



Lyndhurst children's centre

Hawthorn Lane, PO Box 297, Bright VIC 3741 Ph: 03 5750 1367 Fax: 03 5755 1970
www.alpinechildrensservices.asn.au Email: lyndhurst@alpinechildrensservices.asn.au

INC. REGISTRATION NO: A006875Y ABN: 87 882 601 364

WELCOME TO OUR CENTRE



Parent Information Handbook

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1. Welcome to Lyndhurst Children's Centre

Lyndhurst Children's Centre is located close to the hub of Bright. The centre has a welcoming 0-2 room with a separate sleep nursery. The adjoining 2-3 room leads out to a shared 0-3 outdoor play environment with an under-cover sandpit to explore and an array of equipment to promote gross motor skill development, all set amongst beautiful trees. The 3-5 room is a vibrant space rich with opportunities to create, learn and play. This leads out to a large outdoor space designed around mature shade trees with a great area for cycling, under-cover sandpit, equipment and an inviting grassed area for group activities. The hub of the centre is the kitchen where our cook creates delicious home-style.

This handbook is designed to provide you with a thorough understanding of our service. It will equip you with the knowledge to help you and your child adapt to their new surroundings as smoothly as possible. We welcome any questions you may have and encourage your family to feel a part of our little community. We hope that your association with the centre will be a valuable and enjoyable one.

Alpine Children's Services

Alpine Children's Services (ACS) is the governing body that manages Lyndhurst Children's Centre. We are a proud, not-for-profit organisation that has been providing quality early childhood services to families throughout the Alpine Shire since 2000. ACS is managed by a committee of management made up of parent representatives across all services, two directors, the manager, a councillor and the community services manager. We meet on the 4th Monday at 7pm every month. Being on our committee of management really means you do have a voice. We welcome parent participation highly and enjoy working with parents to develop better outcomes for families.

Our Values

Our values provide a framework for all decisions and actions that uphold the performance of our organisation. ACS developed these values through a process of consultation of the Alpine Children's Services Committee of Management, staff and educators.

Sustainability | Innovation | Collaborative Relationships | Integrity

Award for Sustainable Practices

Alpine Children's Services are the winners of the Environmental Education in Early Childhood (EEEC) **RESPECT** award for Victoria for 2010. The RESPECT award is for Recognition of Excellent Sustainable Practice in Early Childhood.

National Quality Framework

The Australian Government is introducing a National Quality Framework to ensure high quality and consistent early childhood education and care across Australia. ACS is committed to achieving high quality results and regularly evaluates the service to ensure a very high standard is maintained. Our last accreditation took place in June 2010 where the centre received 'high quality'.

Our Focus

Our early childhood educators provide a warm, caring and sensitive environment. We understand the importance and value of **play**. This stimulates your child's growth and development so they can reach their full potential. We operate as a centre that promotes inclusiveness and embraces diversity. We strive to maintain a balance between home and centre life promoting the children's sense of security and belonging.

At Lyndhurst Children's Centre we value each other, our environment and ourselves.

We believe we should treat each other, as we ourselves would want to be treated. This includes being treated:

- With respect
- With kindness
- With honesty
- In a friendly and helpful manner
- In a cooperative manner (sharing and taking turns)
- In a way that includes others in our work and play.

We have a responsibility to:

- Play sensibly and fairly
- Look after other people's things as we would our own
- Think of the consequences of what we say and do
- Show appreciation and acknowledgement when other people do things for us.

We want to feel safe in our centre and enjoy our play times, therefore:

- We need to play and move around in a way that is safe for other people and ourselves
- Out of bounds areas are unsafe and that is why we don't play there.

We value our environment and want it to be safe, clean and attractive. We are all responsible for looking after our play areas. This includes:

- Our belongings
- Our equipment
- Our trees and plants
- Recycling when possible
- Putting rubbish in the bins.

Children are treated with respect and as individuals, with appropriate expectations and boundaries. Positive behaviour is consistently reinforced by our educators. **Educators communicate with children in a respectful manner** and engage them in the following experiences:

- Creative
- Intellectual
- Social
- Self-help
- Spontaneous
- Imaginary
- Physical
- Health and well-being
- Sensory
- Cultural Diversity

Educators, administration staff and management of the centre are committed to:

- The Australian Early Childhood Association Code of Ethics (2006)
- The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia
- The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework
- Using portfolio's to document the celebrations of a child's growth and learning
- Involving families in their child's education
- Emergent curriculum
- Confidentiality for children, families and staff
- Program planning that caters for the needs of all children
- Positive and effective communication
- Sustainable practices
- Professional development to ensure continuous quality improvement of the service.



