

**REDLYNCH KINDERGARTEN  
PARENT HANDBOOK  
FOR VACATION CARE**



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**Office attended Monday-Friday  
7am-3pm**

**This booklet is designed to provide parents or guardians with the relevant information on the policies, procedures and expectations of Redlynch Kindergarten. The management and staff encourage all parents/guardians to become familiar with this book, and if you have any questions or queries these can be directed to the Director or any other staff member.**

## **WELCOME**

The management and staff of Redlynch Kindergarten wish to welcome you and your children to our centre. This booklet has been put together to give you an overview of our Vacation Care Services.

This handbook provides information, which we hope you will find useful; it also covers policies and procedures that are relevant to Redlynch Kindergarten's Vacation Care Services. For further information please do not hesitate to contact the Director: Belinda Jarvinen.

## **OUR PHILOSOPHY.**

Redlynch Kindergarten aims to provide a warm, friendly, caring and safe environment in which children are given the opportunity to develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually through interaction with staff and peers. Our centre is child-based and our educational programs will provide and reflect the multi-cultural nature of our environment, this includes implementing an anti-bias curriculum where all children are treated equally regardless of race, gender, culture, ability, socio-economic background and beliefs.

We acknowledge each child is unique and develop at various paces, levels and stages. We understand children have individual strengths, weaknesses and interests. The staff will assist in scaffolding children's growth and learning through one on one interactions and experiences. We believe that by educating the children to make good choices in all areas of their play, and healthy choices when teaching children about healthy lifestyles is a valuable part of their learning whilst in their early years. We believe as carer's, educators and role models, promoting each child's individuality, positive self-esteem and feelings of self worth is paramount for learning and life. We recognize that parents are the principle influence in their child's life, and therefore we strive to develop close links with families and carer's, so we can support and complement each other in the important role of nurturing children through their early childhood years.

## **OUR VACATION CARE GOALS.**

The aim of Redlynch Kindergarten is to provide an environment that is:

- ◆ Safe, healthy and fun.
- ◆ Flexible in its programming, while still being consistent in its outcomes and objectives.
- ◆ Encourages children to be pro active in making their own choices.
- ◆ Promotes continuity in programs through evaluation, observation and learning stories.
- ◆ Promotes the social, physical, cognitive and emotional development of the children.
- ◆ Works together with the parents to reach common goals for all children.
- ◆ Recognizes that ALL children are unique and have their own special qualities.

## **FEES AND CHARGES**

Child Care fees are set on an annual basis. The fees and charges for Vacation care by Redlynch Kindergarten is \$43 a day (before CCB and CCR).

Fees are paid for the days your child/ren is booked in the centre, absences due to illness or private holidays must still be paid for. If your child is absent on a particular day, please inform the centre either via email or phone.

## **PARENTS RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the parents responsibility to sign all areas of the attendance sheets every day that your child is in attendance, both in and out. The days that your child are absent also need to be initialed.

In the event of an emergency the attendance record is used to account for all children in the centre.

**Failure to sign the attendance sheets daily will jeopardise your Child Care Benefit and your child's position at the Centre.**

## **ABSENCES**

Families using Child Care Benefit are entitled to 38 allowable absences per financial year. Please contact Family Assistance Office or Centrelink on 136 150 for further information

## **REFUNDS AND CREDITS**

Refunds, transfers or credits will NOT be given for a day or an excursion unless booked days are unavailable. (Families will be notified if days are unavailable).

## **CHILD CARE ENROLMENTS**

During Vacation Care we will have a range of ages between the ages of 3-10, staff will ensure activities are available for all age groups, and ensure fun is had by all ages.

Our centre abides by National Standards, and "Child to Staff Ratios" are vital to the quality of service provided.

## **COLLECTION OF CHILDREN**

If a nominated person is coming to collect your child, please contact the centre to inform the staff. Identification will be requested and a photo will be taken if the person is not known to staff members.

## **LATE COLLECTION OF CHILDREN**

Redlynch Kindergarten's Vacation Care is only available to cater for children between the hours of 7am to 3 pm during school holidays therefore children should not be on these premises outside these hours.

