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THE
PARENT INFORMATION

HANDBOOK

Updated January 2020

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# Centre Details

Welcome to Little Amigos Childcare Lindfield. This handbook will provide you with important information about our centre, to ensure the best possible start with us.

Centre Contact Details**:** Approved Provider

Jian Zhang

Little Amigos Lindfield First Place Education Group Pty Ltd

29 Grosvenor Rd

Lindfield, NSW, 2070Nominated Supervisor

Ph: (02) 9624 6485 Amy Coulton

www.littleamigoschildcare.com

Centre Opening Hours**:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Monday** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** |
| **Open** | 7.00am | 7.00am | 7.00am | 7.00am | 7.00am |
| **Close** | 6.00pm | 6.00pm | 6.00pm | 6.00pm | 6.00pm |

The centre operates 52 weeks of the year and is closed on Public Holidays.

Room Organisation**:**

We are licensed for 80 children per day and the children are divided into three rooms:

* **Discoverers**- 0-2 years

Catering for up to 20 children with three educators for a 1:4 ratio.

* **Explorers**– 2-3 years

Catering for up to 30 children with three educators for a 1:5 ratio.

* **Inventors**– 3-5 years

Catering for up to 30 children with three educators for a 1:10 ratio.

We greatly look forward to welcoming you to the Little Amigos family and getting to know you and your family.

# Statement of Philosophy

*At Little Amigos Lindfield we believe that our service will provide high quality care for the individual needs of children and families in a warm, secure and friendly environment. We use the Early Years Learning Framework as a platform to implement a meaningful and enriching learning program that enhances each child’s learning and development.*

*We achieve this by striving to:*

1. *Provide an environment that supports and caters for each individual child’s interests and developmental needs*
2. *Provide a safe, secure, healthy, hygienic and well supervised centre*
3. *Provide a calm, warm, nurturing and caring environment for children to learn and develop new skills*
4. *Encourage parent input and participation, and encourage this in the daily running of our centre, inviting them to attend special events and maintaining our open door policy*
5. *Provide programs that actively involve the immediate community, that encompass the cultures within the centre and that promote inclusion and diversity*
6. *Provide a nutritionally balanced menu which includes variety, vegetarian options, caters for those with allergies and cultural food restrictions and which reflects the cultural makeup of our centre*
7. *Contribute to the local and the wider community by celebrating cultural events, fundraising for local charities and providing partnerships through centre events*
8. *Ensure that children are planned and programmed for with regard to each child’s knowledge, ideas, culture and interests. This documentation will be available for parents within each classroom*
9. *Provide a range of learning experiences daily which cover all 5 learning outcomes including individual, small group and whole based learning to benefit each individual child and where children’s choice is promoted strongly*
10. *Promote individual differences as well as providing opportunities for positive interactions to further develop each individuals positive self-esteem and self-worth*
11. *Promote opportunities for children to explore language, literacy, mathematics, science and discovery and creative arts (including music, drama, dance and visual art), to make sense of their world and further their knowledge*
12. *Encourage the building of social relationships with peers through modelling, demonstrating appropriate social behaviour and building resilience to give children the skills that they will need for life when forming social relationships*
13. *Encourage children to have a strong environmental awareness, showing respect for their environment and participating in responsible practices regarding sustainability*
14. *Base our programs on the fundamentals of play-based learning, fostering natural curiosity in a supportive and well-resourced environment*
15. *Foster children’s independence skills with supportive guidance from educators and to promote each child’s sense of agency, allowing them to be empowered by making decisions within their environment*
16. *Provide adequate time for meals, rest and relaxation*
17. *Provide a School Readiness Program that places strong value on social and emotional readiness as primary, while also enriching children’s current skills in early literacy, numeracy, science and creative arts to best prepare them for school in a safe and supportive environment*
18. *Commit to continuous improvement of our centre through a process of regular critical reflection of ourselves as educators, through promotion of professional development and through reflection of our program, policies and practices*

Updated December 2019

Next review date- December 2020

# General Centre Information

We are a privately owned childcare centre. We are licensed by the Department of Community Services and are governed by the Education and Care Services National Law Act (2010) and Regulations (2011). We also undergo accreditation through the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) and work towards meeting and maintaining the National Quality Standards.

## Open Door Policy

At Little Amigos Childcare Lindfield, we have an Open Door Policy which means that families are free to come and go from the centre at any time. Please feel free to come in and join our programs, spend some time with your child or simply observe the experiences your child is involved in each day. You are welcome at any time, though we do prefer that you inform us of when you might choose to visit to ensure it is a convenient time for all parties.

## Parent Involvement

Our centre recognises that families are full of people who have many interests, skills and talents which help to create our diverse community. We love to partner with families in sharing these abilities and encourage families to get involved in activities at the centre. If you have something that you feel you can contribute to our program please feel free to come and share this with us, whether it is your occupation, visiting with a young baby, helping with craft activities, doing a performance, gardening with the children or providing the staff with support in an area that you enjoy! We would love for more families to be involved. We also believe that including experiences and links to children’s home in the program provides more positive opportunities and connections for children’s learning and identity at the centre. Each room has a place where families can provide information about children’s current interests and experiences for educators to include and extend on in our programs. Outings, interests, new skills are all of interest to us and we would love to hear about these things!