2. General Information

Hours of operation

Open from 8.00am until 6.00 pm Monday to Friday, except public holidays.

Session times are:	Mornings Session	8.00am to 1.00pm
	Afternoon Session	1.00pm to 6.00pm
	Respite Session	9am to 3.30pm
	All Day	8.00am to 6.00pm

Kindergarten programs: Session times change from year to year and are dependent upon enrolments. Please call the centre for details.

The centre generally closes two days prior to Christmas day and reopens two days after the New Year's Day public holiday.

Child Care Orientation

A new environment can create anxiety for many children. Even if your child has been in another child care situation or centre, they will still need time to adjust to the new staff and environment. You are more than welcome to come in and look around our centre and become familiar with the educators, children and daily routines.

Parents can help their child adjust by:

- Visiting the centre several times with the child prior to actually leaving him or her.
- Ensuring that your child has his or her special 'security' object such as a teddy or blanket.
- By always telling your child that you are going and that you will return.
- Returning at the agreed time - educators use this time to reassure your child as to your arrival (e.g. Mummy will be back after afternoon tea).
- By continuing to be involved with the centre. Parents are welcome into the rooms to share their child's day at anytime. We encourage anyone with special talents to come and share them with the children and educators.

Parents are encouraged to phone the centre as many times, and for as long as necessary to find out how their child is settling. A phone call is better than calling in if your child has trouble settling. The educators will not allow your child to be upset for long periods. They will always call if needed.

Drop off and Collection of Children

Children must arrive and leave the centre with their parent or lawful authorised person (as listed on your enrolment form). The parent/carer must 'sign in/sign out' their child in the attendance register at both arrival and departure times. A contact number must be left each day in case of an emergency. This is a protection for you and the centre. No person under the age of eighteen years of age may deliver or collect a child from the centre (with the exception of parents).

Please ensure that children are supervised prior to drop off and after collection times. If your child is absent for the day for any reason, or there is to be any variation to the normal collection and delivery arrangements then please notify the centre in advance (or as early as

possible), a simple phone call is all that is required.

We would appreciate that you do not allow your child to write/draw on the sign in/out books, as these are legal documents.

Change of Details

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the centre immediately if there is a change of details such as home address and phone number: this also applies to changes in work address and phone numbers. It is important that centre staff are able to contact you quickly should the need arise.

Custody and Access

Prior written authority must be produced if someone other than the parent is to collect a child, if a parent is experiencing problems associated with custody and access, please discuss this with the team leader or manager. A copy of current court orders will be requested if there is any likelihood of problems associated with collection of a child. It is a parent's responsibility to notify the centre of any changes to court orders.

Child Protection

Centre staff will ensure that it fulfils its responsibility regarding the monitoring of each child under its care and comply with mandatory reporting requirements. Centre staff will respect confidentiality in all matters. Refer to the ACS Child Protection Policy.

Clothing, Shoes and Weather Protection

We believe that young children learn through play and they will be encouraged to explore a wide range of materials and activities, including messy activities. It is important that you provide clothes for your children that allow them to feel comfortable move freely and can stand dirt! Each child should bring a complete change of clothes (including singlet, underpants, shoes, and socks) in a suitable bag. Infants will need more than one change of clothing. We ask that all clothing be clearly named. Please bring a sun hat for the summer months.

For your child's safety, you are asked not to send your child in thongs, gumboots, crocs or backless sandals. Shoes need to be comfortable, well fitted and suitable for outdoor play and climbing. In cold weather a warm coat and boots or sturdy shoes are necessary so that children can still go outside to play. Spending time outdoors even in winter promotes good health through exercise and fresh air. In hot weather we ask that shoulders be covered at all times for sun protection, no singlets or dresses with thin straps.

Nappies

The centre provides disposable nappies. Children are changed regularly throughout the day and this is noted on the whiteboard in your child's room.

Smoking

It is important to note that centre areas are 'No Smoking' zones.

Child Care Food and Nutrition

The centre has a comprehensive nutrition policy that was developed in consultation with families and local dieticians. The centre is accredited with the Start Right Eat Right program: this program ensures children are provided with 50% of the recommended daily intake for

young children. Lyndhurst Children's Centre is a nut free centre.

We provide morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. Milk and water will be provided for morning and afternoon tea. Children do also have access to water at all times throughout the day. Lunchtime is a social occasion where centre staff sit and chat with the children. Children are also part of the setting up and cleaning away process as they choose.

Infant formulas must be supplied in original tin and given to our kitchen staff. The bottles must be clearly labelled and placed in the refrigerator on arrival. Please inform an educator of the time your child had their previous bottle. It is your responsibility to notify staff of any food allergies or dietary restrictions, concerning your child. If your child is allergic to cow's milk, parents are to supply the alternative, for example soy or rice milk.

