



# Parent Information Handbook

Ph: 08 8985 4535  
Email: [childcare@nfcdarwin.com.au](mailto:childcare@nfcdarwin.com.au)  
[www.nightclifffamilycentre.com.au](http://www.nightclifffamilycentre.com.au)

## Introduction

Welcome to the Nightcliff Family Centre Incorporated.

The Nightcliff Family Centre commenced operations in Aralia Street back in 1975 after Cyclone Tracy. The first premises were demountable accommodation with outside toilets. Parents participated in a roster of duties in return for care. In this way, fees were kept to a minimum.

The Centre moved into its present accommodation on 4 March 1981 and through a lot of hard work, parent involvement, fund raising and Darwin City Council as a sponsor, the Centre has become what we know today — there wasn't even a fence in the beginning!

This handbook is intended as a short guide to the Nightcliff Family Centre, outlining the way we operate and some of our major policies.

Please read it carefully and feel free to ask any questions you may have.

**\*You are more than welcome to visit the Centre at any time\***

## Our aim

Our Centre's aim is to provide high quality child care in a safe and supportive environment and to help each child develop to their full potential. Our programs will be based around the Early Years Learning Framework and will incorporate a play based approach to learning.

## Licensing and accreditation

The Centre's operations are governed by licensing requirements set by the Office of Children & Families - Quality Education & Care NT and measured against the National Quality Framework and the Early Years Learning Framework, set by ACECQA, Australia Children's Education & Care Quality Authority.

Regular inspections are carried out by both of the above organisations to ensure that requirements are met. We will do our best to ensure that your child is happy, well looked after and that any special requirements are catered for.

## Management of the Centre

The Nightcliff Family Centre is a community based, not for profit, long day care centre **managed by our parents**.

The daily running of the centre is the Director's responsibility and the Director is overseen by a parent-run Management Committee.

Management Committee members are elected at the Annual General Meeting held each year in October/November. There are 5 portfolio positions and up to 4 general member positions. All parents are encouraged to attend the AGM and /or nominate for a Committee position. No Committee = no Centre!

Parent input is greatly valued and enables us to maintain a high quality centre. Being a part of the management committee also gives you a great background into the centre operations, budgeting processes, fund raising and the general challenges facing us each day — a valuable learning experience!

The Management Committee meets every 6 weeks. Agendas for the general meetings are distributed by email one week prior to the meeting. We welcome all perspective committee members to meetings with the prospect of joining the Management Committee.

### Current Parents Committee

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Brooke O'Malley - Wittwer	Chairperson
Andrea Hlavicova	Treasurer
Aroha Pritchard Davies	Secretary
Sally Kelly	Public Officer
Charlee Shone	General Member
Meaghan Jones	General Member
Claire Bubb	General Member

# CENTRE PHILOSOPHY

*N*ightcliff Family Centre is a special place where children are welcome, are safe, and are loved. We offer a child-centred approach in children's learning and development that helps nurture the child and allows them to achieve their full potential.

*T*hrough our play-based curriculum our educators strive to foster and guide children to create competent, capable, and successful learners that are ready to set forth on a path of lifelong learning.

*We* aim to provide opportunities for the children to actively learn through their play. Our educators will guide children to source their own learning through the choices they make, the risks they take and the interests they choose.

*We* promote a respectful, child safe culture where children concerns are always responded to, and children feel empowered to participate in decisions and provide feedback to educators and staff.

*B*ringing families into the centre to enjoy, participate and connect with their child's learning creates a wonderful sense of community that build's trusting relationships. We know that children learn best when they belong, feel secure and trust in those around them. Our inclusive environment provides consistent, positive interactions between educators, families, and children.

