**Barham Preschool**

**and**

**Early Learning Centre**

**Assoc Inc.**



Parent Information Handbook

**Contact Details**

**Barham Preschool and Early Learning Centre**

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Barham, NSW 2732

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**Parayi, Nyuka Wara**

**(Welcome)**

We wish to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we play and learn. We pay our respects to the Barapa Barapa and Wemba Wemba people, their elders past, present and emerging.

We welcome you to the Barham Preschool and Early Learning Centre, we hope you enjoy your time with us. This booklet is designed to help you navigate your way within our service however if you have any further questions or queries please don’t hesitate to speak with one of our friendly staff or committee members.

Barham Preschool and Early Learning Center aim to provide a community-based, culturally and developmentally inclusive service with programs that cater for all children and their families.

**Centre Background**

The original Barham Preschool had its first session in the Barham Methodist Hall with records dating back to 1969. In 1976 the Barham Preschool moved to the newly erected building at 49 Noorong Street Barham and has been operating at the present location since. The preschool has had a few extensions done over the past few years, with the latest being our new 4-year-old room completed in 2012. In 2019 Barham Preschool made the leap into providing a long day care service.

The service is a non-profit charitable community organisation which provided early childhood education for children 6 weeks to less than six years. The service requests parent and community support in making children’s lives outside the family home a happy and rewarding one.

Barham Preschool Association Inc is a member of the Community Connections Solutions Australia (CCSA). CCSA is a not-for-profit, non-government, membership-based organisation that supports the management of high-quality early childhood services and other community organisations

**Committee of Management**

The service is controlled by a committee of management which consists of family members of current and future children attending the centre and/or broader members of the community. All members are elected at the Annual General Meeting which is held in February each year.

The Committee of Management is the “licensee” of the Service and is therefore responsible to ensure that the governance of the service is in accordance with the “Children’s Services Regulation 2010” under the “Children and Young Persons (care and protection) Act 1998.

The Committee of Management meets monthly. At the first meeting, being the handover meeting, all executive positions are required to be filled. Members of the Committee of Management are expected to sit for a period of 12 months until the following Annual General Meeting. The Committee consists of up to five elected executive members and other non-elected ordinary members. Only the elected committee members are able to vote.

The Directors, Administration Officer and/or the Educational Leader attends as the staff representative.

All Committee meetings are open and therefore all families and community members are welcome to attend. Families and community members are invited to join sub committees to help with fundraising, policy development, planning and other issues.

**Decision Making Process**

All decisions regarding the service are discussed and voted on at Committee level. A majority vote is required for any decision to be passed. The Committee needs to focus on decisions made for the centre as a whole and no decision can be made without a quorum of three elected members present.

**Mission Statement**

The Barham Preschool and Early Learning Centre, through collaboration between families, children and staff will continually strive to provide a unique, flexible and high-quality preschool and long day care program to service our local community needs. Embracing best practice and responsive play-based programs, we will foster independence, confidence, resilience, respect, imagination and a love of learning for all our children.

**Philosophy**

To provide a flexible community-based Preschool and Long Day Care service for children aged 6 weeks to 5 years which meets the different needs of Barham/Koondrook and neighbouring communities. To support families in all aspects of their children’s development and specific support to those children with special needs. The rights and interest of the child are paramount to our service.

To provide a caring and supportive environment which reflects individual and cultural diversity for all attending our centre. An environment that allows all children to inherit the elements of the Early Years Framework, - Belonging, Being and Becoming.

To provide a stimulating environment which encourages the children’s play and learning which allows them to develop; expression and personality, curiosity and creativity, connections with prior experiences, new learning, relationships and a sense of wellbeing. To ensure the program caters for the individual needs and development of each child by becoming aware of unique skills, talents and needs. Reflecting on what the children know and how to build on their learning allowing them to become successful, competent and capable learners.

To encourage family involvement by constructing a friendly, relaxing atmosphere at the centre in which families feel free to participate and children enjoy themselves. Developing partnerships with families and educators to develop children’s learning in all areas. Communicating and supporting families about their children’s learning and learning outcomes. Valuing the cultures of our families, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

To promote children’s learning by adopting holistic approaches, being responsive to children, planning and implementing learning through play and intentional teaching. Providing activities that help children develop physical and social learning. Provide for continuity in experiences to enable children to experience success and help with transitions from home to care, to preschool to school in the years to follow.

**Incorporated Non-for-profit Association**

Barham Preschool and Early Learning Centre is a community-based non-for-profit incorporated association which is regulated by NSW Government, Education Department and the laws and regulations encompassed within. BPELC is reliant upon the fees paid by parents, some funding provided by the NSW government, grants the team applies for and fundraising generated through the parents involved in the Committee of Management.