Birthday Celebrations

If you would like us to celebrate your child's birthday, we ask that you supply a simple cake or cupcakes. Sweets and 'extras' are not necessary; we would prefer to supply our usual afternoon tea with the cake. A simple cake recipe is available from our kitchen staff.

Please Note: Due to our stringent Food Audit requirements we ask that cakes do not have fresh cream or butter icing and that they are provided on a disposable plate. We also request that a list of ingredients is supplied. No child is to bring in their own lunches or snacks, no cordial or juice in bottles.

Rest and Sleep

Rest and sleep is available to children. Educators are guided by parents as to the individual needs of their children, such as timing and comforters. Sleep and rest routines are based on SIDS recommendations. Speak to a staff member or refer to the ACS Sleep Procedure document for more details.

Toilet Training

Educators aim to follow the child and parent's lead regarding toilet training. Since it is important that there is consistency in expectations for successful toilet training, educators and parents will discuss the child's progress regularly. Please remember to supply plenty of spare underpants, trousers/shorts, socks and shoes.

Daily Charts

Daily charts and daily dairies are set up in all rooms to inform parents of their child's day. Please refer to the whiteboards for information about eating and sleeping and to the nappy change schedule.

Referrals

On occasion, the educators may determine that a child or family needs some service which the centre cannot provide, e.g. speech therapy. In these cases the team leader or manager will discuss this with you and offer some recommendations.

Toys

The arrival of toys from home does cause concern for educators. We do NOT encourage toys to be brought to the centre other than those for comfort or security reasons e.g. a special bear or and a blanket for sleep. Unfortunately, no responsibility can be taken for other toys as educators cannot keep track of these items throughout the day and loss can be a disappointment for the child.

Toys brought to the centre must be placed in the child's bag until home time to avoid disruption. Toys that encourage aggressive play are not available, and we request that parents ensure that guns, swords and similar toys are not brought to the centre.

3. Fees

Fees Policy

When you begin at the centre, fees and fee assistance will be discussed.

- Fee assistance is available for parents whose children attend long day care.
- All fees must be paid on a weekly or fortnightly basis.
- Outstanding fees must not exceed 3 weeks.

Enrolment Application Fee

All new enrolments will be charged a non-refundable amount of \$10.

Child Care Fees

Full fees are charged for each day the centre is in operation from the opening day in January, through to the closing day in December, unless the child's position is permanently terminated prior to the finishing date (with the exception of public holidays).

All absences, whether due to illness or holidays are charged at full rate.

Fee Payment

Fees may be paid by

1. On-line transfer of fees. Please use the following information -

BSB: 083 796 Account Number: 51595 8680

Please ensure you note your surname and service in the reference section so the centre can track parent payments on the bank statement. For example, 'Smith LMCC'.

2. EziDebit - where a nominated amount is deducted from your account every week/fortnight/month (please speak to office staff for a form).
3. Cash/cheque, must be placed into envelope, details completed on envelope and envelope placed into slot under office window (Cash payments are left at own risk. Centre Staff or Management will accept no responsibility for mislaid or incorrect cash, although every care will of course be taken). Cheques should be made payable to - Alpine Children's Services.

Parents having difficulty meeting payments should immediately make an appointment with the team leader/manager to discuss any problems the family may be experiencing, and work out a resolution.

Failure to meet the agreed resolution will result in the termination of your child's position.

Procedure for Outstanding Fees

A lapse in payment of 3 weeks is considered to be an outstanding fee.

Outstanding amounts are to be brought to the attention of the family personally with a means of resolving the situation amicably.

An account will be sent out to the parent or guardian if they cannot be contacted personally. In the event of the account accumulating and not being paid, a phone call will be made requesting payment.

It is up to the discretion of the manager/team leader to assist the parent or guardian in establishing a reasonable payment arrangement. If a payment is not forthcoming legal action may be taken.

Child Care Benefits (Fee relief)

Child Care Benefits (CCB) is available to most families and helps reduce the amount of fees that you pay. The amount of Child Care Benefit you get for approved care depends on your yearly family income. **Zero rate is payable over the following thresholds:**

Number of children in care	Income limits
1	\$134,443
2	\$139,333
3 or more	\$157,329 plus \$29,721 for each child after the 3rd

The CCB usually remains current for up to 12 months ending on 31 March of the year after you apply. As a courtesy, the Family Assistance Office will send you a reminder and form each year, before your assessment expires. If families elect not to register with the Family Assistance Office they will be charged full fees.