## Notification of Changes

It is the responsibility of families to inform centre management of any changes to your child’s enrolment information. This includes: your address, place of work, phone numbers, authorised emergency contacts or changes to family custody arrangements. Occasionally we may need to get in contact with you or an authorised contact urgently and we need to have all the appropriate information on file. Forms to update these details, or add additional authorised contacts are available in the foyer. These can be returned to the Nominated Supervisor in the office.

## Keeping You Up To Date

There are many ways that the centre provides information to families and we believe that it is important for families to have current information. The most common form of communication with families is via email. We request that all families provide the centre with one or more current email addresses to receive information, reminders and updates from the centre. Other ways that information is provided include:

* Daily Learning Stories and program boards in rooms
* Storypark
* Notice Boards – in the foyer, at front entrance outside, room doors and within rooms.
* Signs displayed on entry and room doors
* Newsletters on specific topics
* Information evenings
* Face to face conversations with room staff or the Nominated Supervisor
* Phone calls – parents are encouraged to call and staff will contact families where required

## Parent Pockets

Each family has an allocated pocket with their child’s name, located in the hallway. These pockets are used to send home any relevant notices or correspondence from either management or your child’s educators. It is your responsibility to check your child’s pocket regularly.

## Toys from Home

We would prefer that no toys are brought to the centre unless they are a comfort item required for rest time, or an item for news. Toys that come to the centre can easily be lost or broken and this causes unnecessary distress for children. Toys can also cause trouble amongst the children when other children would like to play with them. News items should be handed to educator’s in your child’s room or left in children’s bags until required and are preferred to be items of interest such as nature items, craft, photos or books, rather than toys. Comfort items should also remain in your child’s bag until rest time, staff will use them to settle your child during the day if required.

## Lost Property

Please ensure that any item that you bring to the centre for your child is clearly labelled with your child’s name. Educators will do their best to return any items left behind to the correct children however, it is not always possible to recall what belongs to which children. Any unclaimed items will be left in the Lost Property box. After a reasonable amount of time these will be donated to a charity.

## Celebrations

We believe strongly in embracing and celebrating cultural and community events and beliefs, and integrating celebrations into our centre community. If you have any special celebrations/events you would like us to incorporate into the curriculum, please speak to your child’s educator, or add these details to your parent survey so we can plan for these events. We also encourage the celebration of birthdays at the centre. If you are providing a cake for your child’s birthday, please ensure there are no nuts in or on the cake, and please provide us with a full list of ingredients. We prefer small cupcakes where possible for ease of distribution and eating.

## Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures relating to a wide range of areas relevant to our service are available to families in the foyer. These are used as the basis for everyday practice at the centre and are updated throughout the year. Families will be encouraged to provide feedback as we review policies and procedures to ensure they are relevant and up to date with current legislative requirements. These will be sent out via email or placed in parent pockets. Families will be notified of any large changes that may impact on the running of the centre or care provided.

## Grievance Procedure

If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to your child’s educator or room leader. If you are not comfortable approaching your child’s educator or room leader, please approach the Nominated Supervisor or management, so your concern may be addressed. If it is difficult to approach the Nominated Supervisor or management, you may voice your concern in writing, via a telephone conversation or e-mail. A meeting may be requested if required. We are here to answer your questions or concerns, and any issues will be dealt with promptly. Our grievance procedure is displayed in the centre foyer.

# Staffing

The Staff at Little Amigos Childcare Lindfield are trained and experienced in caring for children. They are responsible for the care of your children during the day and programming for their individual needs. We value happy and enthusiastic staff who are friendly and interested and we support our staff to be the best they can be through an orientation process for all new staff, encouraging in-service training (both in house and external) and on-going study in education and care. Staff also undergo regular performance reviews which include setting and working towards professional goals.

## Who Works at Little Amigos Childcare Lindfield?

* **Director- (Nominated Supervisor & Educational Leader)** – non teaching Early Childhood Teacher who is responsible for the day to day running of the centre and supporting educators in providing quality programs and care.
* **Early Childhood Teacher** – University qualified teacher who holds a Bachelor of Education/Teaching, working in our preschool room.
* **Diplomas** – TAFE or College trained educators who have completed a 2 year Diploma of Children’s Services.
* **Certificate III** - Support staff in each room with a fundamental qualification in providing care for children.
* **Trainees** – these staff are working towards their Certificate III in Childcare in a 12 month, ‘apprenticeship’ style, on the job training program.

Before commencing work staff are screened through a Working with Children Check that is carried out by the Office of the Children's Guardian. If you would like to know more about a staff member’s role in the centre, please ask.

## Staff Roster

Our staff work on a roster system. This involves some of our staff working four long shifts and having a day off each week and other staff working five days for shorter shifts. Staff are on varying shifts, however we do try to maintain some consistency so that on any given day you will see a familiar face. A roster is displayed in each classroom, this details when staff are working during the week.