It is essential that all families be involved in some form of fundraising throughout the year, the Committee of Management is responsible for ensuring the service can meet its budget and cover costs. To assist the Committee in keeping fees as low as possible, fundraising is an easy way you can help to ensure this is possible.

All families who use the service must be paid financial members. A fee of $15 for Long Day care and 4 year old Preschool children and $12 for 3 year old Preschool children is charged to each families account per child annually, at either the beginning of each year or at the time your child started at the centre. This fee covers your membership, cleaning costs of the service and helps towards supplies such as tissues, paper towel and toilet paper.

**Hours of Operation**

**LONG DAYCARE**

Full Days 8.00am til 6.00pm Monday to Friday

**SESSIONAL PRESCHOOL**

3 Year Old Session 8.50am til 1.50pm Tuesday and Friday

4 Year Old Session 8.30am til 2.50pm Monday to Thursday

**AFTER KINDER CARE**

Is available Monday through to Friday at the completion of the sessional programs if space in the LDC allows. AKC is only available to those children enrolled in the preschool sessional program for that particular day. Arrangements need to be made with Kylie Symons and cannot always be granted.

There is an additional cost for this service of $40 a day. Childcare Subsidy is available for eligible families.

**Staff**

We currently have 11 members of staff employed at our service:-

**Preschool**

Director Kylie McGowan

Preschool Teachers Cassie Marsh

 Alyce Saunders

3 Year Old Lead Educator Mandy Fulton

Early Years Educator Kelly Green

**Long Day Care**

Director Kylie Symons

Lead Educator Chloe Whelan

Early Years Educators Alana Crichton

 Kiama Birrer

 Kirby Coote

Educational Leader Cassie Marsh

Administration Officer Carolyn Lake

**Absences and Holidays**

We request that you inform BPELC as early as possible if your child will be absent from the centre. BPELC has a legal obligation to record all absences of the children who receive Child Care Subsidy (CCS) payments. Full fees will be charged if your child is absent from the service due to illness, holidays etc. For children in our long day care programs who will be absent for 4 weeks or greater, there is an opportunity to make available the days that your child would normally attend to other families in the centre. With enough notice to the centre, the centre can advertise the days available to be ‘sold’ to other families for the period of leave. Should any of the days be sold to other families, these fees will be credited to your account. BPELC does not provide any guarantee that any of the days advertised will be filled, but we will support the process for families on extended leave and do our best to sell the days available.

If families have separated and court orders support the fact that the child must spend time with either parent for a period of time, then please speak to the directors about how this will be recorded as this can make a difference to your allowed absence days.

Each child is allowed to be absent from the centre for 42 days per financial year, before this impacts on your CCS payments. If your child is sick, then please bring in a doctors certificate to support these absences.

**Accidents**

All accidents are recorded in the accident book. Parents will be required to read and sign the book when they collect their child, so that they are aware of the incident and the treatment administered. A staff member will witness all entries written into this book.

If a parent reports an accident or illness that has occurred prior to the child attending the centre, it shall also be recorded. (Please refer to the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy for further details)

**Arrivals and Departures**

Each morning when you arrive you must sign your child in using the sign in sheet (for sessional preschool) or the iPad (for long day care) situated in the foyer. Each individual listed on your enrolment form as being able to collect your child will be able to set up a pin and use the electronic sign in/out on the iPad for LDC.

Any person that is not known to staff will be asked for identification, and their details checked against the details kept on the child’s enrolment form, to be able to collect a child from the service.

If, for some reason, circumstances change throughout the day and your arrangements need to be altered, you must contact the centre to inform us of any new arrangements.

Staff will contact families, if a person not listed on the enrolment form comes to collect the child.

No child shall be able to go without permission from a parent/guardian. (Please refer to the Delivery and Collection Policy for further details)

No child will be permitted to leave with anyone under the age of 18 years of age. The Directors and Committee may be approached to approve an underage person in exceptional circumstances.

**Assessment and Rating Process**

The Assessment and Rating process is a government initiative which aims to regulate the standards of care provided by early childhood services. The centre is currently rated as **MEETING THE NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD** and is constantly striving for best practice through the use of the centre’s Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

**Asthma/Anaphylaxis/Medical Conditions**

If your child has a diagnosed medical condition we require a medical management plan completed by the family doctor prior to commencement. Children with asthma, anaphylaxis or a medical condition need specific action plans and their own medications need to be kept at the centre at all times whilst in attendance. A risk minimization form and communication form will be completed by the staff in consultation with the parent/guardian. Please refer to the relevant requirements and forms relating to the following policies; Asthma Policy, Diabetes Policy, Anaphylaxis Policy, and Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy.

