

LITTLE FLYERS



Parent Handbook

Welcome to the family!

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to our family.

Little Flyers Learning Centres is an initiative of The Eltham College Foundation Ltd and has been inspired by ELTHAM College's acclaimed Early Learning Centre.

For over 40 years ELTHAM College has been a leader in educating children from Kindergarten to Year 12 and since 2002 operated high quality child care through The Eltham College Foundation Ltd. In 2012 the management team at the Foundation assumed full responsibilities of their Centres.

While the business is owned and operated by The Eltham College Foundation Ltd, Little Flyers Learning Centres operate as Caroline Springs Child Care and Kindergarten, Eltham North Child Care, Laurimar Child Care and Early Learning and Laurimar Township Child Care and Kindergarten. Kids on Collins in Melbourne's CBD is an affiliated Centre.

'Flying' represents the freedom to learn, safe risk taking, striving for excellence, developing self-confidence and self-worth and being the best version of you – this is what we endeavour to offer your 'Little Flyer'!

This handbook is designed to assist all new members of our community to become familiar with the service we offer, what to expect when enrolling your child in our care and the standard of care and education you should expect from your Centre.

We look forward to getting to know you, your family and your Little Flyer!

Contents

Declaration of Intent	4
New to Child Care?	
First day – what to expect	
What to bring	
Our educators would like you to know	
How do we communicate with you?	5
Educational Program and Practice	7
Our Curriculum	
Kindergarten and school readiness	
Use of technology	
Incursions and excursions	
How do we educate?	
Children’s health and safety	10
Dropping off and collecting your child	
Infectious disease and illness	
Medical Conditions Policy	
Incidents and injuries	
Nutrition	
Immunisation	
Child protection	
Physical environment	12
Sustainable practices	
Relationships with Children	13
Interactions with children	
Respectful relationships	

Collaborative partnerships with families and communities 13

Parent and community involvement

Parent code of conduct

Staffing arrangements, leadership and service management 14

Staffing arrangements

Staff professional development

Students and volunteers

Grievance and complaints procedure

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and Fee Schedule

Priority of care

Centre details 17

Declaration of intent

Little Flyers Learning Centres staff believe that each child develops their own unique knowledge, beliefs, culture, learning style and values. We acknowledge that families are the child's first teachers and they are central to their child's learning. Our educational Programs ensure each child is respected as an individual within a group and is encouraged to reach their full potential.

We believe that children should develop connections and relationships with their communities and that everyone has the right to belong. Children, families and staff in our Centres will develop cultural competence and in the process, create a shared culture where everyone feels safe, included, respected and valued.

Our environments and learning experiences aspire to create positive and trustful relationships, courage, resilience, empowerment and wellbeing. Children are encouraged to be empathetic and caring. They will experience success, joy and celebration, by taking risks in their learning, accepting and embracing diversity, developing confidence in themselves and learning from their mistakes.

We know that children learn best when they are interested, curious and motivated. Educators will have high expectations of children and will work with them to co-construct knowledge through learning strategies such as play, inquiry, investigation and research. Educators will scaffold children's learning, through a responsive curriculum and a commitment to assist children in their search for meaning.

We acknowledge the many ways that children express themselves and communicate. We afford children a hundred ways to express their ideas: imaginative, symbolic, cognitive and metaphorical. Educators listen, document and assess children's theories and knowledge and share these through documentation to families and the community.

New to Child Care?

Leaving your child in the care of someone else can be a very daunting experience. At Little Flyers Learning Centres we strive to make the process of enrolling your child engaging and informative, making you and your child feel comfortable and at ease. We offer free orientation sessions where our educators get to know your child's routines, likes and dislikes and to give you and your child a chance to familiarise yourselves with the space and the educators who will care for them.

First day – what to expect

Even after orientation, separation anxiety is completely normal, for both families and children! It is important however, that you remain calm, happy and excited about your child's first day (even if you have to pretend!). Children will feed off your mood and emotion. Families are welcome to call during the day to check on their children. You can be sure that if your child is not settled, an educator will contact you.