Within any given 12 month period, parents who pick up their children after closing time will;

- On the first occasion receive a verbal warning, which will be documented and kept on file. A fine of \$10 for the first 5 minutes or part thereof, followed by an additional fee of \$1 for each minute thereafter.
- On the second time a fine of \$10 for the first 5 minutes or part thereof, followed by an additional fee of \$1 for each minute thereafter. This is to be paid with 14 days of an account being issued by Redlynch Kindergarten.
- On the third time the parents will receive a fine as above and the child's position at the centre will be terminated.

## **OUR PROGRAM**

Our program recognizes the unique individuality of children and caters for their overall development. Your child's holiday time is spent equally among all staff members in the centre. All staff are responsible for planning for your child's individual interests and needs. Activities are planned in conjunction with the children, families and staff to develop a program for children attending our centre. The weekly program is displayed on the Parent Noticeboard at the Centre. Whilst all children are encouraged by staff to join in with the advertised activities, it is the children's choice to participate. Additional activities are planned by the staff. Why not ask the staff what activities your child enjoyed today.

The daily routine of the centre caters for individual activities, small and large group experiences in both the indoor and outdoor environment, and is evaluated on a regular basis. Programs are displayed at the centre and parent input is valued. Programs are evaluated on a daily basis and children and parent feedback is encouraged. Our program recognizes the unique individuality of children.

## **EXCURSION INFORMATION**

Please be at the centre by 8.30am on excursion days unless otherwise notified. Please check with the centre supervisor or the communication notice board advertising daily events, items required and excursion times. Children may be required to bring additional materials to participate in some activities, eg craft materials.

\*\*\* Please note that excursion costs are calculated to include the extra staff required to meet staff excursion ratios, the venue and travel costs.\*\*\*

## **POSITIVE GUIDANCE**

Our service aims to provide an environment, which is safe, secure and consistent for children aged 3-10. As behavioural expectations and child rearing practices vary greatly among different cultures and social groupings, our services take into considerations the families using the service. We aim to

use a positive approach to discipline so that it does not impair self-esteem, but allows children to feel capable and competent, encouraging their independence and ability to interact with others. Should parents/guardians or children's behaviour offend or harass any staff member Redlynch Kindergarten reserves the right to terminate child care placement.

### **MEALS**

Families are to provide ALL meals for all days including excursions. Children should not be bringing money to purchase lunch whilst attending Vacation Care unless specified by the centre's Supervisor. The service has current information in regards to healthy eating available for families at all times. Attached is a healthy Lunch box checklist to assist you in packing a healthy lunch.

### **FOOD PREFERENCES AND ALLERGIES**

The Centre does not have a no nut policy which means food containing nuts or traces of nuts is allowed on the premises. In the event of a child attending the centre with an allergy you will be informed of the centres individual requirements in relation to allergies

Our centre is committed to ensuring that food preferences or allergies are catered for where reasonably known or notified. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure centre staff are aware of any such requirements or preferences.

### **LUNCHBOX CHECKLIST FOR VACATION CARE**

Use this checklist to help provide nutritious food for your child each day: Is your child provided with:

#### **Dairy or high calcium foods?**

High calcium foods are dairy products including plain or flavoured milks, hard and soft cheeses, yogurts and custard. Calcium- added soya milk and tofu are also good sources of calcium. Other high calcium foods are milk based desserts such as fruche, creamed rice, milk puddings and icecream.

#### **Protein and high iron foods?**

Protein foods include beef, lamb, veal, beef sausage, pork, ham, fish, egg, chicken( breast leg or loaf), legumes

#### **Cereal – based foods?**

Cereal – based foods include bread( all varieties including fruit bread), rice, pasta, noodles, cracker biscuits(plain, unsalted crackers, rice cakes, rice crackers), fruit buns, scones, pikelets, muffins and crumpets

#### **Fruit?**

Fruit includes fresh, canned or dried but NOT JUICE.