When applying for Child Care Benefits you will need to advise the Family Assistance Office that your child is attending Lyndhurst Children's Centre. **For more information call the Family Assistance Office on 136 150.**

Allowable absences

The Family Assistance Office (the funding body for child care services) has introduced an accountability requirement for parents in receipt of CCB.

As well as signing attendance records when you drop off and collect your child, you are now required to give a reason for absences. The Family Assistance Office considers that CCB should be more closely aligned to child care actually provided. The service may be audited to check that we are complying with these new requirements.

You will get CCB for 42 absence days per child per each financial year. These can be for any days and will not require proof.

You can also get CCB for additional absence days once your initial 42 absence days have been used. There is no limit on these days but you may be required to provide documentation to support the absence.

The additional absence days reasons are:

- illness (with a medical certificate), or another absence due to sickness of the child, a parent or
- sibling, supported by medical certificates
- non-immunisation
- rostered days off
- rotating shift work

- temporary closure of a school or pupil-free days
- period of local emergency - the service is closed or the child is unable to travel to the service

Child Care Rebate

The Child Care Rebate (CCR) is a payment from the Australian Government that helps working families with the cost of child care. To get the CCR, both you and your partner (if you have one) must have had work, training or study-related commitments at some time during a week or have an exemption. No minimum number of hours is required.

From 1 July 2010 the Child Care Rebate annual cap will be \$7,500 per child per year, subject to the passage of legislation.

There is no income test for the CCR. If you are eligible for CCB but your CCB entitlement is zero due to income, you are still eligible for the CCR. You must, however, still register with the Family Assistance Office

The Child Care Rebate is based on your Child Care Benefit entitlement. If you choose to claim Child Care Benefit as a lump sum payment, you will not receive your Child Care Rebate entitlement until the end of that year, once your Child Care Benefit entitlement has been determined.

For further information on your eligibility for CCB and CCR please contact the Family Assistance Office:

- Access online services at www.familyassist.gov.au
- Call 13 61 50 between 8am and 8pm (local time) Monday to Friday
- Email through www.familyassist.gov.au
- Visit a Family Assistance Office (located in Medicare Offices, and Centrelink Customer Service Centres.).

Late Pickup Fee:

First Time: A warning and a once-off fee of \$10 will apply for the first time a child is collected up to ten minutes late from his/her session. If a child is collected more than ten minutes late from his/her session regular late fees will apply.

Regular Late Fees: When a child is collected up to five minutes late from his/her session, a late fee of \$10 will apply. A further \$10 per child will be charged for each additional one (1) minute thereafter. This applies to all sessions (morning, afternoon, respite and full day). It should be further noted that late fees will be charged even when one child is collected on time but a sibling in another room is collected late from his/her session.

4. Bookings

Permanent Sessions

On commencement at the centre your child's hours of care are a contract agreed upon by you and Alpine Children's Services. It is vital that you adhere to these times for two reasons:

- We must always maintain a legal staff/child ratio in accordance with the Children's Services Regulations 2009.
- Your child knows at what time to expect you and may become concerned if you are late.

Bookings

Once children have a permanent booking, days may be changed subject to the availability of a vacancy on the preferred day. Such changes need to be made one week in advance and must be a permanent booking, e.g. if you wish to change your day for one week only you will be required to pay for your permanent day plus the new casual booking. Bookings are open for discussion at any time.

Casual bookings can be made depending on availability. Casual bookings incur a booking fee and must be cancelled at least twenty-four hours prior to the start of the session to avoid charge.

Information about booking a place for your child for the following year will be provided to families in October.

Priority of Access

The government has established guidelines for priority of access to the centre. All centres receiving subsidies from the government must abide by these guidelines.

First Priority: Children at serious risk of abuse or neglect.

Second Priority: Children of parents who are both working/studying (as defined under section 14 of the Family Assistance Act).

Third Priority: All other children.

Within each category, children are to be given priority who fall into these groups:

- 1 Children from Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander families
- 2 Children from families which include a disabled family member
- 3 Children in socially isolated families
- 4 Children of single parents

Please advise the team leader or the manager if your circumstances change. Your child's place at the centre may require reviewing.

Waiting List

The centre maintains a waiting list of prospective children. As vacancies occur in each age group, parents are contacted and offered a place. Extra days can be offered to families as they occur. The waiting list will be maintained according to the following guidelines:

1. Priority of access.
2. According to date of request for childcare.

Transition

Parents will be advised in advance if their child is to move from one group to another, as young children can become unsettled with the change. Parent/staff communication is vital to ensure that the child settles into the new situation. A child will progress to the next group according to their age and stage of development and the availability of a position in the next group.