**Birthday Celebrations**

When it is your child’s birthday you are welcome to bring in cupcakes to share with the other children. The cupcakes must have a list of ingredients so staff can ensure the safety of all children.

**Please Note:** you will need to bring enough cup cakes for sharing with all the children your child’s room, please see staff for numbers.

If you have a child who is anaphylaxis or suffers from allergies that prevent them from eating such foods you will need to provide alternative foods for your child on these occasions. Please speak to staff regarding this.

**Children’s Artwork**

At the end of each day, please check the top of your child’s locker for your child’s art work, to take home.

The centre uses re-cycled materials and would greatly appreciate any donations brought from home for use at the centre. Items could include any of the following:

* Computer paper
* Cardboard boxes. (No larger than a shoe box)
* Small Jars/bottles
* Buttons
* Material
* Bottle tops
* Wood off cuts
* Wrapping paper
* Items from nature (pine cones, gum nuts etc)
* Paper/ Cardboard/ cards etc

**We are unable to use the following:**

* toilet rolls
* meat trays
* medication boxes or containers
* egg cartoon

**Child Care Subsidy (CCS)—Approved Care**

The **Barham Preschool and Early Learning Centre** is an approved care provider and parents/guardians can claim Childcare Subsidy (CCS) for the long daycare program including before and after preschool care. CCS is determined by the families income, type of care used and hours of activity.

**Centre Provider Number: to be advised**

It is the families’ responsibility to ensure that they apply for Child Care Subsidy (CCS) at Centrelink to access eligibility for assistance with their childcare fees.

**Applying for CCS**

* myGov website my.gov.au
* Centrelink 136150

**More Information**

* For more information on CCS, go to the Department of Human Services (DHS) website [www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy)
* **my.gov.au**

All families must have a myGov account to manage CCS Payments and Immunisation Statements. You will need to link Centrelink and Medicare to your myGov account

The centre requires both the parent and the child’s customer reference number(CRN)and date of birth to be able to formalise a child’s enrolment and have the reduction in fees completed electronically. Families shall pay the maximum fee if ineligible for CCS.

**Child Free Days**

There are two (2) childfree days during the year for the following purposes:

* One day at the beginning of the year to set up the centre
* One day at the end of the year to pack up and clean the centre

No fee will be charged for these days.

**Children’s lockers**

Each child will have a locker in the foyer area of their room. When your child arrives at the centre, they are asked to place their bag, coats etc. into their locker which has their name on it. In the Preschool foyer you will find Parent Pockets for all notes needing attention and in the Long Day Care all notes will be in the top shelf of your child’s locker.

**Children’s Program**

We believe in the recognition of the uniqueness of each child and family and the need for children to develop an understanding and respect for self and others. The children’s program environment promotes the optimum development of the children and staff in a setting that is, warm, caring, and collaborative, and where a wide variety of learning experiences are offered that will challenge the children’s thinking.

It is necessary that the children’s environment has the potential for not only educational experiences, but also opportunities to develop a sense of community and culture through the routine and transitional times that occur during the day. Our aim is to provide an environment where play is an important avenue for learning and for enjoyment, where it is anticipated that the children will learn by using their senses, exploring concepts, taking on roles, testing theories, making discoveries, storing impressions, classifying, organising, assimilating and putting their thoughts into order. We aim to foster a love of learning, in an environment that values hands on experiences that are achievable for children at their own level of development.

Educators plan a program of experiences designed to foster children’s development. The program is planned according to observations of the children. The experiences include language and literature, music, movement, painting, drawing, imaginative play, science, maths, sensory motor experiences to promote physical development and coordination, healthy eating, physical activity, environment and sustainability. Collaboration between families and the service is essential to maximise your child’s experience. Throughout the year we ask you to participate in setting goals for your child (assisted by their teacher) and we welcome your input in any way you are able.

**Child Protection Policy**

The service recoginsies that whilst providing care and education for children, it has a responsibility and duty of care to act in the best interests of the children and to promote their safety, welfare and wellbeing. Staff and the Committee of Management are mandated to report any concerns regarding the welfare of children at the centre or any suspected cases of child abuse or ‘significant risk of harm’ to the Department of Community Services.

CHILD PROTECTION HELP LINE: 133 627

**Christmas Closure**

The centre will be closed for approximately three weeks during the Christmas/New Year period. The Committee of Management will determine the days of the Christmas break period. No fee is charged when the centre is closed for this time. The centre will return in January on a date nominated by the Committee of Management.

Children who are enrolled in school for this year are unable to access the long daycare program prior to them commencing school.