#### **Vegetables?**

Vegetables include raw or cooked ( fresh, canned or frozen)

#### **A drink?**

The best drinks for children are milk or water. Fruit juice is not essential if your child eats fruit. If you choose to pack juice, dilute it half and half with water.

Limit the following foods

- Sticky snacks like heath food bars, lollies and fruit straps as these may lead to tooth decay.
- Foods high in fat and sugar like creamed filled and chocolate coated biscuits, chocolate and chocolate or yoghurt coated heath food bars.
- Foods high in fat and salt like savoury snack biscuits
  - **Healthy Lunch Ideas**
  - Lettuce and ham sandwich, sultanas, milk
  - Crackers, cheese/celery sticks, banana, water
  - Egg and lettuce roll, apple, flavoured milk
  - Left over dinner eg spaghetti Bolognese, cheese cubes, orange quarters, water
  - Banana roll, yogurt, carrot sticks, water

#### **Keeping food in the Lunchbox cool**

**Redlynch Kindergarten has a fridge available to staff and children.**

- Food poisoning occurs when bacteria in food have the right conditions to grow. Bacteria grow best

when the temperature is between 5-60oC. To keep food in the lunchbox safe it is important that food is kept cool.

If you choose to use an insulated lunchbox we can not refrigerate them so please ensure you

- Use insulated bags as lunchboxes
- Place ice bricks in lunch boxes
- Place frozen drinks (water) in lunch box

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays are very special to a child. Please feel free to discuss with staff if you wish to celebrate this occasion with other children at the centre.

## **LOST PROPERTY**

Please label lunch boxes, drink bottles, clothing etc.

We do not keep lost property after the holidays, so please check for lost articles every day.

## **WHAT TO WEAR**

Something old, comfortable and labelled - the children will be painting, playing and generally having fun - so they don't want to worry about getting dirty, or about losing expensive clothing. Children need to bring a sunsafe hat - excursions do require some walking therefore sensible shoes will be needed. Please supply spare clothes for your child. Sunscreen is provided at the centre.

## **SUN SMART**

Redlynch Kindergarten adheres to a strict sun smart policy. The centre provides Cancer Council Sunscreen or you may choose to provide your own. Parents must provide written permission to have sunscreen NOT applied at the child care centre. Each child must also wear a hat whilst outdoors, as we abide by our "No Hat ... day in the shade" policy. We would suggest that all children have a shirt that will cover their arms whilst out in the sun. It is the parent's responsibility to apply sunscreen on arrival and staff will encourage the children to re-apply throughout the day.

## **ACCREDITATION**

Redlynch Kindergarten's Vacation Care Centres comply with the 30 principles in the 8 quality areas of the Quality Assurance System as outlined by the National Child Care Accreditation Council.

The Accreditation process ensures that the centre continually strives to maintain and improve all aspects of the program. Our Centre is committed to quality care.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Our centre recognises the importance of parent involvement within the program. We realise that for many working parents time is limited and therefore we aim to provide a variety of opportunities for parents to participate according to their availability.

Some of the ways in which you can become involved:

- Completing surveys
- Input into the weekly program, policies and procedures
- Spending time with the children at the centre or on excursions

## **PARENT COMMUNICATION**

Parents are the primary Caregivers of their children. Communication between parents and staff is very important, as we are here to complement what you already do at home. There are a number of ways in which communication between the centre and families can occur. These include:

- Conversations - both formal and informal
- The weekly program being displayed
- Signs
- Information letters
- Communication slips/whiteboard notices
- Suggestion/box/book

Any important messages are displayed on the notice board, walls and doors, so we ask that you make a point of reading these. Enclosed is our customer feedback flow chart, which outlines the processes that should be taken in the event of a grievance, concern or comment.

## **HINTS FOR MAINTAINING A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP**

Open and honest communication is essential in maintaining a successful and ongoing relationship. Discuss any concerns you have with the centre staff quickly to minimise stress and misunderstanding. The Co-ordinator will assist both parent and staff if required.

Children are very perceptive so avoid discussing them or concerns where they can hear you. It is a good idea to make an appointment to discuss issues which may take time to resolve. After these steps have been taken please contact the co-ordinator who will endeavour to solve the issue promptly and to the liking of all parties involved.