What to bring:

- A Winter hat or Sun Smart Summer hat
- A change of clothes (sometimes we get messy!)
- Appropriate shoes for running and climbing
- A clean water bottle
- Any comfort items
- Creams or medications

Our educators would like you to know:

- Communication is a crucial aspect of our day – please keep us updated with any changes in your child’s learning, development, health and home life.
- Feel free to ask us questions or tell us any concerns.
- We like it when you and your family show an interest in our educational Program – and love it when you get involved!!
- It is important for families to keep up to date with latest news, memos and events.
- We are professionally trained Early Childhood Educators – your child’s play is our work!

How do we communicate with you?

Little Flyers Learning Centres know that in an early education setting it is important for families and educators to form a partnership. Learning and development occur at their best when collaborative relationships are formed. Communication is a crucial element to the relationships and partnerships we form with families.

Orientation process

During a thorough tour of the Centre, our Centre Director has a chance to meet families one-on-one and give them an outline of the Centre’s policies and procedures. Families also meet the educating staff and can voice any questions or concerns they have before the child’s enrolment begins. This process is crucial to the beginning of our collaborative relationship.

Email

Much of the information you will receive as part of our family will be via email; including newsletters, reminders, fundraisers and general information. Families are welcome to use email to communicate with the Centre Director.

Verbal communication (via telephone or in person)

Little Flyers Learning Centres understands the importance of one-on-one conversations, whether they be over the phone or in person. Every family is able to contact their child’s room throughout the day. Simply call the Centre and your call will be directed straight to your child’s room. When you arrive to collect your child, Educators are available to discuss your child’s day and any other matters relating to your child. You can be assured that personal information will remain confidential.

Daily written communication

Our Educators fill out a 'Daily Journal' each day. This can be found in your child's room and on the My Family Lounge App. The Daily Journal will give you a broad understanding of what activities and learning outcomes your child was exposed to on any given day.

Individual educational and developmental reporting

Families will be able to log on using the My Family Lounge app to access your child's learning portfolio which is a running record the educators use to document your child's personal learning throughout the year. A link to download the app is available from qikkids.com.au/My-Family-Lounge. While this app is available to download now, you will not be able to sign in until you receive an invitation via email. This email will be sent out upon enrolment. Our dedicated staff will publish observations, Program plans, and daily journals, which you will have access to at any time once you sign in. The Program provides you with opportunities to contribute to your child's learning. Please note you will only have access to the children linked to your account.

Group educational and developmental reporting

A general Program plan can be found in each of the rooms which will advise you on the overall room goals and interests as well as intentional teaching and learning outcomes. Please see your child's educators to find out where this is displayed in the room.

Educational information communicated through displays

In each of our Centres and rooms you will find many displays of learning. These may include project work, creative work, photos, children's dialogue or learning webs. These displays of learning are made visible as a reminder to children, families and educators of the group learning we have undertaken together.

TV monitor and digital photo frames

The Centre will often use monitors and digital photo frames to display learning, upcoming events, community reminders, and community events.

Parent information hub

Located in the foyer, there is a Parent Information Hub. Here, you will find information from local, state and federal governments regarding early childhood, child care, vaccination, illness prevention and support. Well worth a look!

Website

Relevant and up-to-date information is available on our website.

Visit littleflyers.vic.edu.au to see what each of our Centres have been up to!

Social media

Our Little Flyers Facebook and Instagram pages are updated several times weekly – like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram to see what each of our Centres are exploring this week!

- Caroline Springs – facebook.com/carolinespringschildcare
- Eltham North – facebook.com/elthamnorthchildcare
- Laurimar – facebook.com/laurimarchildcareandearlylearning
- Laurimar Township – facebook.com/laurimartownshipchildcare

If you have any questions, queries or concerns, please see one of our friendly Educators or the Centre Director.