Any changes to staff days off, staff taking annual leave and room staffing will be communicated through newsletters, email updates and displays on room doors. Changes will also be mentioned face to face by room staff where possible.

## Relief Staff

When permanent staff members are absent you may see a different face at the centre. The names of the relief staff members are on display in the foyer.

We have a collection of staff who work for the centre on a casual basis. These staff are subject to the same qualification and check requirements as our permanent staff. We try to maintain consistency where possible when covering staff on leave with a casual for the whole time period where we can.

## Students

Little Amigos Childcare Lindfield is proud to provide experiences for students and trainees and contribute to the positive development of early childhood educators. Throughout the year we will have various types of students at our centre on practicum. The students come to us from different institutions e.g. TAFE, Universities, Colleges and High Schools. Ourstaff always supervise these students. A constant liaison is maintained between the centre and the various institutions.

# Education and Programs

## Learning Framework

Our focus is on nurturing and caring for the children in our care. We value children’s thirst for knowledge and curiosity. As educators we aim to create an environment where children are provided with enriching, stimulating and valuable learning opportunities which empower children’s ideas and challenge their thinking. The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) provides us with a platform with 5 key learning areas from which to base our program and partner with children to develop their dispositions for learning and enjoyment of life. These learning areas are the basis of our centre goals for learning.

Throughout the centre, all our age groups are experiencing, investigating, exploring and conquering their worlds. Experiences provided for children are based on children’s ability to concentrate, interact and participate. Children of all ages are provided with a full program of experiences and staff support them in celebrating their achievements, developing independence and taking on the next challenge. Our programs and observations as part of our learning stories are displayed for families to read each day. Learning Stories are also posted on Storypark each day to those families who have provided permission and an email address. These are also available to families in the room so if you miss one you are welcome to access these at a later time. We encourage families to read this information each day and talk to your children about what they are experiencing during their time in care.

Learning experiences which highlight children’s interests, strengths and ongoing development are compiled in an individual portfolio record for each child. Information is continually added to these throughout the year. Children’s portfolios are available to parents at the centre and are given to families at the end of the year. As part of our portfolios we also provide families with an overview of their child’s progress at the end of the year. This draws on the EYLF and also provides some direction for the year to come.

We encourage families to take an interest and if you have any questions or concern please speak to your child’s teacher. They will provide information where required and are happy to take time to speak to you. Times can be arranged so that staff can be available to discuss issues outside of the room if that is more appropriate.

## How we program

Here at Little Amigos Childcare Lindfield we base our educational program on the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), allowing the 5 elements of the framework to become the platform from which we do our planning and programming.

 The 5 elements of the framework 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

Within these elements are several learning outcomes which are broken up into sub headings. Each of these learning outcomes has a code e.g- 1A2. Educators use these codes when planning for the group, as well as when planning for individual children. The weekly program, individual observations as well as projects and some artwork contain these learning outcomes on them to communicate to other educators as well as to families what learning outcomes we are anticipating to observe and evaluate.

Each child is observed monthly and after an educator has analysed their learning, an activity is planned for them, implemented, evaluated and followed up with further learning experiences if necessary. Educators use a variety of methods to observe children individually as well as in groups. Some of these methods include photos, anecdotals, learning stories, artwork, videos and work samples.

Educators are responsible for certain groups of children and each child also has an individual code for programming purposes e.g -A5. When educators plan an activity for individual children, they write the activity on the ‘Observations’ section of the program with the date of the original observation, the learning outcome code and the children’s code is written in red and circled. When children move to a new classroom or at the beginning of each year, parents are notified of their children’s individual code and informed of where to find the weekly program, including the ‘Observation’ section.

Individual observations are posted to parents on the Storypark website on a monthly basis. Parents are welcome to comment on these, ask questions and give feedback. Parents can also request to see their child’s individual observations at any time which are filed in educator’s observation folders with any other relevant information including returned parent surveys, any other developmental information or reports & plans from outside professionals such as speech therapists or occupational therapists.

Children are ultimately the drivers of their own learning so we as educators follow children’s interests as the fundamental basis of our programs and planned activities. Educators guide learning projects which stem from children’s interests and these projects vary in length and complexity based on children’s engagement and focus.

Daily learning stories provide insight into learning experiences, spontaneous learning as well as an account of particular daily events. Learning stories are often featured in individual children’s portfolios or used as an observation from which a planned activity will be implemented. Learning stories are completed daily and are on display in classrooms with a collection of photos from the day, some photos linked to the learning story and others of various activities or events of the day. These are also posted on Storypark which we use to connect with families online. Families will be notified once a story has been posted on Storypark which includes their child.

Each child has an individual portfolio which provides various accounts of children’s learning including art, craft, work samples, learning stories, photo pages, anecdotes, drawing and writing. Educators use these samples to inform their planning and programming and these portfolios are sent home with families at the end of each year, as their Christmas gift. Portfolios are on display in each classroom and families are welcome to view their child’s portfolio at any time they wish.

Families are encouraged to have active input into our programming and are welcome to come and spend time at the centre any time that is convenient for them, to provide feedback on our programs, make suggestions for learning experiences or anything they would like to see incorporated into our program.