5. Centre Staffing

Regulations and Training

Under 3 years:

- One early childhood educator with a minimum of 2 years training per 12 children
- One early childhood educator with a minimum of 1 year's training per four children

Over 3 years:

- One early childhood educator with a minimum of 2 year's training per 30 children
- One early childhood educator with a minimum of 1 year's training per 15 children

All staff hold current first aid and anaphylaxis awareness certificates and asthma training. All staff attend training each year, including professional development in the areas of behaviour guidance, child development, dealing with conflicts, communication skills etc.

Staff Illness:

As you can expect, educators occasionally become ill and as with children, educators must remain away from the centre until all signs of the illness have passed. The centre has a reliable pool of casual educators to call on during these times.

6. Educational program

The Victorian Early Years Learning Framework (the Victorian Framework)

The centre adopted the Victorian Framework in January 2010 as the basis of the educational program. The *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework* advances children's learning and development from birth to eight years by early childhood professionals working together, and with families, to achieve common outcomes for children.

The Victorian Framework:

- identifies five early years learning and development outcomes for all children
- identifies eight practice principles for learning and development, categorised as collaborative, effective and reflective. The practice principles describe the most effective ways for early childhood professionals to work together and with children and families to facilitate learning and development
- emphasises the importance of supporting children's and families' transitions as they move within and across services throughout the early childhood period.

Each week educators have non-contact time to plan and evaluate the educational program. All educators contribute to the program and also to each child's portfolio. Your child's portfolio is a celebration of your child's process of learning: what your child has learned and how they have gone about learning; how your child thinks, questions, analyses, synthesises, produces, and creates; and how your child interacts--intellectually, emotionally and socially--with others. Families are able to contribute to their child's portfolio; educators can incorporate these contributions into the education program.

Your child's portfolio is available at all times in your child's room. Families may also take their child's portfolio home to share with other family members or to take more time to add to the portfolio.

Children are provided with a wide range of developmentally appropriate experiences in language, literature, music and movement, art-craft, dramatic play, science, maths and sensory activities. Motor activities are geared to promote physical development and coordination. We aim to achieve this within a relaxed home-like environment.

Excursions and Incursions

Throughout the year a variety of incursions are planned to enrich the educational program. Incursions may include music performers, local paramedic officers, local rangers from Parks Victoria, local CFA and water education officers from NE H20. These events are conducted as part of the education program and are not just a social event.

Excursions may include visits to local schools, local shops or performances at a local performing arts centre. The centre is conscious of the cost of such events and as a result events are kept to a minimum acceptable level to support early childhood programs. A risk assessment is undertaken prior to the excursion and is provided to families. Permission forms are to be filled out by families prior to each excursion. Careful planning also goes into our programs to ensure enrichment in both the educational and social development of the children.

Inclusion and Diversity

The early childhood educators ensure all children are included into the program regardless of cultural background, additional needs etc. There are government support programs that provide funding for an additional assistant across all early childhood services including child care and kindergarten programs.

7. Communication with parents

We have several means of communication: via email or your child's 'pocket' for receipts, newsletters, notices and information. Please take a moment to read notice boards for current information about meetings, discussions and other activities happening both within and outside the centre. Weekly plans and daily routines are on the notice boards in each room.

Parent Interviews

You are invited to make an appointment to see your child's educator at any time throughout the year to discuss such items as your child's progress and any concerns you may have.

Keeping the Centre Informed

As the safety and well being of your children is our primary concern, we repeat our need for accurate information from you. Please notify staff of:

- Any changes of home or work address and telephone numbers. It is essential we can contact you in an emergency. Also please keep contact numbers up to date.
- Any medical details relating to your child. Current contact numbers, change of medical practitioner
- Custody arrangements. The manager/team leader must be given notification in writing if access is prohibited to any person. Please notify the manager/team leader of any changes in custody and access arrangements.

Parent Involvement

Parents are encouraged to become involved in the centre. This is the best way of becoming familiar with the program and all centre staff. Spending time on the floor reading to your child before you leave or when you return is appreciated and recommended. Try to leave enough time each day for a daily 'check in' with educators. This will enable you to report any significant changes happening at home that may affect your child's day. Likewise, the educators will be telling you about your child's day at the centre.

Parents can also be involved in the decision making of the centre by participating in policy reviews, annual feedback surveys, questionnaires on specific topics, attending the annual general meeting or nominating for a parent position on the ACS Committee of Management.

Annual Parent Surveys

The ACS Committee of Management and staff at the centre would appreciate your help in ensuring that the centre continues to offer high quality early childhood services.

We hope you will offer us your opinions on how the service meets your needs and also your ideas for improvement. We review our service on an annual basis and need to know if you are satisfied with the service the centre provides. However, your comments and concerns are welcome at anytime and may be addressed to either the manager or the ACS Committee of Management.