*O*ur educators come from many diverse backgrounds and Nightcliff Family Centre celebrate and acknowledge all these wonderful cultures as well as the traditional custodians of the land we live, learn and care for. Equity, inclusion, and diversity are embedded in our practices. We give the children respect, a feeling of value and worth enabling them to succeed and excel in all they wish to do.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

To provide a high quality, community based, sustainable child care service that maintains the Early Years Learning Framework and the National Quality Framework

# PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

**Parents and Staff** will work together towards promoting mutual respect and understanding.

**Parents** have an obligation to form good relationships with the staff caring for their child / children. A good relationship between parents and staff adds to the quality of care for all children in the centre.

**Staff** recognises the rights of Parents and their children. They understand the need to be supportive and respectful of the beliefs and values of the different families in the centre.

**Parents** should be aware that: Staff has the right to privacy, confidentiality and respect. They do not have to tolerate verbal abuse or accusations at any time.

**Effective Communication** allows everyone (parents, children and staff) to enjoy a positive environment.

**Parents** first point of communication is with the immediate caregiver.

**Parents** with major concerns about the quality of service provided at this Centre should follow the Grievance Procedures.

## Membership

A family is offered a place for their child subject to availability and the Priority of Access guidelines being met. These guidelines are set and monitored by the Department of Education and Children's Service's - Quality Education & Care NT unit.

Nightcliff Family Centre is a corporation and each family becomes a member on accepting a place at our Centre. Membership allows families to utilise the Centre's facilities and functions.

The membership fee is set annually at the AGM. This fee should be paid with your first child care fees and subsequently at the commencement of each calendar year. The fee also helps to fund any functions held at the centre.

## Types of care offered

**Weekly, and daily care is offered** and charged at 10 hour sessions per day. A **full time** booking is defined as one which covers 5 days per week. A **part time** booking is less than 5 days per week.

Booked hours are negotiated with the Director. The **booked hours must always be adhered to**, as staffing is organised to ensure that staff to child ratios are met in accordance with our licensing requirements at all times. If you require 7:15am drop off you need to discuss this with the director as we need to ensure we have adequate staff on and maintain child : educator ratio.

Please do not drop your child off at 7:15am unless you have reserved this booking.

Any changes to booked hours need to be negotiated with the Director. Two weeks written notice is required for any changes, including cancellation of care and booked hours.

## Hours of operation

The Centre is now open from 7.15am to 5.45pm Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays. There are limited positions from 7.15–8.00am due to staff ratios. Please advise us if you need to drop off in these time slots.

**Once a month the centre closes at 5:00 pm for staff meetings. Advance notice is given for these meetings and late fees do apply after 5:00pm.**

## STAFF MEETING/COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

Month	Staff Meeting Dates – Wednesdays 5:00 – 6pm	Committee Meeting Dates Tuesdays 5.30pm - finish
February	22nd	21st
March	22nd	21st
April	19th	18th
May	17th	16th
June	21st	20th
July	19th	18th
August	16th	15th
September	20th	19th
October	18th	17th
November		28th AGM

## Fees from August 12th 2024

PART TIME	FULL TIME
0-3 years \$123.50/day	0-3 years \$118.50 day (\$592.50) per week)
3-5 years \$120.50/day	3-5 years \$114.50day (\$572.50) per week)

Membership fee — \$50 per year

Payment of fees is through the Fat Zebra system only, a form will be given to families to complete, along with the enrolment package. If you wish to end your time with us, 2 weeks notice is required, either via email or to the Director. Centrelink will not pay the subsidy if your child doesn't attend the Centre during the 2 weeks notice therefore you will be charged full fees.

Fee subsidy is available through Childcare Subsidy (CCS) — contact Centrelink to find out what your family is entitled to. Our provider number is 555 002 501X.

## Priority Enrolment

The Australian Government removed legal Priority of Access from July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018 when it introduced the new Childcare Package and Childcare Subsidy.

Nightcliff Family Centre wants to ensure that our service uses a fair and equitable practise for managing and filling positions from our Centre's wait-list.

Priority will be given **firstly** to:

- \* Children wanting additional days of care where they are currently enrolled at Nightcliff Family Centre.
- \* Siblings of children that are currently enrolled at Nightcliff Family Centre.