Parent surveys are sent out to parents annually which include questions about the cultural background of families, languages spoken at home, any celebrations they get involved in, interests of children, activities occurring at home and any suggestions they may have of experiences they would like to see their child involved in at our centre and any way they think we could improve our environment. The results from these surveys are collated and then used to inform our planning and programming, aiming for the best outcomes for children and valuing this important family input into our educational program.

Our centre’s statement of philosophy is incorporated into educational programs consistently. The elements of the philosophy are carefully considered, act as a platform to guide educator’s behaviour and involvement and are linked to learning experiences in each weekly program.

Parent/teacher interviews are held mid-year and families have the opportunity to come and discuss their child’s progress and development with their child’s teacher. Interviews can also be organised any time throughout the year by request from parents at a mutually convenient time if there is anything they would like to discuss with their child’s teacher. Developmental reports are sent out at the end of each year with portfolios. These follow the principles of the Early Years Learning Framework and give an overall picture of the child’s development against these fundamental learning outcomes.

# Transitions between rooms

When children move from one room to another, we aim to make the transition as smooth as possible and allow them to feel safe, comfortable and supported in their new environment. To allow this to happen we employ the following strategies:

* Nominating a primary educator for each child who will also be responsible for that child’s individual planning and observations, to ensure children form strong attachments.
* Ensuring that important information about children is passed on and shared with the new educators. This information might include likes and dislikes, interests and cultural traditions. Information may be shared by way of relevant documentation, informal conversations between educators and talking with parents.
* Allowing children to have opportunities to spend small amounts of time in the classroom they will be moving to before they move permanently. This gives children a chance to become familiar with the educators in their new room and help them to feel a sense of belonging.
* Employing a buddy system when possible with children in the new room, preferably an older child who is settled and comfortable in that room, to help the younger child feel more comfortable and learn new routines and guidelines.
* Inviting parents to become part of the transition process by spending some time in the new room with their child, getting involved in some of the activities, helping them to find their new locker and engaging in conversations with peers and educators.

## Transition to School

We believe that children are developing skills that will support them at school from a very young age and each child works towards formal schooling in a different way. Through their interests, explorations, play and guidance from their educators children develop important skills which provide the foundations for school. In April each year we also begin a School Readiness program which involves play based activities in small group times covering a range of topics. A school readiness evening is usually held each year to help inform our parents, with information from our educators as well as teachers from a local school.

The centre also has built relationships with many of the local schools and we receive information regarding events, enrolments, orientations and ready for school events. This information is usually displayed in the foyer for families as things come up each year. Transition to school statements are also completed each year for the children who will be going to school.

## Peer Interactions

We encourage children to implement strategies that support their interactions with their peers. If another child is doing something that they don’t like they are encouraged to say “stop”, explain the issue and work to resolve the issue. Staff are always available to support children through this process. We encourage your child to be assertive and to let the teacher know if they are upset or worried about anything. With younger children staff monitor behaviour and work with individual children to promote positive interactions including sharing and using words to communicate.

## Behaviour Guidance

Our centre believes in focusing on encouragement and positive guidance, rather than discipline. We try to recognise why a child behaves in a certain way, and encourage acceptable behaviours. We explain in age appropriate terms why certain behaviours are unacceptable, offer suggestions for future occurrences and provide children with choices and support where required. Children are regularly involved in recognising and setting standards for acceptable behaviours and these standards are consistently used by both children and adults. Re-direction is used where children need to move away from an area or need time to calm down. Staff will support children through these situations.

Where a child continues to behave in an inappropriate way which is harmful or detrimental to other children or property and other techniques have not been successful, the child may be removed from an activity or group for a short time until they can behave in an acceptable way. Staff will communicate with families regarding behavioural concerns and work with families to develop strategies which are consistent between the home and care environments to support the child’s social and emotional development. If families have any concerns regarding behaviour management please speak to your child’s room leader or the Nominated Supervisor.

## Special Needs Program

Our centre has access to Early Intervention Services, Inclusion Support Services and we work alongside speech pathologists, occupational therapists and medical practitioners. If you have concerns regarding your child’s development please speak to your child’s teacher. We will also discuss with families any concerns that we might have regarding their child. We believe that working collaboratively to support children provides the best possible environment for them to achieve their potential.

# Early Years Learning Framework-

# Centre Goals for Learning

**Outcome 1 - Children Have a Strong Sense of Identity**

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

**Outcome 2 - Children are Connected with and Contribute to their World**

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

**Outcome 3 - Children Have a Strong Sense of Wellbeing**

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

**Outcome 4 - Children are Confident and Involved Learners**

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

**Outcome 5 - Children are Effective Communicators**

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

**Source:** Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments.

# Menu, Meals and Dietary Requirements

## Menu

Our centre provides Breakfast, Morning tea, Lunch, Afternoon Tea and Late Snack. We have a four-week rotating menu and all meals are prepared here on site by our cook. We have a summer menu and a winter menu, changing over in September and March each year. Menus are displayed in our foyer. Suggestions for our menu are always welcome and menu suggestion forms are available in the foyer also. We use only quality ingredients and fresh vegetables with a minimal amount of processed or frozen foods. Both water and milk are served at various times throughout the day. We value the importance of developing good eating and drinking habits for all babies and children.