Communication with Families

Parent information sessions will be held once a year and cover a range of topics relevant to early childhood including the health and well-being of the children.

Our notice board in each of the room is used for posting notices and articles that may be of interest to parents. Please check the board regularly for new information. Parents can also arrange with the team leader/manager to display notices of events and items of interest on the board. There is also a menu board in front of the kitchen so parents can check weekly menu's and get some tips and ideas for cooking at home.

Quarterly parent newsletters are sent home via email or supplied in your child's 'pocket. This provides an update on all the important information about the centre's events and happenings. Parents are also invited to contribute items of interest to the newsletter.

Visit www.alpinechildrensservices.asn.au for full details on our services.

Fundraising

Throughout the year fund raising activities are organized by our fund raising committee and your co-operation is essential for the success of these events. The money raised is used to purchase equipment for your children.

Grievance Procedures for Families

- If a family has a grievance in relation to the centre and its operations, an appointment should be made with the manager/team leader to discuss the issue. Every attempt will be made to resolve the problem co-operatively and quickly.
- If the grievance is not resolved in discussion with the manager/team leader, the problem can then be expressed in writing and forwarded to the ACS Committee of Management via the President. The Committee's policy sub-committee will meet to discuss the issue and attempt to resolve the grievance.
- If the sub-committee is unable to resolve the grievance then the appropriate authorities will be contacted (i.e. the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development)
- All issues will be treated confidentially.
- All new parents will be given the centre's current information booklet in which this grievance procedure is described.
- Parents may choose to contact the Children's Services Advisor (Joanne Bruce) in Wodonga on (02) 6055 7788.



8. Behaviour Guidance

The centre has a comprehensive behavior guidance policy that is in line with current early childhood theory, practice and the centre's philosophy.

The centre promotes a sense of self worth and empowerment, allowing children to resolve conflicts by developing a positive attitude towards themselves and others.

Empowering Young Children

- Making decisions - power to choose/make choices.
- Autonomy - power to try/respecting being allowed to do in own time.
- Fostering competence - power to do so.

Our ultimate goal is to eliminate inappropriate behaviour and increase positive socially acceptable and competent behaviour by fostering self-esteem and self worth.

We aim to achieve this through:

- Respecting what the child is feeling, allowing children to understand emotions.
- Using appropriate language.
- Using positive guidance and behaviour techniques.
- Role modelling, courtesy, fairness, equality, concern and affection.
- Providing experiences in an environment that encourages children and promotes positive behaviour.
- Offering children clear, rational explanations when a dilemma arises.
- Offering verbal encouragement that acknowledges strengths, values, contributions, respects independence, shows faith in abilities and notices improvement or effort.

Behaviour guidance techniques are promoted through a sound knowledge of how children develop. Each child is an individual, unique in its own way. Therefore:

- Limits will be always clear and consistent.
- Children will be encouraged to develop self-discipline and take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- Children will be encouraged to enjoy being co-operative with their peers and adults.

Staff will:

- Ignore negative behaviour as far as is reasonable.
- Focus on positive behaviour to build self-esteem.
- Give clear directions and explanations for them.
- Redirect and distract where necessary.
- Give children positive choices.
- Allow children to acknowledge emotions i.e. anger, fear, frustration and joy giving help and encouragement in dealing with them.

- Be aware of different stages of development and appropriate behaviour.
- Focus on behaviour not child.
- Look for reason behind continued negative or disruptive behaviour and in consultation with parent's deal with the underlying problem.
- Children need to function in an environment of approval to feel good about themselves.

There may be circumstances where inappropriate behaviour is being displayed and the behaviour guidelines have proved unsuccessful. If other children or staff are at risk, reference to our grievance and harassment policy will be made.

9. Health & Safety

Where there are people there will be cross infection. When a child is ill, they need one-to-one care. No early childhood service is able to offer this. For working parents it is important to consider a support network in case your child becomes ill, e.g. grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends etc.

Please do not send your child if he/she has:

- A FEVER - The definition of a fever is an oral (mouth) temperature or forehead using a forehead thermometer) temperature greater than 37.5°C or an axillary (armpit) temperature greater than 37°C. A child with a fever must be kept at home (or will be sent home). It is advised that the child stay home fever free for at least 24 hours. His/her activity level and appetite should be back to normal as well. Parents should watch for secondary problems such as tonsillitis or ear infection. Seek medical advice, and give child plenty of fluids.
- BEEN PRESCRIBED ANTIBIOTICS FOR AN ACUTE ILLNESS - A child who has been prescribed an antibiotic for an acute illness should be kept at home for at least 24 hours.
- DIARRHOEA - A child who has watery stools should not return to the centre until he/she has been free of the diarrhoea for 48 hours. A doctor's certificate may be required stating that your child is clear of infectious diarrhoea. Diarrhoea causes great concern to staff each year as children can be hospitalised with a severe attack. Seek medical advice and give your child plenty of fluids.
- VOMITING - A child who is vomiting should be kept home until 48 hours after the vomiting has stopped. Micro-organisms, which cause vomiting and diarrhoea are highly contagious and will spread through the centre very rapidly. Seek medical advice and give your child plenty of fluids.
- COLD SORES - (Herpes simplex) are painful sores (vesicles) usually around the mouth and are sometimes associated with a fever. The condition requires medical attention if the infection is severe or if the sores become secondarily infected. The child must be excluded until the sores have healed.

- THRUSH - We would advise exclusion of the child for at least 48 hours after appropriate medical treatment has commenced.
- ANY CONTAGIOUS DISEASE. such as measles, mumps, chicken pox. Exclusion periods are set by the Department of Human Services and must be adhered to.

Immunisation

It is recommended that all children have protection against infectious diseases when possible. Diphtheria, Tetanus, Polio, Measles and Mumps are five serious childhood diseases that could be eradicated if all children received immunisation available at your Maternal & Child Health Centre. Immunisation is the parent's responsibility.

You will need to speak to your doctor along with the Family Assistance Office if you have chosen not to immunise your child. Parents must complete the 'Immunisation exemption Conscientious objection form' as part of the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register process. Please speak to the manager/team leader/administration officer/kindergarten teacher if your child is not immunised.

Medications and Medication Book

To protect your child from incorrect administration of medicine, a strict medications policy has been developed. Medication can be stored in the refrigerator or locked first aid cabinet and must never be left in your child's bag. Anaphylaxis and Asthma and Allergy forms must be completed by a doctor and submitted before commencing care. It is important to have a discussion with staff as well.

Children may only be given medications at the centre if the medication has been prescribed by a medical practitioner and are in a container labelled by the pharmacy with the child's name.

The parents of a child, who has a chronic condition (e.g. asthma, anaphylaxis or epilepsy) which requires prolonged/preventative medication, must supply the centre with a doctor's certificate at the time of enrolment or onset of the illness.

The centre has medication forms, which must be used if you wish staff to administer medication in any form. The following details must be completed:

- Child's Name
- Date
- Name of Medication
- Reason for medication
- Time of last dosage given and time for next dosage
- Required dosage (the dosage on the bottle and in the Medication Book must be the same)
- Parent signature

Accidents, Injury, Trauma or Illness

In the case of a significant accident, injury, trauma or illness the staff will attempt to contact the family immediately. Please ensure that the telephone contact you have given is correct. If emergency treatment is required an ambulance will be arranged without delay.

On enrolment parents will sign the authority for staff to seek treatment at a hospital or call a

doctor and/or ambulance so that emergency treatment may be commenced.

It is advisable that parents consider having ambulance membership, as parents will be responsible for all costs involved should an ambulance be required.

All accidents are recorded in an Accidents, Injury, Trauma or Illness form. Families will be asked to sign this book. Forms are also filled in for Department of Education and Early Childhood Development when a child requires medical treatment.

Head Lice

Head lice are friendly little creatures, which show no particular bias to whose head they are attracted. Having head lice is no indication of lack of cleanliness and should not have any social stigma attached.

Regular checks should be made of your child's head, particularly if he/she seems to have an itchy scalp. If lice are found, a treatment solution can be obtained from the chemist. The child concerned will be excluded from centre until treatment has been carried out. Effective treatment is when a treatment is used and all the lice are dead.

Parents will be notified of any outbreaks of head lice.

Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances:

The centre has a *Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances Policy and Procedure*. This policy and procedure outlines our commitment to providing a safe environment for your child. There are a number of methods we implement to control risks from dangerous goods and hazardous substances. For example, a quarterly audit is performed to ensure all dangerous products are stored and labelled correctly and a material and safety data sheet (that outlines first aid treatment) is available. Please ask a staff member for a copy of this policy and procedure if you would like any further information.

Sun Smart Centre

Lyndhurst Children's Centre is a sun smart centre. Parents are to provide a sun hat without cords for your child to use whilst in care. No caps please. Sun hats are to be worn by all children when outdoors from September to April (inclusive). Your child's hat will remain at the centre for the year.

The centre will ensure a supply of SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen for use as directed by staff. If any child has a particular sensitivity to the sunscreen provided by the centre, the parent must provide an alternative, labeled sunscreen at their own cost to be left at the centre from October to April (inclusive).

