

Waite Campus Childrens Centre

Orientation to child care

Trusting the care of your child to the educators at the centre is something we hope you can do with confidence.

When you begin using child care you are often experiencing other changes in your lives, commencing a new job, returning to work, establishing yourself in a new home. You may be anxious about your child and need to know that they will be well cared for and have their individual needs met. If your child is young, especially under 12 months, you may also be concerned over maintaining your child's routines regarding feeding and sleeping patterns.

Enrolment

Children all react individually and settle into child care differently. This process of settling in is assisted by a period of orientation for both you and your child.

We recommend that both you and your child have several orientation visits to the Centre so that:

- you can both become familiar with the new environment
- your child can begin to bond with the educators
- you can discuss your child's routines and behaviour patterns with their primary educator

The number of orientation visits will depend on the time you have available, and how your child is managing the transition to child care.

For children under 6 months and children over 2.5 years this orientation may need only a few visits for you to talk to educators and discuss the centre and room routines/ procedures.

For children 6 months -2.5 years the orientation process will often need several visits before your child takes up their required booking. Children of this age usually need time to get to know the educators who will be caring for them.

Educators focus is on children and we maintain good educator: child ratios throughout the day. There are therefore better times of the day for you to visit, when educators are able to spend time talking to you without compromising the care of other children

For initial visits the best times are:

10.00am - 11.30am

or

3.00pm - 4.30pm

An initial enrolment interview time needs to be made with the Director. After this orientation visits are arranged with the room coordinator and primary educator in your child's room.

We recommend at least 1-2 short visits of ½-1 hour with both you and your child at the centre,

- the first visit is for you to chat with your child's primary educator about their needs, Centre routines etc
- on the next visits, when you are ready you should leave your child with their primary educator while you remain close by. This is a good opportunity for you to read the Centre's Policies and Procedures manual and view the parent library in the reception area.

This can be followed by visits of **up to** 2 hours for your child without you at the Centre. Please discuss this with the educators.

If your child is able to commence care for a few shorter sessions before taking up their required booking this also allows them to gradually adjust to their new routine.

Even after a good orientation your child may be unsettled for a while depending on how often they attend, their general health, and what other changes are happening in their lives.

Children who have been in care for a number of weeks or months can become unsettled for short periods of time, just like sometimes adults don't feel like going to work.

Establishing a Routine

Once your child is attending child care regularly it is important to follow a routine which is familiar to your child when leaving them at the centre. Spend 5-10 relaxed minutes settling your child with a favourite experience. **Always** say goodbye to your child and give them a kiss, a hug or a wave and then leave quickly and smoothly. Both rushing out and lingering too long can add to the anxiety of separation. If you need help discuss this with the room coordinator or your child's primary educator.

It is also very important to maintain open two-way communication between educators and yourself, both verbal and written. You are welcome to phone the room at any time to have a brief chat with your child's primary educator about how your child is.

Please read all notices, newsletters and other information. Take the time to have a conversation with the educators every day, either at the beginning or the end of the visit.

To help children in their first few weeks of child care educators will give more individual attention to your child when they arrive and help them to become involved in the program. It helps for you to discuss your child's favourite experiences so that educators can plan for this.

Sleeping at child care

For young children sleeping at child care will be a different experience to sleeping at home.

Educators aim for each child to have a peaceful and happy time while they are at the centre and for the centre routines to compliment the child's at home care. Adequate day time sleep is very important for children. Some routines which may soothe and settle your child at home will not be accepted by them at the Centre. Some techniques which haven't worked at home will work at the centre, or perhaps you haven't tried them.

Educators in all rooms establish a peaceful atmosphere for sleeping by playing relaxing music and dimming lights, and encourage children to settle themselves to sleep.

Educators will sit with children and help them to relax.

Please remember that the care of babies and young children has an impact on back care for educators, due to this educators are unable to carry children for long periods of time or walk around rocking children to sleep in their arms.

Please make sure you discuss your child's sleep patterns with educators.

Educators are trained in Safe Sleep Practices and follow Safe Sleep guidelines at all times for children's sleep.

We look forward to sharing the care and education of your child with you and having your family as part of our centre community.

Thankyou

Eleanor and WCCC Educators