Our centre also aims to assist, where possible families who are most in need and may prioritise filling vacancies with children who are:

- \* At risk of serious abuse or neglect.
- \* A child of a sole parent or parents with lower income who satisfy the CCS activity test for paid employment.

Families on our current waitlist (second priority) will then be prioritised according to need using the following criteria:

- \* Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.
- \* Children in families which include a disabled person.
- \* Children in lower income families.
- \* Children from non-English speaking families.
- \* Children in socially isolated families.
- \* Children from single parent families.

Priority will be assessed taking each of the above factors into account and making a judgement based on the information available.

**The factors above are not ordered.**



## Centre policies

Our Centre Quality Improvement Plan is located in the main office as you enter the Centre.

Some of the major policies at the Centre are as follow;

- Acceptance & Refusal of Authorisations Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Educator & Management Policy
- Food, Nutrition & Beverage Policy
- Health, Hygiene & Safe Food Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Photography Policy
- Physical Environment Policy
- Relationships with Children Policy
- Grievance Policy

If you would like to see any of the above policies please ask the Centre Director to show you.

The Quality Improvement Plan is a continual ‘work in progress’ and is constantly being updated so that it is relevant to today’s child care practices.

Once you are a Parent of this Centre, if you would like to offer suggestions for our Quality Improvement Plan please let the Director know so that it can be taken to the Management Committee.

## Parent involvement

We welcome parent and family involvement — in fact we encourage it!

We strive for open communication between Parents and care givers and will actively seek out information about your child to aid us with our care.

Please set aside a few minutes at drop off time to talk with one of your child’s carers and have a look at the program on your way out to see what they’ll be doing that day.

We welcome information about their lives outside of the Centre, such as how their weekend was, any personal achievements, visitors from South and so on.

Let us know if there is anything unusual happening, such as a Grandparent picking them up that afternoon or other influences in their lives that could be affecting them – both the positive and/or negative.

If there are any concerns, by all means talk to the Group Leader in your room, or make an appointment to see the Director – don't be afraid to voice your opinion. Should both of these methods fail to meet your requirements, the Parent Management Committee can be consulted. For more information, our grievance procedures for Parents are located in the Policy folder in the foyer.

Our Centre newsletter and other important information are emailed to families or posted in Storypark. We welcome information or suggestions for our newsletters from Parents about items that might be of interest.

The Policy folder is located in the foyer, this is so you can familiarise yourself with some of our centre policies and provide input to the reviews.

## Parent responsibilities

So that we can give your child the best possible care, we ask that you:

Sign your child in and out of the Sign In and Out using the Kangarootime Kiosk App in the foyer. **This is a licensing requirement.** It provides a record of children attending the Centre at any one time and is required by the Government whether you receive CCS or not..

If your child is going to be absent, please let us know. If your child is absent due to holidays, public holiday or illness you are still required to advise us of the days absent. If you are claiming child care subsidy and have a doctor's certificate for sick days, they will not be counted as part of your 42 allowable absences unless these are exhausted; public holidays are included in the 42 days.

If medication is required, complete details in the medication book and leave medication in the fridge. Medication will not be given without written authorisation.

Inform the staff if there is anything in particular they should know, such as someone different picking up i.e. Grandma picking up early

Ensure your fees are paid. Failure to pay fees will result in your place at the centre being forfeited.

Collect your child punctually according to your booked time and **notify** us if you are running late. A late fee may be charged if you are late collecting your child.

Get to know our Centre Policies and our Quality Improvement Plan located in the office. Ensure you take note of messages by email, Storypark or signs at the Centre as this is the best way we can communicate our information. Children who are unwell do not thrive or enjoy childcare, so please consider this and also remember that you may be putting other children or Educators at risk of becoming unwell. If your child is unwell we recommend that they stay away from child care – this is the best practice for all involved including staff and other families members.

Get to know the staff who are caring for your child!