Each room displays a chart each day which lets families know what their child has eaten during the day. Please have a look at this as you pick your child up each day. These charts are also posted on Storypark each day.

## Allergies and Special Diets

Many children at the centre suffer from various allergies and intolerances or have cultural or dietary requirements. If your child has a particular food intolerance or special dietary requirement, please ensure you include this on their enrolment information and discuss it with the Nominated Supervisor so that their food intake can be monitored in accordance with the foods being served. Specific dietary, allergy or religious requirements are catered for by the centre and we try to ensure that substitute products are as close as possible to the menu. At times, if something specific is required we may request that families provide this if it is an item that will expire quickly, such as milk, and only a small amount is required at the centre.

If your child has a medical condition you will be required to provide an Action Plan to the centre before starting care. These conditions include Asthma, Anaphylaxis, Severe allergy and Diabetes. The centre will then work with you to create a Risk Minimisation Plan for the centre so that we can work together to keep your child safe in the care environment. Changes to your child’s dietary, allergy or medical requirements will need to be made in writing and forms are available in the office to be completed and returned.

# Health & Safety

## Appropriate Clothing

During the day, your child will participate in many different activities and it is important that they are dressed in appropriate clothing. Children are required to wear sensible footwear with closed toes (no heels or thongs) and suitable clothing for climbing, running and painting. Please do not send your child in their best clothes as we cannot guarantee their safety. We encourage children to follow sun safety procedures, and have a ‘no hat, play in the shade’ policy. Please provide a change of clothes each day, as well as a sunhat. Limited spares are available at the centre however, children feel most relaxed and comfortable if their clothing is their own and suits the weather. Please bring additional spare clothes if your child is toilet training.

## Sun Safety

We are a ‘Sun Safe Centre’ and we are committed to ensuring all children are protected from the harmful effects of the sun, by modelling and promoting sun safe behaviour and ensuring age appropriate sun safety education is provided to all children. Families are asked to apply sunscreen to their child prior to arrival, or on arrival with the centre sunscreen provided. Educators will ensure sunscreen is reapplied throughout the day before going outdoors. To ensure your child is adequately protected from the sun, you are required to provide a sun safe sun hat for your child every day, dress your child in comfortable, sun protective clothing (e.g. a top with sleeves), and to provide a safe sunscreen for use by your child if they have known allergies to sunscreen.

## Rest Time

All children are involved in some form of sleep, rest or relaxation time during the day at the centre. Children in our 0-2 and 2-3 rooms are required to sleep during afternoon rest time, or in the case of younger babies to their routine times, unless specifically requested by parents. Children in our 3-5s room are encouraged to sleep, although some children may choose to rest. All children in this room will spend some quiet time on a bed until others are sleeping and then will be provided with books or quiet activities.

All children are required to have a sheet set for their rest time. This is the size of a cot sheet and we ask that a fitted and flat sheet are provided for the safety and comfort of the children. Comfort items, small pillows and light weight blankets are permitted if they are required for a child’s comfort.

## Toilet Training

We want to support you and your child through the toilet training process. Please discuss your toileting strategies with your child’s teacher and we will implement them as closely as possible. Please also ensure that you provide sufficient changes of clothes for your child to get through the day. This can at times be a challenging process, please remember that staff are here to help.

## Dental Care

During your child’s time at the centre they will discuss oral health and hygiene and be encouraged to implement this each day. Eating a balanced diet helps to keep their mouth and teeth as well as their body healthy. During the year we also organise a visit from a local dentist to present information about dental health and incorporate information from this into our program to support daily practices.

## Evacuation Procedures

An emergency evacuation plan is displayed at the exit of each classroom at the centre. The centre conducts regular emergency drills, with the aim of ensuring that the children can be evacuated quickly and easily in the event of a real emergency. If you are present at the centre during a drill, you are legally required to participate in this procedure.

## Illness

We provide and maintain a healthy environment, to help safeguard children and educators from infectious diseases and illnesses. Children in care are at higher risk of illness due to the close contact they have with a wide range of children and often they have had minimal exposure to childhood illnesses.

We ask that you do not send your child to the centre if they are unwell. If your child is showing signs of illness or infectious disease whilst at the centre, we will contact you immediately and your child will need to be collected from the centre. It is not possible for staff to give sick children the extra attention that they need without adversely affecting the care given to other children at the centre. Please keep your child at home until they are well enough to fully participate in the program. If your child requires antibiotics for any reason, they are required to have been on the medication for a minimum of 24 hours before they can return to the centre. This means they are not allowed to attend the centre the following day. After this 24-hour period staff may administer anti-biotics at the centre if required and after parents have completed a medication form.

The centre follows the guidelines set down by the NSW Department of Health in regard to infectious diseases. If your child is suspected of or has been confirmed to have an infectious disease, please notify the centre, so that the appropriate arrangements can be made to ensure the safety and wellbeing of others in the centre. We will advise families of an infectious disease in the centre (whilst maintaining strict confidentiality) with emails and also by placing a notice on front entrance notice board detailing the situation. In the case of infectious diseases, a doctor’s clearance letter will be required to state that your child is no longer infectious and is well enough to return to the centre.