**Clothing**

To make life easier, please provide your child with sensible, washable play clothes. We are members of Sunsmart and as such follow their clothing policies. Wide brimmed hats (no caps), clothing with shoulder protection (no shoestring straps on dresses, shirts etc.) and sensible footwear must be worn between the 1st of September through to the 30th of April of the following year.

Please consider weather conditions (light clothes and a hat for warm weather, coats and sturdy shoes for cold weather). Clothes should be easy for the child to manage and require a minimal amount of help.

It is important regardless of your child’s age to bring in a full set of spare clothes. Spare clothes can be left in your child’s bag and used when necessary.

***Please also provide a “wet clothes” bag for any soiled clothing throughout the day. Speak to any staff if you would like to purchase one with funds raised going towards new equipment for the service.***

**No thongs or crocs are allowed at the service**, these are not practical, and children find them difficult to run and climb in. Jewellery is best left at home, as staff cannot be responsible for the care and safe keeping of such items. (Please refer to the Clothing and Sun Protection Policy for further details).

**Communication and Feedback**

To find out about your child’s experiences at BPELC you will have access to Storypark, an online documentation system which allows sharing of information between families and staff. We also encourage you to feel free to chat to staff about your child’s day at any time.

The centre is keen to receive feedback and suggestions that can contribute to the programming of your child’s room or any ideas, activities or a particular area of interest of your child. Families can give feedback verbally to a staff member or better still write down their suggestions in the communication section of Storypark.

**Confidentially and Privacy**

The centre respects each family’s right to confidentiality in regard to financial and personal matters, and in relation to particular issues concerning the care of an individual child. All written material is stored securely and will not be given out, unless advised by the consenting parent.

Please refer to the Privacy Policy for further information, particularly for clarification where your details may be passed onto another agency.

**Excursions and Incursions**

During the year the children may have the opportunity to participate in incursions/excursions or local walking excursions. These events are planned in accordance with the program and are seen as an integral part of the child’s time at BPELC. Child to staff ratios for all excursions is in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2018. No child will be taken out of the centre without written authorisation from the family. For excursions outside of the local area a permission form must contain the following details: proposed destination, method of transport, activities and the number of staff and other adults who are attending.

From time to time the children may also be involved in local walking excursions within the Barham area.

A tick box is part of each child’s enrollment for and when ticked will give authorisation for all local walking excursions throughout the year. At other times incursions (activities inside the centre) are organised, to compliment the children’s program.

A fee will be charged if necessary to assist with the cost of the excursion or incursion.

Affordability and relevance to the children’s interests and the centre program will be taken into consideration before a decision is made that will require families to pay this additional charge. (Refer to Excursions and centre events policy.)

**Family Court Orders**

Families are reminded that the centre needs to be informed if there are any court orders that relate to children whilst at the centre.

The centre undertakes to support these orders to the best of our ability keeping in mind the safety of everyone at the centre is our responsibility.

**Fee Information**

The Committee of management, having taken into account the annual operational budget, determines the fees to be charged.

## How fees are set

The committee sets fees for the programs for the following year (prior to letters of offer being sent out) as part of the budget development process, taking into consideration:

* The financial viability of the centre
* The fees charged by similar centres in the area
* The level of government funding, including the preschool fee subsidy, provided for the program
* Availability of other income sources, such as grants
* The capacity of parents/guardians to pay
* Reasonable expenditure, ensuring agreed program quality/standards
* Requirements of the *Fees policy.*

The *Fees policy* outlines requirements that early childhood centres must comply with and these requirements vary based on the hours the program is offered.

Fees set for the year would only be reviewed in extraordinary circumstances; for example, if attendance rates fall below the budget ‘break even’ point.

## LONG DAYCARE FEE’S

Families that use the long daycare program are required to pay the full fees applicable for the 49 weeks of the year the centre is open. Fees are to be paid in accordance with the centre’s fee policy. Payment is expected even if your child is absent from the centre for illness, holiday or for any other reason. (Please refer to absences and holidays sub heading for planned holidays greater than 4 weeks).

Eligible families can apply for Child Care Subsidy through their myGov accounts or directly with Centrelink. The subsidy is then paid directly to the service and families will only be charged the gap via direct debit.

## SESSIONAL Preschool FEE’S

The Committee of Management sets the sessional preschool fees for the centre on an annual basis. Sessional preschool fees are paid in 4 instalments throughout the year. If this presents financial hardship it may be possible to arrange an alternative payment plan with the Administration Officer or Preschool Director.

The Department of Education & Training, provide a grant for each child attending four year old sessional preschool, which is paid on the child’s behalf directly to the centre.