Educational Program and Practice

Our Curriculum

At Little Flyers Learning Centres, we offer an inspiring and aesthetically pleasing learning environment that provides every child opportunities to discover and explore using their senses.

The National Quality Framework guides the practices of our Centres. The learning and development outcomes are designed to support the complex and interconnected learning of young children. The outcomes are: 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.

Learning occurs when children are active participants. Our Programs offer children the chance to describe, explore, experiment, create, discover and communicate.

Children need freedom to initiate ideas and experiences and the security of a safe, respectful and supportive environment. We facilitate a range of choices and opportunities, allowing children to construct knowledge and understanding about themselves and the world around them.

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land, value diversity and strive to action cultural competence with our children, families and colleagues. The principles of equity, diversity and fairness are valued and inclusive practices are central to how Little Flyers operate.

For more information on Little Flyers Curriculum, please see our 'Teaching, Learning and Curriculum' Document.

Kindergarten and school readiness

Little Flyers Learning Centres offer a government funded 3 year old and 4 year old kinder Program. Our Kindergarten teachers deliver a Program which develops children's interpersonal skills, social skills, independence, self-control and confidence, as well as fostering their curiosity and love of learning – all very important aspects of a child transitioning to school.

Our kinder offerings includes a collection of specialist Programs including nutrition information, dental health, water safety, road and pedestrian safety, as well as minor excursions throughout the year and one major excursion, all based around the educational Program. Literacy, numeracy and technology are all used throughout the kinder curriculum to prepare children for their future learning.

Ensuring children are 'school ready' is also extended to families. Our kinder teachers conduct parent-teacher meetings as well as completing the 'transitioning to school' reports. Our Centres invite families to our 'school readiness' information evening, where a qualified and experienced guest speaker presents information that all parents need to know to successfully prepare their child for the beginning of their school journey.

Use of technology

Technology is used within our Program as an additional tool to enhance curriculum activities, not a substitution. Educators use a range of tools such as music players, iPads, cameras, projectors, light boxes, interactive whiteboards and televisions and DVDs.

Excursions and incursions

Excursions and incursions are one element of our specialist Programs. Incursions include experiences such as farm yard visits, reptiles, sea creatures, insects and endangered species wild life shows as well as music and dance programs.

How do we educate?

Little Flyers Learning Centres know that learning occurs when someone is engaged and interested. In the early years, children learn through play – but what are children learning when they play?

	Science concepts	Language/literacy	Numeracy concepts	Problem solving	Sustainable practices	Fine-motor skills	Gross-motor skills	Social skills/teamwork	Creativity	Healthy Self-esteem	Independence/resilience	Sense of Belonging
Box construction, building blocks and lego	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Group time, reading, singing and sharing stories		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Jigsaws, puzzles and bead frames	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Climbing, running, jumping, rough-housing, dancing and risky play	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Drawing, pasting, creating and making	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pretend and Imaginary play		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Gardening and care for animals	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓
Having conversations using correct English, asking questions, agreeing and disagreeing with peers and educators		✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Everyday routine and transition		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sensory play, water, mud, playdough and sand	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Exploring and celebrating different cultures and traditions		✓						✓		✓	✓	✓

Children's health and safety

Dropping off and collecting your child

It is a legal requirement that you sign your child into our care upon arriving at the Centre. Families will use QikKids Kiosk via iPads located in our foyer to sign your child in and out of the Centre. You will use your phone number to login, and you will be asked to set up a 4-digit PIN. Messages, reminders and upcoming events in the Centre can also be accessed when you log in. This is just another way of ensuring your family is always up to date with notifications. We will not permit any person who is not documented as an authorised nominee to collect your child. No unfamiliar person will be permitted to collect a child without first having photo identification checked against the child's signed enrolment form.

Please note – additional fees will apply should your child be collected after closing time.

In the event that your child will be absent, or is ill we request that you inform the Centre.