## **The first visit**

Starting child care may involve a time of adjustment for both you and your child. We ask that you visit our Centre before commencement where you will be introduced to our wonderful staff and shown around our Centre. Often this is firstly done with a Tour of the Centre.

Some points you may wish to discuss at this time may include routines, activities, discipline, safety, hygiene, diet/menu, allergies, sickness, accidents, excursions.

Once a position has been found for your child we request a minimum of 3 orientation sessions of around 1 hour where you and your child stay and play.

## **The first few days**

Your child will need to bring at least 2 complete changes of clothes, labelled and in their bag each day.

Please put your child's name on everything, not just clothes but bottles, cups and any special toys. You may like to provide special Blanket/ toy for our rest / sleep time.

Some children settle in more quickly than others. Some children will walk straight in and barely look over their shoulder to say goodbye to Mum or Dad, some children will be cautious, standing back just watching and taking everything in and some children might cry. It is also quite common for children to settle easily for the first 2 – 3 visits but then cry on the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup>. All of the above behaviour is very common and perfectly normal.

Try to allow a little time when you first arrive to settle your child in. You are welcome to ring the Centre at any time to find out how your child has settled.

On the flip side of the coin – don't be surprised if sometimes your child does not want to go home at the end of the day! Try to be patient if the children are in the middle of a game, a puzzle, or a story.

## Grouping of children

We are licensed for 80 children within the age range of six months to six years.

Children are grouped by their age – 6mths—2years(Cuddly Koala Room), 2– 3years (Jumping Roos Room) and 3—5 years (Busy Bees Room). From 7.15am the children over 2 years and Educators are grouped together until morning tea time at 8.30am. All groups will then generally operate independently between 9am and 5.00pm (unless special experiences have been planned). From 5.15pm until our 5.45pm closure, both children and Educators of all rooms are grouped together awaiting parental collection.

## Staffing

Within the childcare industry there are set regulations for child to adult ratios.

**Cuddly Koala's Baby Group** : there must be 1 staff member to 4 children . In a group of 14 children there must be 4 staff present. 50% of the staff must have formal qualifications such as a Diploma of Children's Services. Other staff in the room hold a Certificate III in Children's Services.

**Jumping Roos Toddler Group**: there must be 1 staff member to 5 children . In a group of 20 children there must be 4 staff present. 50% of the staff must have formal qualifications such as a Diploma of Children's Services. Other staff in the room hold a Certificate III in Children's Services

**Busy Bees 3-5 years Group** : there must be 1 staff member to 11 children aged between 3 to 5 years. In a group of 38 children there must be 3 staff present. 50% of the staff need formal qualifications such as a Diploma of Children's Services. Other staff in the room hold a Certificate III in Children's Services.

All staff hold current Ochre cards, First Aid, Asthma & Anaphylaxis Qualifications. Staff also attend regular training sessions to keep up to date with current early childhood practices.

Relief or Support Staff are employed to replace staff when required for Annual Leave, RDO's and sick days. At times we may also have volunteers and students working in our Centre.

All Staff abide by the Early Childhood Code of Ethics.

## STAFF OF NIGHTCLIFF FAMILY CENTRE

Director / Educational Leader	Judy Rondon Josepha Minani	Diploma ECT Degree
----------------------------------	-------------------------------	-----------------------

### Busy Bees (3-5yrs)

Educational Leader	Josepha Minani	ECT & Educational Leader
Educator	Ailing Teav	Diploma
Group Leader	Anu Thapa	Diploma
Educator	Mei Mei Chong	Diploma

### Jumping Roos (2-3yrs)

Group Leader	Kathy Mann	Diploma
Educator	Olive Isis	Diploma
Educator	Jinan Sun	Diploma
Educator	Ramona Cubillo	Certificate III

### Cuddly Koalas (6mths-2yrs)

Group Leader	Archie Servai	Diploma
Educator	Caterina Venturin	Certificate III
Group Leader	Manita Pokharel	Diploma
Educator	Anju Bali	Certificate III

### Floating Educators

Sifa Assamba (Certificate III), Siti Mutomimah (Certificate III),  
Evi Hie (Certificate III), Anh Nguyen (Diploma),  
Madiha Zubair (Certificate III)

### Cook

Rachel O'Brien

### Administration

Justine O'Brien      Diploma

### Staff Rotation:

May happen every few months or when needed.

