they would prefer to pick their child up before it is shown.

We will also play popular music along with other genres at Kindy. We do not play graphic music or music with swear words in them. We usually purchase the children's version of song and play that.

Hygiene practices

A high standard of hygiene practices are implemented at Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten. These include:

- a strict hand washing procedure for staff upon arrival, before and after wiping children's noses, before and after serving food or administering medication, and after cleaning equipment
- the use of separate sheets, beds, cups, plates, cutlery, washers and tissues for each child
- encouraging children to assist in keeping the environment clean and tidy

Hand washing



Emerald Preschool & Community Kindergarten maintains an overall high standard of general hygiene and cleanliness, which contributes to a healthy environment for children. Hands play an important role in spreading germs and therefore hand hygiene is a very effective way to control the spread of infection. Hand hygiene means regularly washing hands with soap and water, or using an alcohol-based hand rub.

Children will be encouraged to wash their hands on arrival & departure as well as regularly throughout the day. Younger children will be assisted by staff to learn sound hand washing techniques. All staff and visitors, as well as parents who may visit during the day, will minimise the risk of cross-infection by washing hands thoroughly at appropriate times.

Food and nutrition

We encourage children to eat healthy foods. Fruit, vegetables, yoghurt, cracker biscuits, cheese and sandwiches are suggested as appropriate morning tea snacks. We suggest a healthy lunch of sandwiches, salads, pita bread, fresh/dried fruit, pasta, rice or yoghurt. Please speak to the Director for further healthy lunch ideas. No lollies or soft drink please.



Emergency and Fire procedures

Fire and other emergency evacuations are practised once a term by staff and children at the Centre. The fire evacuation procedure is displayed in each room along with an emergency evacuation map. Parents are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this information. If parents are in the Centre at the time of an emergency evacuation drill, it is essential they cooperate with the staff and follow the necessary directions to ensure a quick and safe evacuation. Fire extinguishers are located in easily accessible places in the Centre and are maintained accordingly. All staff receive basic fire safety training yearly.

Safety at the Centre - Workplace Health and Safety

The safety of your child is of paramount concern to us. On a daily basis, staff carry out routine procedures to ensure an optimal level of safety is maintained. Such procedures include raking sandpits to check for foreign objects or animal faeces, covering sandpits after use, emptying water trays when not in use, and checking equipment and the environment for wear and tear. Other safety procedures include:

- ensuring all poisons and dangerous items are kept in locked cupboards
- disposal of a syringe and/or packaging found discarded on centre grounds or within close proximity to the service, as per Gowrie's policy statements on needle stick injury and disposal of used syringes
- filling out incident report forms to document injury
- training staff on accident and emergency procedures
- ensuring that safety devices are installed
- requiring all permanent staff to hold a current senior first aid certificate
- ensure that kitchen & office doors are shut when an adult is not there
- plastic bags – please hand these to staff

Should you have a concern about any safety issue please see the Director.

Persons authorised to collect children

All children must be collected and signed out of our Centre by an adult. Adults must be 18 or over. At the time of enrolment, you must provide the names, addresses and telephone numbers of persons authorised to collect your child. It is your responsibility to notify the Centre of any changes in this authorisation. The Centre requires the signature of all persons authorised to collect your child. Children will only be released to the authorised signatories nominated on your child's file or by you completing an Authorisation to Collect Form. These forms are available from Administration staff at the office. The completed forms must be given to Administration Staff.

Custodial and resident conflict

Parents who wish to restrict another parent or family member from collecting their child must provide a certified copy of any court order (stamped with an official seal) to the centre upon enrolment or immediately following issue by a law enforcement agency.

Staff will respect and adhere to the restrictions stated in the order while respecting each individual's right to privacy. Should a restricted person attempt to collect the child, the Director will secure the safety of all children, staff, parents and visitors, and notify the police. The resident parent will then be contacted.

Should a resident parent not have a court order and a restricted adult attempts to collect the child, every effort will be made to delay the restricted adult while the resident parent is contacted.