Infectious disease and illness

All Little Flyers educators practise and teach good personal hygiene. This contributes to limiting the amount of illness at the Centre. Should your child become ill – we ask that you keep them home to recover. In the case that your child falls ill whilst in our care, you will be contacted to collect them. A doctor's clearance may be requested upon your return.

Medical Conditions Policy

Clear procedures exist to support the health, wellbeing and inclusion of all children enrolled at the Centre. Centre practices support the enrolment of children and families with specific health care requirements.

Information that must be provided in Enrolment Record

The Centre's Enrolment Form provides an opportunity for parents to help the Centre effectively meet their child's needs relating to any medical condition.

The enrolment record will include details of:

- Specific health care needs or medical conditions of the child, including asthma, diabetes, allergies, and whether the child has been diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis.
- Medical Management Plan provided by a registered medical practitioner. This Plan should:
 - have supporting documentation if appropriate
 - include a photo of the child
 - if relevant, state what triggers the allergy or medical condition
 - first aid needed
 - contact details of the doctor who signed the plan

Copies of the plan will be kept with the child's medication and will also accompany them on any excursions.

Where there is a Medical Management Plan, a Risk Minimisation Plan must be developed and be included with the child's Medical Management Plan. Parents are responsible for updating their child's Medical Management Plan/providing a new Plan as necessary and will be regularly reminded by the Centre as per the Medical Management Communications Plan. Any new information will be attached to the Enrolment Form and kept on file at the Centre. Educators will ensure information that is displayed about a child's medical conditions is updated.

Identifying children with medical conditions

Any information relating to a child's medical conditions will be shared with relevant educators and volunteers at the Centre. Educators will be briefed by the Centre Director on the specific health needs of each child.

Our Centre will implement the following communications plan to ensure that relevant educators, staff and volunteers are:

- informed about the Medical Conditions Policy
- easily able to identify a child with medical conditions
- aware of the requirements of any Medical Management Plans and Risk Management Plan
- aware of the location of each child's medication
- updated on the child's treatment along with any regulatory changes that may affect practices for specific medical conditions

Medical conditions risk minimisation plan

Using a child's Medical Management Plan, our Centres will develop a Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation Plan in consultation with a child's parents and medical professionals which will ensure that:

- any risks are assessed and minimised
- relevant, practices and procedures for the safe handling of food, preparation, consumption and service of food for the child are developed and implemented (note we will follow all health, hygiene and safe food policies and procedures)
- a child does not attend the Centre without medication prescribed by their medical practitioner in relation to their specific medical condition

Our Centre will provide support and information to all parents and other members of our community about resources and support for managing allergies, anaphylaxis, asthma and diabetes.

Our Centre will routinely review each child's medication to ensure it hasn't expired.

Incidents and injuries

Your child's safety is our priority. Our staff practise active supervision and conduct risk assessments on experiences to ensure your child's safety during play.

Every educator employed by Little Flyers updates their first aid, CPR, asthma and anaphylaxis training every two years, so in the case of an incident or injury, you can be reassured your child is in good hands. In the case of a minor injury, you will be contacted and an injury report will be filled out for you to sign upon collection of your child. In the case of a more serious incident – you may be asked to collect your child from the Centre or instructed of further medical treatment that may need to be sought.

Nutrition

Each day your child is in our care, they are provided with 50 – 75% of their daily nutritional needs. Little Flyers supply all meals and snacks throughout your child's day with monthly rotating menus endorsed by Nutrition Australia. All allergies and dietary requirements will be catered for, and to ensure the health and safety of all children, we ask that no food be brought into the Centre.

Up to date nutritional information can be found in the foyer of every Little Flyers Learning Centre.

Immunisation

From January 2016 all Centres operating under the Education and Care Services National Law 'No Jab, No Play' legislation, will require all new enrolling children to be up to date with their immunisations in line with the Department of Health immunisation schedule.