If your child is enrolled in one of the sessional preschool groups and you hold a health care card, please bring this to the centre, a copy will be taken, recorded and minimal fees will be required.

Eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander three-year-old children and children known to Child Protection are also funded to attend a preschool program; however, there is no other funding available for three-year-old programs at this time. **The Barham Preschool and Early Learning Centre** provides a range of support options for parents/guardians experiencing difficulty with paying fees.

## PAYMENT OF FEES

Fees for Preschool are calculated on a session basis and invoiced termly.

There are three Payment Options for annual fees.

(i). The annual fees may be paid in full at the commencement of the year.

(ii). The fees are to be paid by invoice, by the due dates specified on the fee notice.

(iii) A payment arrangement may be entered into within one week of receipt of the fees notice, provided it is adhered to.

Fees for Long Day Care are to be paid by direct deposit fortnightly.

A Direct Debit Authorisation Request form must be completed and returned to the centre on your child’s Orientation Day.

A fee statement will be sent prior to the fortnightly fee process and the amount showing as due on the statement will be the amount that will be debited from your nominated account or credit card.

All fees will be processed via your chosen method ie; direct debit from your nominated bank account or credit card once a fortnight on Thursday. All bank fees incurred due to insufficient funds or declined payments are solely the parent/guardians responsibility.

Please note: An administration fee of 88c applies for each direct debit transaction and a 2% surcharge applies if you choose to have your payment processed using your credit card.

No fees are charged for times when the centre is closed for the annual set up and pack up days at the start and the end of the year, or over the Christmas/ New Year shut down period, however fees are charged for public holidays and for days that your child is absent due to illness, holiday or for any other reason.

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## Procedures for unpaid fees.

The management team will always endeavour to support families in making payment arrangements to ensure fees are paid however if fees remain unpaid and without an arrangement set in place for 30 days the child will be excluded from care across the service until all outstanding fees are paid in full.

Any amounts left in arrears after the 31st of December of the year of attendance will be passed onto the centre Debt Collection Agency. Families who have been passed onto debt collection will be ineligible for any future places in the centre unless the debt has been cleared*.*

The Director and any committee member involved will ensure the Privacy Policy of the centre is complied with in relation to the family’s financial/personal situation and staff will not be involved in any stage of this process. Staff may be consulted on a child’s attendance rates and any other information required for the Director to fulfil their role.

## LATE COLLECTION FEE

The committee reserves the right to implement a late collection of children charge when parents/guardians are late in collecting their child/ren. The fee will be based on $15.00 for the first 10 minutes or part thereof, then $10.00 for every additional 5 minutes, or part thereof, from the conclusion of the child/ren’s session time.

Families will be issued with 1 warning before the late collection charge is applied.

On the 2nd and subsequent offence/s the late collection charge will be applied immediately to the child’s fee statement.

If the family is more than 30 minutes late in collecting their child, the late collection charge will apply immediately. No warning will be given

## Preschool fee subsidy

Your child will be eligible to access low-cost preschool in any of the following circumstances: • your child is identified by a parent, carer or legal guardian as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander • your child is identified on their birth certificate as being a multiple birth child (triplets or more) • your child holds, or has a parent or guardian who holds, one of the following: – Commonwealth Health Care Card – Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card – Department of Veterans’ Affairs Gold Card or White Card – Eligible or Asylum Seeker visa

Supporting documentation must be sighted by the Director at the start of each term and prior to expiration of the concession card. In addition, triplets or quadruplets, the original or certified birth certificates need to be sighted by the Director. Note that families are eligible for the preschool fee subsidy, providing their concession is valid during the applicable term.

## Fee Refunds

Fees are non-refundable. Refunds/pro rata refunds apply only in the following cases:

1. Up to the commencement of Term 1, a full refund of any fees paid will be given to families eligible for the preschool fee subsidy on sighting the supporting documentation.
2. If a family becomes eligible for the preschool fee subsidy during a term, a full refund of the applicable term fees will be provided.
3. If the child leaves before the end of the term, no pro-rata refunds will be available for that term. Written notice of departure is required prior to the invoicing period for the next term.
4. The committee may consider a partial refund in exceptional circumstances. Applications for a refund must be in writing and must clearly outline the reasons why the child ceased to attend the center. Any refund will be at the discretion of the committee and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. An administration fee may be applied.