## **Promoting and Supporting Positive Behaviour**

Nightcliff Family Centre will take several factors into account in order to support children's behaviour. This includes us as Educators asking the questions about whether the environment is set up appropriately, are there enough resources, and are expectations clear and appropriate for the children's developmental age.

Educators model appropriate behaviour at the Centre, using guidance to ensure children can create their own choices, be encouraged and be able to communicate effectively to increase problem solving.

Young children often have big feelings and emotions and it is important to discuss how they can manage this and their behaviour. We use positive behaviour strategies to guide children's behaviour.

## **Planned activities**

A tremendous amount of planning goes into the weekly program for your child's age group. Activities and experiences are planned through observations, to encompass all developmental areas such as Social/Emotional, Cognitive, Language and Physical Development.

On commencement at this Centre each child is placed in a 'focus group'. Each week the focus group rotates and there are specific activities planned within the program for the children in that particular focus group.

A copy of the current program is displayed for you in each room. Any ideas or suggestions for our program are a valued and important part of planning an effective program - in fact, sometimes information such as a relative visiting from over seas can inspire a theme for weeks!

## Use of indoor and outdoor areas

We utilise both our indoor and outdoor areas — weather permitting — at different times throughout the day. Although we do have terrific shade structures, we do not utilise the garden areas between the hours of 11 and 3pm — it's just too hot, however the verandas are utilised throughout the entire day.

We have a very strict Sun & Hat policy — we apply sun screen to children whilst the children are outdoors and the wearing of hats for sun safety is adhered to.

All children attending the Centre need to bring and wear a broad rimmed hat that provides adequate shade from the sun. Staff also models this behaviour.

## Nutrition

The Centre provides a nutritionally balanced menu that is designed to meet the children's needs and it is changed on a regular basis. Each child is provided with the following 3 meals per day:

8.30 - 9.00am - the children are served morning tea.

11.00am - the children are served a cooked lunch.

2:30 - 3:00pm - the children are served afternoon tea.

On enrolment please indicate any special dietary needs or allergies. Our daily menu and nutritional information is located in the Centre foyer.

Our menu follows guidelines provided by Nutrition Australia.

Parents are welcome to provide favourite recipes from home and we enjoy sharing ours with you!

## Christmas Closedown

The Centre closes for a two week period of time over the Christmas/New Year break. The dates for this closure are available to parents by mid-year. Parents wont be charge for those two weeks.

## Celebrations

We are happy to share special occasions such as birthdays with your child. Please notify our cook if you are intending to bring in some special food to share. Birthday cakes are usually served at afternoon tea time. Staff can advise you on the number of children who will be present and suggest possible food choices — cake is fine, but no lollies, chips or nuts please.

## Nightcliff Preschool

Preschool in the Northern Territory is voluntary. Children are able to commence at Nightcliff Preschool on turning 3.5years old. There are two sessions for Pre-school: Morning - 8.00am to 10.45am & Afternoon - 12.00pm to 2.30pm.

If you choose to send your child to Preschool we are able to provide the following services;

Once a permission form has been signed we are able to pick up from the morning preschool session and drop off and pick up from the afternoon preschool session. Both sessions are here for lunch.

Depending upon the number of children walking to Pre-school, one or two Educators will escort the children.

Please supply a raincoat/umbrella for the wet season walks!

## Cyclones

Cyclone season runs from 1 November to 30 April each year.

The Nightcliff Family Centre will be directed by the Department of Education on whether to close during a Cyclone Warning. This will usually occur if a Cyclone Warning is issued or if the Cyclone intensifies overnight, before an official Warning is issued. If in doubt, if NT Schools are closed we are also closed.