Child protection

Little Flyers is responsible for providing a safe and caring environment for all children. We believe that the safety of children is paramount at all times and aim to protect a child's right to be safe from abuse of any kind. Where there is a belief, on reasonable grounds, that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, adults in contact with or working with that child are ethically bound to act to maintain the child's safety and wellbeing.

Physical environment

Sustainable practices

Little Flyers Learning Centres aim to assist children in developing positive attitudes and values about sustainable practices. We engage children through learning experiences, discussions and role-modelling. We promote a holistic, open-ended curriculum which explores ideas and practices for environmental sustainability and helps children understand the interdependence between people and the environment.

Relationships with children

Interactions with children

Little Flyers aims to ensure that all educators form positive and respectful relationships with each child ensuring they feel safe and supported in their environment.

We consider the diversity of individual children at the Centre, including family and cultural values, age, and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child, building collaborative relationships with families to improve learning and development outcomes for children. We encourage positive, respectful and warm relationships between children and educators/staff at the Centre.

Each child is supported to learn and develop in a secure and empowering environment maintaining the dignity and rights of each child at the Centre. We encourage children to express themselves and their opinions, and to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem. We consider the health, safety and wellbeing of each child, and provide a safe, secure and welcoming environment in which they can develop and learn, maintaining a duty of care towards all children.

Respectful relationships

Our Centre redirects children in a positive manner to guide behaviour, rather than using negative verbal and physical direction. We believe this is of greater value to the child. Kinder aged children are encouraged to discuss and take personal responsibility for developing boundaries of behaviour that are respectful. Consultation is made with parents on important issues and our educators are always available for discussions.

Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

Parent and community involvement

At Littler Flyers we have an open door policy. Parents and families are welcome to pop in at any time. Families are encouraged to make suggestions and offer critique on our Educational Program, Declaration of Intent, Policies and our Menu. Educators are excited when families share aspects of their culture with both staff and children. Sharing our culture makes our educational program richer.

Parent code of conduct

The Parent, Guardian and Family Code of Conduct is intended as a guideline to ensure mutual understanding of appropriate behaviours and expectations at Little Flyers.

We ask that families behave in an appropriate manner at all times they are in the Centre both in the Rooms and in Public Areas.

This includes:

- appropriate Language – positive language is encouraged at all times and swearing will not be tolerated
- acceptable tone of voice
- respecting the Policies and Procedures of Little Flyers Learning Centres
- responding to concerns according to our Complaints and Grievance Management Policy
- at no time being verbally or physically abusive or aggressive to any staff member. This can also include electronic communication.
- not being permitted to collect their child if intoxicated or under the influence of drugs. This matter will be reported to the appropriate Child Protection Agency.

Any breach of the above may result in your child's enrolment being terminated.

Staffing arrangements, leadership and service management

Staffing arrangements

Little Flyers Learning Centres are governed by the Department of Education and Training whose Regulations state that there will be one educator for every four children under 36 months, and one educator for every 11 children over 36 months.

Our staffing roster is consistent and ensures continuity for all of the children in our care. That is, there will always be a familiar educator on duty for your child. Little Flyers Learning Centres prefer not to use agency staff as we believe it is important for all educators who come into contact with our children and families are familiar with the Centre's policies, procedures and routines, as well as the children and families enrolled in our Centres.

Staff professional development

At Little Flyers we believe learning is never ending. It is for this reason that we offer our staff up to date and current training yearly in areas such as how children learn, music and movement, respectful relationships, child protection, communicating with families, first aid, nutrition and hygiene practices... and much more.

Students and volunteers

Little Flyers is committed to facilitating the training of students undertaking studies in Early Childhood education and to enhance development of mutually beneficial relationships with training institutions.

Students will not be left unsupervised while in the care of children and will not be counted in ratios.

Grievance and complaints procedure

We comply with the Children's Services Regulations requiring the Centre to notify the Department of Education and Training (DET) should a complaint be made which alleges the health, safety or well-being of any child at Little Flyers has been compromised or that there may have been a contravention of the Act or Regulations. Parents are advised that if they believe their concerns have not been adequately dealt with after speaking with Centre Management, they can speak directly to an Advisor at the Department of Education and Training.