## Immunisation

When enrolling at the centre families must provide an up to date ‘Immunisation History Statement’ with the child’s enrolment information. A copy will be taken and kept in your child’s records. Children who are not immunised must provide an objection letter or medical exemption from their doctor. Immunisation reminders will go out to families every 2 months. Updated immunisation records should be provided to the centre as soon as possible after immunisation updates are given.

## Medication

If your child requires medication whilst at the centre, you must complete the ‘Medication Authorisation Form’, detailing the name of the medication, the time and dosage to be given at the centre, how the medication is to be administered, and your signature to confirm that you would like us to administer the medication to your child. All medication must be in its original container and prescription onlyor be accompanied by a doctor’s letter. Over the counter medication will not be administered at the centre without a pharmacy label and a letter from the doctor.

Medication must be handed to a staff member who will store it in a locked storage cupboard or container and taken home in the afternoon. **No medication can remain in a child’s bag while at the centre.**

## Administering Panadol

Families are asked to give permission to administer Panadol on the enrolment form. This is optional and families can say no to this option. In the case that a child has a temperature over 38 degrees families will be contacted to inform you of the situation and seek verbal permission to administer Panadol. Parents will also be required to organise someone to pick up their child. No further doses of Panadol will be administered.

## Other Medical Conditions

If your child has an identified medical condition like asthma or anaphylaxis, an ‘Action Plan’ from your doctor needs to be developed and brought into the centre to keep on the premises. The action plan is to ensure the best practice for your child in the event they suffer from an event related to their condition whilst in our care.The centre will then work with you to create a Risk Minimisation Plan for the centre so that we can work together to keep your child safe in the care environment. Changes to your child’s dietary, allergy or medical requirements will need to be made in writing and forms are available in the foyer to be completed and returned to the office.These plans will be reviewed annually or as any changes are required.

If your child requires an Adrenaline Injector (EpiPen /Anapen) or Asthma Medication, these need to be provided by families to the centre. All medications must be clearly labelled with your child’s name and handed to a teacher for safe storage.

## Nut Free Zone

Due to a large number of children now suffering from allergies to nuts, our centre is a Nut Free Zone. The centre is free from whole/pieces of nuts however some individual items may contain traces of nuts as this is unavoidable. Please ensure that no Nuts or nut products are brought into the centre. Please also ensure that no food is left in your child’s bag.

## Child Related Accidents and Injuries

We are committed to ensuring a safe and healthy environment for all the children in our care. Any child related incidents that may occur at the centre are recorded on an Incident, Injury, Trauma& Illness report. Upon collection of your child, you will be required to sign the incident report form, to indicate that you have been made aware of the incident. Should your child receive a bump to the head or face at any time at the centre, you will be given a courtesy call to ensure you are aware of the incident. A copy of any report can be provided to you at your request.

If you cannot be contacted and your child requires medical attention, we will take the necessary required steps, such as contacting a person indicated on the enrolment form as an emergency contact. Please ensure you have provided us with up to date and correct emergency contact details for your child and that all contacts are available and reliable.

# Enrolment & Attendance

## Waitlist

Our waitlist is created in order of application. Families in the centre have priority for any positions which may become available and any additional positions are offered to waitlist families. Our waitlist is updated regularly, and families are contacted to see if they still require care for their children.

## Attendance Records

It is a legal requirement that you sign your child in and out each time they attend the centre. If your child is absent for any reason (including illness), you still need to pay for that day. There are no make-up days or swap days. If you need an extra day and there is availability, your child can attend extra days.

## Absences from the Centre

Parents are requested to notify the centre if your child is sick or unable to attend the centre on their usual day/s of attendance. You will still be charged for absent days, and no ‘make-up’ days or ‘swap’ days will be given.

## Public Holidays

Public holidays which fall on your usual day of attendance must be paid for. ‘Make-up’ days or ‘swap’ days will not be provided as we are unable to do this for all families in the centre.

## Allowable Absences

Each financial year Family Assistance provides each child with 42 absences. These allowable absences cover days that children are enrolled but do not attend care for any reason, including illness, public holidays and family holidays and provide standard CCS payments for these days. Once a child’s absences reach over 42 for the year CCS is not payable for the absence days unless you provide a doctors certificate or other substantiating evidence for the child. This means that these days are charged at full fee. Allowable absences reset to 42 from 1st July every year.

## Changing Days of Attendance & Resignation from the Centre

You are required to give the centre four weeks written notice if you would like to change your child’s days of attendance. This includes lowering the amount of days your child attends. If you are leaving the centre, four weeks written notice is also required, to ensure your bond is returned. If you wish to change or increase your attendance days, you will need to put your name on the Waitlist until positions are available for you. Children who are currently attending the centre have priority for any available positions.

## Collection of Children

We will only allow parents or persons stated in writing on the enrolment form, to collect your child/ren from the centre. If you are unable to collect your child from the centre, please notify us with the name of the person who will be collecting your child/ren. This person must be an authorised person on your child’s enrolment form. Photo identification will be required for any persons unknown to the centre educators.