There will be no refund of fees due to a child’s short-term illness; public holidays; family holiday (refer to absences and holidays sub heading) during operational times; closure of the centre for one or more days when a qualified staff member is absent and a qualified reliever is not available; closure of the centre for staff training days; or closure of the centre in extreme and unavoidable circumstances

# **Fees 2019**

Fees are as follows:

PRESCHOOL

 Full fee rate - $16.00 per session- Kookaburras Group (4/5yr olds)

 Subsidy - $12.00 per session

 Full fee rate - $20.00 per session- Possum Group (3yr olds)

 Subsidy - $16.00 per session

 Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander - $12.00 per session

LONG DAY CARE

Children under the age of 3 years - $104 a day

Children over the age of 3 years - $100 a day

Before/After Kinder Care - $40 a day

MEMBERSHIP FEES

 Long Day Care and Kookaburras - $15 per year

 Possums - $12 per year

**Family Involvement**

Family involvement plays an important role in bridging the gap between home and Preschool/Daycare. It is recognised that there are different parenting styles and the centre is respectful of individual cultures, needs and ideas.

Barham Preschool and Early Learning Centre holds an information evening and orientation days for new families, which are held towards the end of the year or as needed, to introduce the child and family to the staff and the centre.

Families are invited to telephone, visit or stay with their child at any time. Private meetings between staff and parents can be arranged to discuss the development of their child or any aspects of the program. We strongly encourage families to work with our educators to establish goals for their child in these important early childhood years. For example; I want my child to be able to work in a group, sit still at story time, to share, to use scissors etc.

Families are a valuable source of support for the staff and are encouraged to become actively involved in the centre. The staff also invite families to join in the program, sharing skills with the children in a variety of ways such as playing musical instruments, sharing different cultures. In this way families can spend time with their child and the other children at the centre. The staff are grateful for any ideas or suggestions regarding any aspects of the program, or any feature, families would like included in the program.

A lunchtime helper roster is set for the kinder sessions and will be given to the relevant families. When on duty, you are welcomed to bring toddlers with you if you can not find someone to look after them however please remember that they are your responsibility. Staff ratios only allow for the enrolled children. Parents on duty are asked to sign themselves ‘in’ and ‘out’ on the same sheet as the children on the day they attend so we have a record of this.

# **Grievances**

We have a Complaints and Grievances Policy which outlines the steps to take if you have a complaint or grievance. We would like to think that if you are dissatisfied with an aspect of the centre you would firstly try to speak with the staff member in the room or the centre Directors about your concerns.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome after speaking with the director, you can put your concerns in writing to the Committee, or ask to speak to a member of the committee.

# **Hand Washing**

Please Remind/Assist Your Child to **WASH THEIR HANDS ON ARRIVAL** to Barham Preschool and Early Learning Centre. In line with our Hygiene Policy we would like to remind all Parents/Guardians that it is important that children are encouraged (or assisted if necessary) to wash their hands on arrival to the centre.

This will help us primarily to minimise the spread of Germs (and keep those nasty respiratory and gastric bugs away) and also assist in reducing the risk of anaphylactic incidences for those with allergies.

# **Illness**

The centre is only able to care for well children. Any child who is not able to join in the day’s activities should not attend the centre. If a child appears unwell or develops a high temperature or signs and symptoms of illness during the day, the family will be notified by telephone. In the event that staff cannot get in touch with the parents, emergency contacts will be called. The child can only be collected by a parent or an emergency contact person recorded on the child’s enrolment form. Arrangements must be made to take the child home immediately. Families need to inform staff of any illness that their child may have had overnight, at the weekend or why they have been absent from the centre.

**Exclusion of ill children**

Sometimes children need to be away from the centre for the wellbeing of others. This is called exclusion. Excluding sick children is an important way of preventing the spread of infection in the centre. The exclusion period is the minimum time a child must be kept away from the centre. However, the child may need to stay at home longer than the exclusion period to fully recover from an illness. If your child contracts an infectious disease he/she must remain at home until he/ she is no longer infectious and fully recovered.

In relation to infectious conditions such as gastro-enteritis, the child would need to remain away from the centre for at least 24 hrs after the last bout of vomiting or diarrhoea.

Please refer to the list of infectious diseases as set out by the *Department of Human Services: Minimum Period of Exclusion from School and Childcare service centres for infectious diseases, cases and contacts.*

If your child contracts an infectious disease, families need to inform the centre as soon as possible. This will enable staff to inform other families whose children attend the centre and give parents the opportunity to exclude their child, and generally monitor the health of other children in attendance.

Please refer to the following for further details. Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness, Dealing with Medical Conditions, Dealing with Infectious Diseases, Asthma, Diabetes, Anaphylaxis and Administration of Medication policies.