In most cases we remain open whilst there is a Cyclone Watch however, once a Cyclone Warning is issued from the NT Bureau of Meteorology, the centre will close in response from the Department of Education and remain closed for the entire period of warning.

Parents are asked to collect their children immediately once a Warning is issued or if a cyclone is imminent.

Please read our Cyclone Procedure at the beginning of each season to refresh your Memory.



## **Confidentiality of Records**

The Director must ensure that information in the child's enrolment record is not divulged to another person unless necessary for the care or education of the child, to manage, medical treatment of the child, where expressly authorised by the parent or prescribed in the Education and Care Services National Regulations under the Education and Care Services National Law

## **Information Privacy Statement**

Nightcliff Family Centre will take all reasonable steps to protect all personal information from misuse, loss or from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure. Nightcliff Family Centre may disclose this information to Government, Regulatory Authorities and Council contractors or where there is a legislated requirement. Otherwise, information held will only be disclosed or amended upon receipt of written instructions from the Parent or from parties authorised to act on their behalf. Please note that everyone has the right to access their own personal information subject to some exceptions permitted by law. If you have any questions, concerns or complaints regarding privacy, please contact us.

## **DELIVERY AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN**

Our sign in/out system is located in the foyer, the iPad will be logged into the centre's kiosk which is linked to the Kangarootime system used for uploading Attendances directly to CCS for processing.

Your mobile number will be recorded through Kangarootime and a Pin can be chosen for yourself. Please see staff for help to set up the pin number for you.

On arrival, you need to take your child/ren inside the Centre, seek a staff member's acknowledgement of the child's arrival and sign the Child Care kiosk located in the foyer.

On departure you need to let a staff member know that you are leaving and taking your child/ren with you and sign-out using the appropriate Child Care kiosk located in the foyer. Any Absences and Public Holidays should be acknowledged as well, these will generally be done by staff and then need to be confirmed by a parent/carer.

## **COLLECTION BY SOMEONE ELSE**

Your child's enrolment form should carry the name of two emergency contact people. These names can be changed at any time. The Centre will release your child to the emergency contact when you telephone in advance and request this or if they are a designated emergency contact pick up person. The staff of Nightcliff Family Centre will endeavour to prevent anyone other than you or your emergency contacts to take your child from the Centre without you giving the Centre either written or phone permission. In the case where custody orders are not yet in effect, by law, staff cannot prevent the other parent, if known to staff, from collecting the child. Staff will inform this person that the parent that delivered the child to care will be contacted and ask for them to wait until done so. This person will need to show photo identification upon arrival.

**THIS IS FOR YOUR CHILD'S PROTECTION.**

## Keeping the Community in Childcare

The Nightcliff Family Centre is a community based childcare centre. This means it is not a profit driven operation. The Centre is concerned with providing the best possible care for our children at a very reasonable rate. To balance those conflicting goals we rely on active parental involvement in assisting with the management of the Centre.

Prior to enrolling your child you must consider your involvement in this community.

Being a member of the NFC Management Committee, getting involved in our fundraising efforts or helping with our working bees are active ways in which you can contribute.

The option of placing your child in the care of our non commercial Centre can only continue with parental involvement.

If there is no Management Committee there is no childcare centre.

Management Committee meetings are held every 6 weeks, in the early evening.

Working bees and fundraising activities are organised at the Directors digression.

## Story park

Storypark is an online system that allows educators to upload pictures and 'tag' individual families so that only your family can see the pictures of your child. If there are group photos, then several families will be 'tagged' and therefore will all see the picture. Storypark allows you to see observations of your child's learning and development as well as daily routines.

Once you're using Storypark, you can invite family members to access some of the pictures of your child also. This is great for families in Darwin as many of us have family down south or even overseas.

Storypark can also allow us to send important information on the Centre and events via posts on the platform.



**W**elcome to our NFC community,  
we want to make sure that you and  
your children will have the best  
experience whilst attending our  
Child Care Centre.

NFC Team