# Accounts& Payment

## Fee Information:

Fees are set by centre management and are based on the room which children are enrolled in. Cost for each room varies due to the staffing requirements for the different age groups.

 **0-3’s (Nursery Room& Toddler room) $150 per day**

 **3-5’s (Pre-School Room) $140 per day**

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## Payments required to secure enrolment:

**Annual Enrolment Fee** of $110(including GST) per family is required to secure a position at the centre. This payment is non-refundable if your child does not commence care. Enrolment fees are also charged each year at re-enrolment which occurs around September.

A **Bond** which acts as a security deposit is required on all positions at the centre and must be paid before a child begins care. Bond is $300 per child. This payment is non-refundable if your child does not commence care. Bonds are fully refundable on leaving with required notice and up to date payment of fees. Bonds can be deducted from final payments (this is the preferred option) or refunded to a nominated bank account.

## Fee Payment Procedure

Centre fees are paid 2 weeks in arrears. Fees are to be paid through the DebitSuccess system. Upon enrolment, you will be given a direct debit form to complete and return to the centre. It is your responsibility to ensure there are sufficient funds available in your nominated account, so as not to be charged a late fee or dishonour fee.

Statements are issued fortnightly via e-mail.

## Overdue fees:

Any fees that are overdue must be paid by the end of the billing fortnight and a friendly reminder will be provided to families. If DebitSuccess payments are not successful families can choose to make a once off payment by another method to catch up on their payments. Failure to pay fees in required time frames will jeopardise the child’s position at the centre.Recovery action may be sought in the case where fees are consistently not paid. A fee may also be charged to families to cover the cost of this service. If families are struggling to pay fees, they can make an appointment to speak with the Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider to reach an agreement regarding payment.

## Late Fees

All children should be collected from the centre before 6:00pm. A LateFee will be charged if your child has not been picked up from the centre by close of operating hours at 6:00pm. Fees will start at $15flat rate for the first5 minutes, up to 15 minutes and then $1 per minute thereafter. This fee will be charged per child remaining at the centre after this time.If you think that you are going to be late to pick your child/ren up we ask that you phone the centre to notify staff. This saves them from trying to contact you and also makes staff aware so that they can communicate with your child about why you have not arrived. You will be asked to sign a late collection form when you arrive at the centre after 6:00pm which will be signed by staff and yourself and provided to management for processing.

# Starting Care

## Settling Your Child

Some children are relaxed about starting child care and enjoy it from the beginning. Other children may take longer to settle, especially if it is the first time they have been separated from their parents or have had little experience of spending time with other children. Don’t be surprised if it takes some time for your child to settle, they are all different and there is no one way to settle all children.

## Orientation Visits

Talking to your child about starting care helps them to become familiar with the idea. Whenever you have a chance you are more than welcome to visit the centre with your child, as many times as you wish. The purpose of orientation visits are to familiarise both your child and yourself with our child care environment. Staff will be on hand to show you around the room, explain how the routine and program work and answer any questions that you may have. You are welcome to stay as long as you feel comfortable and your child is welcome to join in all of the room activities during these visits. Encourage your child to explore their new environment and share the experiences with you. If your child is toilet training, it is important that they are familiar with the bathroom and feel comfortable using the toilets provided. You are also welcome to join in any meals.

## When it’s time to leave

We like to encourage parents to spend just a few minutes dropping off and picking up in the afternoon. This helps to ease the transition for children and allows you as a parent to chat with staff and play with your child. However, we do encourage parents to leave quickly and smoothly once you have given your child a goodbye kiss and cuddle. Both, rushing in and out or lingering too long can add to the anxiety of separation. It is also very important that you do say goodbye to your child, rather than quietly leaving while they are playing, without them noticing. Although it may seem traumatic at the time, your child will learn to trust that they can confidently enter an environment and find something to play with; knowing that they have noticed your departure, and that you will return. Otherwise they may come to be afraid to engage in play, fearful that mum or dad will suddenly disappear with no reassurance of their return.

If you are worried about upsetting your child when leaving, there are plenty of staff around who are eager to give your child a cuddle and are very experienced in making your child feel safe and special. It is a good idea to try and make sure your child’s first few days are shorter to ease with the transition,however you are most welcome to phone as many times as you like throughout the day to check on your child’s progress.

Some children are perfectly happy from their first day at the centre and have second thoughts after a couple of weeks. This is not uncommon, and they will need some time to settle again. It usually takes about 3 weeks (sometimes longer for others) before your child feels comfortable at the centre. If your child seems unhappy please discuss the situation with their room leader.

## Things you can do to help the transition to care

* Ensure you child is familiar with the child care environment
* Encourage independence
* Teach basic self-help skills
* Encourage your child to mix with other children by taking them for example to gym/play groups
* Be involved in the centre’s regular activities and events.
* Regularly check out all the notices on the notice board, parent pockets and emails
* Read the Daily Program and Learning stories to see what your child has been involved in for that day so that you can talk about it with your child. This provides an opportunity for positive conversations about the care experience and shows an interest in your child’s day.
* Be confident in the knowledge that your child is in capable hands and will settle in their own time and If you have any concerns about how your child is settling, please come and speak to their teacher.