# **Immunisation requirements**

Before an enrolment can be accepted we are required to *see proof that a child’s immunisations are up to date for their age. An Immunisation History Statement must be provided.*

* Immunisation History Statements are available on request at any time by contacting Medicare
	+ by telephone on 1800653809
	+ by email on acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au
	+ online at [www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/medicare-online-accounts](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/medicare-online-accounts)
	+ in person at your local Medicare Office or through the Medicare section of your myGov account.

# **Late collection of children**

The centre closes at 6.00pm. Families should be aware that late collection of your child places significant stress on the child and the staff. Arrangements must be made to have children collected from the centre no later than 6.00pm. A child attending sessional preschool must be collected at the end of their session unless prior arrangements are made. A fee will apply if children are not collected on time.

For a first time offence, a warning will be given to the family. For a second offence, an automatic penalty will apply, as we are required to have two staff members remain at the centre with the child. This fee will be added to your account. Refer to the fees policy for fees charged.

If this continues the family will receive a letter from the Committee of Management to remind them of their responsibilities regarding the collection of their child.

**Library**

4 year old Preschool children may borrow books from our Preschool Library. This is a good habit for children to develop, as it fosters an interest in books and reading. It also provides a one on one time for parents and children and is a nice way to wind down at the end of the day.

# **Lost Property**

Every effort will be made to ensure your child’s belongings are returned to their bag or locker. Occasionally though, items may be misplaced. In order to prevent this happening please name all items of clothing and equipment the child may bring from home.

Anything that has been found will be placed in the lost property box.

# **Meals and Nutrition**

Each child is required to bring their own morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and a late snack if still at centre after 4.00pm.

Please provide fruit or a healthy alternative for morning and afternoon teas. Lunches can be stored in the fridges, food can be heated in either the microwave, pie warmer or bottle/food warmer for infants.

Families are asked to provide their child with a drink bottle filled with water

(**No other drink is acceptable)** Drink bottles must be taken home each day.

We encourage water bottles so that children can have access to water at all times during the day. To encourage healthy eating habits and to follow the ‘Munch and Move’ program, which supports healthy eating, we ask that families pack nutritional and healthy foods only.

Some children at the centre suffer from extreme allergic reactions to particular food and food products and for this reason the following foods are excluded from the centre.

***Eggs and egg products, nuts and nut products including peanut butter, nutella and muesli bars that contain nuts.***

All food and drink bottles must be clearly labelled with your child’s name.

# **Examples of healthy lunch/snacks**

Parents are encouraged to provide fruit and vegetables in the children's snack and lunch box every day and are asked to exclude high fat, salt and sugar foods such as chips, chocolates, lollies, muesli and fruit bars.

Wholegrain crackers, cheese and reduced-fat plain or low-sugar fruit yoghurt may be included as a snack. Parents are also encouraged to provide healthy lunch alternatives. Inappropriate items provided in the child's lunch/snack box are removed and a note is sent home to families explaining the reason why the item has been returned. Healthy eating and a variety of snack options are discussed with parents at orientation and also included in newsletters throughout the year.

Food is not given as a reward, incentive or for comfort; instead children are given encouragement through verbal and physical reinforcement through positive feedback..

Refer to the Nutrition and Active Play Policy for further details and suggestions.

# **Medication**

A Medication Book will be kept at all times. Each day that medication is required it is the responsibility of the parent to verbally inform a staff member and enter the details in the medication book. A second staff member will witness that the correct medication and dose has been given. All medication must be clearly labelled with the child’s name and the dosage to be administered. Over-the-counter medication must be clearly named. Handwritten labelling is only acceptable from a registered practitioner, e.g. naturopath.

All medication must be given to staff for storage in either the First Aid cupboard or fridge and under no circumstances is it to be left in the child’s bag. Medication of any type will not be administered if the expiry date has lapsed. Refer to the Administration of Medication Policy for further details

# **Newsletter**

The centre produces a newsletter to keep parents informed about the program, the centre, up-coming events, fundraising and more. Newsletters and other notices will be sent via email or placed in parent pockets.

# **Policies**

# Please familiarise yourself and be aware of the parent/guardian responsibilities in respect to each centre policy.

The centre policy folder is kept in foyer areas and is also available to you and can be accessed at any time.

# **Priority of Access**

Priority of Access Guidelines as set by the Department of Education and Training:

**Priority 1**. A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect.

**Priority 2**. Children with additional needs

**Priority 3**. Priority will also be given to children from:

* Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander families
* Families which include a disabled person
* Families with an individual on a low income – or income support
* Families from non-English speaking background
* Socially isolated families
* Single parent families

**Priority of Access Guidelines** as set by the **Barham Preschool and Early Learning Centre**

**Priority 1** Children who the teacher has recommended an additional year

**Priority 2** Families who are currently at the centre

**Priority 3** Siblings of current and past families (within a 3 year period) will be given priority

# **Public holidays**

During the year the centre will be closed for all Government gazetted public holidays. Childcare fees are charged for these days.