Educational information about the centre's sun smart policy requirements and the harmful effects of exposure to ultra violet rays will be reinforced in a positive way through the newsletter, informal contact and the centre's notice boards. At relevant times during each year the educational program will include sun smart education. The educators will ensure that children, staff and participants within the program wear an approved sun hat and SPF30+ sunscreen during outdoor activities.

Safety

Please find detailed below some of the centre's safety issues.

- The gate must be closed securely after entering/leaving the centre grounds.
- Only open the gate or door for the child/ren in your care.
- DO NOT open the gate for other children. It is the responsibility of each parent/carer to be responsible for their children.
- Children must be supervised by the parent/carer prior to the session beginning.
- Children are not permitted to open the gate or door at any time.
- Please prevent your children from swinging/hanging from the gate and discourage attempts to open doors or gates.

Car Park Safety

(taken from 'A Road Safety Guide for Parents', a Vic Roads publication)

Car parks are confusing for small children. You need to work out some rules to help your child to know what to do when getting out of the car.

When parking at the centre please:

- Do not allow your child to leave the car until you are at the door waiting.
- If you need to get a baby out of the car, have your child wait inside until you are ready.
- Once out of the vehicle stand with your child and look around for moving vehicles and talk to your child about where dangers may come from.

The car park should only have one-way traffic, therefore:

- Cars are to **enter** the car park at Hawthorne Lane
- Cars are to **exit** the car park at Hawthorne Lane

It is extremely important for both emergency and safety reasons that you do not park on the grass or directly in front of the centre.

Emergency Evacuation and/or Emergency Lockdown

Policies and procedures are in place in the event of an emergency evacuation. We will also practice these procedures with the children at regular intervals.



10. ACS Management Committee Information and Policies

Committee of Management

The key duties and responsibilities of the committee of management include the following:

- To develop policies for the centre in conjunction with staff and parents.
- To engage, control and dismiss staff as required.
- To plan and manage the finances of the centre.
- To keep all necessary records and make these available to the members.
- To keep members informed on the operations of the centre and encourage their participation.
- To liaise with the community.
- To ensure statutory regulations relating to children's services are observed.
- To ensure that appropriate insurance has been taken out to cover the operation of the service and the operation of the centre.
- To ensure the ACS Incorporation Rules are followed.

Alpine Children's Services Manager & Team Leader

The manager oversees the administrative functions of the centre and the decisions of the committee of management. The manager and/or the team leader welcome new families and familiarises them with the centre; maintains an overall view of the centre and the staff and assists with the integration of the centre as a community service. The manager and/or the team leader are responsible for the overall program of the centre, including children staff and parents. The centre has an enthusiastic team of staff who maintain and develop the daily living and learning experiences of the children; they liaise closely with the parents and work as a team in the overall program of the centre.

Policies

The centre operates within a framework of policies that have been developed in consultation with staff and parents and approved by the committee of management. Policies and procedure continue to be reviewed and parents and staff are encouraged to participate. Parents are informed of policy changes through newsletters. A copy of all policy documents is on display in the centre foyer and a 'take-home' copy can be obtained from the office.

11. Sustainability Focus

As an organisation we strive to embed 'green' practices into the way our services are run. We have nominated sustainability officers at each service and parent representation who help to initiate and implement environmental awareness and education to staff, children and families. Some of our activities at the centre include:-

- Growing your own - vegetables, herbs, fruit and plants
- Ride or Walk week - encouraging families to rethink the way they travel (Oct)
- Water education session with North East Water (Nov)
- Scraps - our cuddly bear who comes home with families to get up to all sorts of environmental adventures
- Recycling - all most everything you can think of (paper, mobile phones, batteries and soon soft plastics).
- Worm farms and composting
- Simple things like switching off lights and saving water.

12. Useful Contacts

LYNDHURST CHILDREN'S CENTRE	(03) 5750 1367 PHONE (03) 5755 1970 FAX
MANAGER (JENNY KROMAR)	0439 999 788
AMBULANCE, FIRE & POLICE	000
MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH CENTRE	0417 147120
ALPINE SHIRE	(03) 5755 0555
BRIGHT HOSPITAL	(03) 5755 0100
BRIGHT MEDICAL CENTRE	(03) 5750 1000
CENTRELINK	136 150
PARENTLINE	132 289
INTERPRETING SERVICES	131 450
LIFELINE	131 114
ROYAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL	(03) 9345 5522
POISONS INFORMATION	131 126
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CHILDREN'S SERVICES ADVISOR (JOANNE BRUCE)	(02) 6055 7788

We hope that the information in this booklet helps parents to understand the operation of the centre. We welcome any enquiries you may have regarding the information and policies.

We are committed to providing high quality early childhood services where families and staff can contribute to the development and well being of children.