## Supporting Home Languages

We believe that it is important to support your child to maintain their home language so that they have a solid language base to build on. We also want to help all children to settle into the centre and feel comfortable in the new environment. If your child is most confident in a language other than English, please communicate this to the staff in your enrolment paperwork and also in your family survey. We have resources to support your child and also have access to a Bi-cultural Support Program which provides support workers for a few hours each week at the start of your child’s enrolment to help their transition.

# Arrival and Departure

The centre requires that all children are dropped off and picked up from the centre by a responsible adult over the age of 18. This could be a parent, guardian or authorised contact named on your enrolment forms.

## When arriving at the centre:

1. Sign your child into the centre on the IPad device in the foyer.
2. Take your child to their room and place their belongings into their allocated locker.
3. Hand labelled nappies to staff members in nursery and toddler rooms
4. Ensure your child has sunscreen on
5. Pass on any relevant information regarding your child including any special requirements for the day i.e. Medication
6. Ensure you let your child know that you are leaving and let them know who will be back to pick them up

## When picking up your child:

1. Read the information regarding your child’s day displayed in the room. This includes the Daily Learning Story, Eat/Sleep Chart, Room Displays & Nappy Change/Toileting information (Nursery & Toddlers)
2. It is your responsibility to ensure you have collected the following items:
	* Bag
	* Jumper
	* Comfort items (including toys, dummies & wraps)
	* Hat
	* Shoes / socks
	* Bed sheets (on the last day of attendance for the week)
	* Show & Tell items or books (on your child’s allocated Show & Tell or Share a Book day)
3. Take time, where possible, to let your child show you what they were involved in during the day.
4. Ensure that your child’s teacher knows that you are taking your child for the day and encourage your child to say goodbye.
5. Check your parent information pocket in the hallway.
6. Sign your child out of the centre on the IPad device in the foyer.

## Authorised Contacts

Any person collecting your child must be listed on your child’s enrolment form. Staff will check the identification of any person who they are not familiar with. Additional emergency contacts can be added to your child’s file if required. Please ensure you notify the centre if someone other than you is collecting your child.

# What to Bring to the Centre

**Nursery- 0-2 YEARS**

* Bag
* Bottles
* Formula – tin or dispenser (cow’s milk provided)
* Nappies – at least 6 per day
* Nappy cream - if required
* Hat – wide brimmed
* Bed sheets – 1 fitted & 1 flat
* Comfort Items if required
* Spare clothes:
* Pants/shorts
* Top/t-shirt
* Jumper
* Singlets
* Socks
* Additional clothes and underwear if toilet training

**Toddlers- 2-3 YEARS**

* Bag
* Nappies – at least 6 per day (if required)
* Nappy cream - if required
* Hat – wide brimmed
* Bed sheets – 1 fitted & 1 flat
* Comfort Items if required
* Spare clothes:
* Pants/shorts
* Top/t-shirt
* Jumper
* Socks
* Undies (if required)
* Additional clothes, underwear & shoes if toilet training

**Pre-School – 3-5 YEARS**

* Bag
* Hat – wide brimmed
* Bed sheets – 1 fitted & 1 flat
* Comfort Items if required
* Spare clothes:
* Pants/shorts
* Top/t-shirt
* Jumper
* Undies& socks
* Show & Tell items or book – on your child’s allocated day

Please clearly label all of your child’s belongings.

# General Daily Routine

7:00am Indoor activities (combined rooms)

8:00am Outdoor or indoor activities / free play

9:00am Pack away

9:15am Nursery & Toddlers Morning Tea

9:30am Preschool Morning Tea

10:00am Inside activities including large and small group times, free play, creative arts, computers and general exploration.

11:15am Pack away – Language & Music group times

11:15am Babies & Toddlers Lunch

12:00pm Preschool Lunch

12:30pm Rest time / quiet activities

2-2:30pm Indoor free play

3:00pm Afternoon tea

3:30pm Outside play

4:45pm Late Snack

5:00pm Pack away

5:15pm Indoor quiet activities (combined rooms)

6:00pm Centre closes

\* Shows warmer month indoor times due to Sun Safety restrictions and UV levels.

**Indoor and Outdoor times are revised to suit weather conditions**

This routine provides a guideline for the day, however this is very flexible. During any given day the staff will consider weather, changes due to an event or extra activity, children’s interests and requests, staffing and any additional impacts which may arise.

# Welcome

We thank you for choosing Little Amigo’s Lindfield as your choice of care for your precious child/ren and we greatly look forward to inviting you and your family into our service.

We are always here to listen and respond in the best way possible to you and your family’s needs and we hope that we can leave a lasting impression of positivity upon your child’s early learning experience.

We understand that you are leaving your most precious gift with us to look after and we don’t take that for granted. We look forward to working alongside your child and your family to provide the best developmental opportunities for all children in our care.

We look forward to spending this time with you and seeing your children develop, learn and grow in the amazing years ahead.