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# **Quality Improvement Plan**

Barham Preschool and Early Learning Centre has a quality improvement plan (QIP) which is developed through consultation with staff, committee, parent feedback and the children's voice. The quality improvement plan is a working document and families are welcome to review the plan or contribute at any time. Throughout the year, the committee and staff work to make the improvements identified in the QIP, formally updating the plan at least once a year. A parent survey is developed each year, which focuses on a number of the quality areas. We would appreciate it if you could take some time to complete our survey, as the information we gather from the survey helps to drive our future quality improvement plans

# **Relief Staff**

Relief staff is called upon when a permanent staff member is absent. In order to prevent disruption to the routine, we endeavour to employ the same staff member, but this cannot be guaranteed. When a staff member is away a notice will be displayed on the whiteboard at the front door, informing families of their replacement.

# **Rest Time and Sleep**

The centre offers children the opportunity to have a sleep or rest during the day, if this is part of their daily routine, the child asks for, or the parent requests it. The centre provides bedding and linen which is washed in accordance with our hygiene policy. Children will be supervised at all times whilst sleeping or resting. If parents would like their child to have a rest, please speak to the child’s teacher to discuss their needs.

# **Students on placement/work experience**

BPELC supports students from a variety of training institutes and high school. Students attend for a varying number of days and are required to participate in the daily program.

All students are fully supervised and are never left in charge of the children.

# **Sun Smart**

BPELC is recognised as a sun smart centre. From the 1st of September to the 30th of April the following year we require the children to wear hats during outside play and to have sunscreen applied. It is the families responsibility to ensure children have sunscreen applied before they arrive or upon arrival.

Sunscreen provided by the family will be re-applied during the day by a staff member or the children will be encouraged to re-apply their own sunscreen as a self-help skill for school readiness. (Roll on sunscreen is preferable). You will note an authorisation tick on your child’s enrolment form which authorises staff to reapply sunscreen during the day.

Our staff is aware of the damage that the sun can cause and act as role models by wearing appropriate hats and applying sunscreen during this time whilst outdoors. We ask that parents provide either a wide brimmed hat or legionnaire’s hat, as these provide the best protection.

**No Hat, No Outside Play. Caps are not suitable and they do not meet the sunsmart regulations**.

Families are asked to take their child’s hat home regularly and wash it.

Hats, must be clearly labelled, as sharing of hats is not permitted.

# **Sustainability and our environment**

Barham Preschool and Early Learning Centre are committed to promoting respect for, and an appreciation of, the natural environment among all at the service. We work to foster children’s capacity to understand and respect the natural environment, and the interdependence between people, plants, animals and the land

Positive attitudes and values in line with sustainable practices are developed throughout the service ensuring that educators and other staff endeavour to engage in sustainable practices at all times.

The use of paper hand towel will be kept to a minimum. The introduction of **NUDE FOOD** has further enhanced our sustainable practices.

Nude Food is food without excess packaging. This reduces the amount of rubbish that needs to go into bins to be sent to landfill. Durable, reusable containers are a great way to bring food, as they may last from pre-school through to high school and beyond, providing long term cost savings and environmental benefits.  Re-useable sandwich wraps are also a great alternative to plastic bags or plastic wrap.

# **Termination of Care**

If a child is reducing or ceasing attendance at the centre, notice, in writing, or verbally to the Directors or Admin Officer must be given two weeks prior to any changes.

# **Toileting**

Like any aspect of development, “readiness and achievement” of toilet training can vary.

All children, regardless of their developmental stage, are welcome and entitled to attend preschool/childcare.

Children attending the centre wearing nappies, or requiring nappies for sleep time, will have their needs met in an appropriate and caring manner. Open and regular communication about your child’s needs and/or progress towards toilet training ensures the centre can make the necessary preparations and work with the family in encouraging the new routine/skill.

Families are to provide the nappies for the day and any nappy rash cream. Please speak to staff about filling in a nappy rash cream form.

# **Toys from Home**

Toys from home should not be brought to the centre because they can cause disputes between children and can be misplaced or broken. However, this does not exclude comfort objects which help the child feel more secure and help them settle while they adjust to their new environment.

# **What to bring each day**

* Food for morning tea and lunch for all children attending BPELC but only daycare children need afternoon tea and also a late snack if still at centre after 4.00pm
* Changes of clothes including underwear and socks
* Hats or jackets depending on the weather
* Sunscreen (roll on is prefered).
* Insect Repellent if required