Keeping animals

The inclusion of pets, as appropriate, is an integral part of an education program without compromising the health and safety of families, staff, students, volunteers and visitors to our services.

When keeping animals as pets in any kindergarten environment, careful consideration of The Gowrie's policy regarding the keeping of animals must be given, to ensure the safety, health and hygiene of all children, adults and pets.

Pets must be kept in a secure and appropriate surrounding that allows for supervised child access only. Strategies and practices should be discussed between parents and staff.

These include:

- safe and hygienic handling and feeding of animals
- strict hand washing guidelines
- hygienic handling of animals' food and drink containers and bedding
- cleaning of cage/enclosures
- wearing safety goggles when necessary

Section 9: Communication

Communication with parents

Newsletters via email or paper version

Newsletters are periodically placed in each child's Kindergarten pocket. These newsletters may include reminders of upcoming events, committee information and meetings, current issues in early childhood, possibly favourite songs, rhymes, stories and other information the staff think may be of interest to you. Newsletters can be emailed to parents (if requested). Please ensure we always have your correct email address.



Noticeboards

Information about early childhood issues, theatre productions, parent information nights and other relevant items will be displayed on the noticeboard. Please take the time to read notices regularly.

Daily feedback

Most days you are given information about your child's day. This may be in the form of short notes sent home, these are placed in your child/ren's pocket, a daily diary written by the Director, Story Park or communication books. Please ensure that you chat briefly with staff at the end of each day if you require further information about your child.

Concerns and complaints (grievance procedure)

If you have a concern or complaint, the ensuing procedure is followed.

- ✓ Raise your concerns with the Nominated Supervisor, President or Liaison Officer. The Nominated Supervisor, President or Liaison Officer will then make a time with the parent or guardian to discuss the matter and work through possible solutions or offer supportive material.
- ✓ If families feel that their grievance has not been resolved satisfactorily at this level, the parent/guardian will be encouraged to place the complaint in writing and address the matter to the President who will bring the complaint/concern to the attention of the Executive Committee for noting and action.
- ✓ In the instance of a service not being able to process a grievance complaint satisfactorily to all parties, the Central Governing Body will be informed. The CGB will then discuss their process with the service.
- ✓ All complaints and grievances will be handled with respect for confidentiality and procedural fairness will be observed in all aspects of handling a complaint.

We hope that all concerns of parents are met satisfactorily, however, if you are unhappy with the result of the complaint handling you should approach the Early Education Consultant and The Gowrie Qld, identifying yourself and the concern you have.

The Gowrie Consultant for this region is Brooke Kelly.

Email: BKelly.ecec@ladygowrie.com.au or **Phone:** 07 3252 2667

After discussion with the parent, Director, Management Committee and person whom the complaint is made against, the Early Education Consultant will investigate the complaint focusing on the issue of concern. Finally, if a parent is not happy about the resolution of their complaint, they may contact:

Department of Education and Training, Early Childhood Education & Care Team

PO Box 138

Rockhampton Q 4700

Telephone: (07) 4932 4022

- ✓ **Early Childhood Information Service 13QGOV (137468)**
- ✓ **Email: Rockhampton.ecec@qed.qld.gov.au**

A register of complaints will be kept at the centre to enable us to review centre practice and plan better for client needs.

Workplace bullying

Emerald Preschool and Community Kindergarten considers bullying unacceptable behaviour and will not tolerate it under any circumstances. Workplace bullying includes behaviours that intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate a worker. **Error! No text of specified style in document.** will not tolerate workplace bullying by staff, committee members, parents or any other person.

We have grievance and investigation procedures to deal with workplace bullying. Any reports of workplace bullying will be treated seriously and investigated promptly, confidentially and impartially.

You can be assured that incidences of workplace bullying are rare at our Centre. We believe this is due to the positive strategies we have in place to ensure our staff are happy, for we are well aware of the crucial and influential role staff play in your child's life. Please assist us in continuing to protect the rights of individuals by providing a safe and respectful work environment.