Child Care Subsidy and Fee Schedule

Fee schedule information can be found in our Little Flyers Terms and Conditions. All booked days must be paid for. This includes public holidays, sick days and holidays.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is a payment made by the Australian Government to assist families with the cost of child care. You will need to complete the Child Care Subsidy Assessment through your myGov account. For more information on this, please visit dese.gov.au/early-childhood/providing-child-care. Once you have provided the Centre with your Centrelink Customer Reference Number (CRN), the Centre will be able to process your CCS Enrolment. Once this has occurred, you will need to confirm your child's enrolment at the Centre through your myGov account.

Please note – no CCS can be paid if your child is absent for their first or last booked day/s of care.

We require two weeks' notice to end a booking. Failure to give two weeks' notice will result in two weeks being charged at full fees.

Priority of care

The reason the Australian Government fund child care is to meet the needs of working Australian families, however sometimes the demand for Child Care is greater than the supply.

In these cases, government funded services must work by the priority access guidelines.

Priorities

First Priority: a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect

Second Priority: a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under Section 14 of the 'A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999'

Third Priority: any other child.

Within these main categories priority should also be given to the following children:

- children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- children from families which include a disabled person
- children from families which include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold, or who, or whose partner, are on income support
- children from families from a non-English speaking background
- children from socially isolated families
- children of single parents

A child care service may require a Priority 3 child to vacate a place to make room for a child with a higher priority. They can only do so if you:

- are notified when your child first entered care that your service follows this policy
- are given at least 14 days' notice of the need for your child to vacate

For more information visit dese.gov.au/early-childhood-and-child-care-case-studies/resources/priority-access-guidelines-child-care-services

To view our full policies and procedures folder – please see your Centre Director.

Little Flyers Learning Centres and affiliated Centres

Caroline Springs Child Care and Kindergarten

1 The Crossing, Caroline Springs VIC 3023

p. (03) 9363 7622 **e.** carolinesprings@littleflyers.vic.edu.au

The Centre operates from 6.30am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday,
52 weeks a year and is licensed with the Department of Education and Training.

Eltham North Child Care

296 Ryans Road, Eltham North VIC 3095

p. (03) 9431 4947 **f.** (03) 9431 4952 **e.** elthamnorth@littleflyers.vic.edu.au

The Centre operates from 7.00am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday,
50 weeks a year and is licensed with the Department of Education and Training.

Laurimar Child Care and Early Learning

35 Flaxen Hills Road, Doreen VIC 3754

p. (03) 9717 3741 **f.** (03) 9717 4892 **e.** laurimar@littleflyers.vic.edu.au

The Centre operates from 6.30am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday, 50 weeks a year and is licensed
with the Department of Education and Training.

Laurimar Township Child Care and Kindergarten

9 Bulimba Drive, Doreen VIC 3754

p. (03) 9717 8074 **e.** laurimartownship@littleflyers.vic.edu.au

The Centre operates from 6.30am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday,
52 weeks a year and is licensed with the Department of Education and Training.

Kids on Collins – affiliated Centre

Kids on Collins Nursery and Early Education

Level 4, 544-546 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

p. (03) 9629 4099 **e.** kidsoncollins@koc.vic.edu.au

The Centre operates from 7.00am to 7.00pm Monday to Friday,
52 weeks a year and is licensed with the Department of Education and Training.

Little Flyers Learning Centres observe all Victorian gazetted Public Holidays, including New Year's Day; Australia Day; Labour Day; Good Friday and Easter Monday; Anzac Day; Queen's Birthday; AFL Grand Final Parade Day; Melbourne Cup Day; Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

Little Flyers Learning Centres are nut-free and require that no food be brought from home.

Each of our Centres are Sun Smart Centres.