We greatly value your input and rely on your feedback to continue to improve the high quality of our service.

## **CUSTOMER FEEDBACK FLOW CHART**

The following is a flow chart that details the process which families should follow when they have a grievance, comments, suggestions etc.

Family

Comment / Feedback /

Grievance expressed to staff member + record

Issue discussed/resolved.

Co-ordinator to record on grievance register

If appropriate staff to resolve and inform Coordinator

Family contacted by Coordinator and a meeting will be organised if necessary

Contact Manager of Children's Services

Staff to direct parent to the Co-ordinator If unresolved

## **STAFFING**

Redlynch Kindergarten believes that high quality services are provided by high quality staff. It is for this reason that there is a strong focus on the professional development of the staff at the centres. All staff have experience and/or qualification relating to middle childhood development.

Staff are encouraged to attend training nights held prior to each holiday period to aid in their professional knowledge and skills.

The team of staff at each centre consists of:

- A Supervisor who is usually, university qualified or TAFE qualified (Diploma of Children Service or

equivalent) who is responsible for the overall management of the centre

- Second in Charge who is normally - TAFE qualified staff (Child Care Certificate/Certificate in Child

Care Studies/Associate Diploma/Diploma (Social Science-Child Studies)/Diploma in Community Services (Children's Services)

All staff at the centre possess a first aid certificate.

Please remember staff are casuals so you will see a few new faces during any one holiday period.

Please check the staff shift poster located near the parent information section for the names and positions of staff on a daily basis. Redlynch Kindergarten abides by National Standards in relation to staff/child ratios these ratios at the time this

booklet went to print are: 1:11 for in house activities

## **INCLUSION SUPPORT PROGRAM**

The inclusion support program aims to build the capacity of eligible child care services to include children who require additional support to access mainstream child care services. In this area the Inclusion Support Agency FNQ is currently the support agency and is funded by the Commonwealth Government.

Children with additional needs include:

- Children with a disability
- Children from a non-English speaking background
- Children from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
- Children from an Australian South Sea Islander background

## **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Redlynch Kindergarten is committed to providing and maintaining work environments and systems of work that are safe and without undue risks to health.

Redlynch Kindergarten is committed to the health, safety and welfare of all its employees, contractors and visitors to our centres.

## **SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Emergency evacuation procedures in case of a fire, etc are displayed in the room and throughout the centre. Our staff are trained to deal with such emergencies and at regular intervals emergency evacuation drills are practised with the children. The staff at the centre have first aid training and are equipped to handle emergency First Aid situations.

## **CHILD PROTECTION**

It is mandatory for child care centre staff to notify DOCS if they suspect (using professional judgement and training) on reasonable grounds, that a child or young person is at risk of harm. All staff are aware of issues relating to child protection. Redlynch Kindergarten has a Child Protection Policy that identifies the types of abuse, indicators and staff's responsibilities to protect for the rights of children. It is important for parents to be aware and have read this policy. It is staff's responsibility to keep children SAFE AT ALL TIMES.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY GUIDELINES**

Redlynch Kindergarten acknowledges and follows confidentiality guidelines as outlined by Department of Community Services Centre-Based and Mobile Child Care Services Regulation (No. 2) Code of Ethics and The Privacy Act. These guidelines are abided by in every centre policy, procedure and practice.

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

The centre has policies, which reflect our Children's Services philosophy. These policies are in place to ensure high quality care for the children who attend the vacation care centres.

Full copies of the policies are available for reference at the centre.

This Handbook is in line with current practices, policies and procedures at the time of printing, all of which are reviewed annually to keep up with current trends and to maintain best practice in consultation with parents.

## **ILLNESS**

If your child is diagnosed as having an infectious disease, please notify the centre as soon as possible so that parents of other children at the centre can be notified. A medical practitioner's clearance is required before your child can return to the centre.

The Department of Health requires exclusion from the centre for infectious conditions. See guidelines for exclusion.

If your child falls ill at the centre, you will be notified immediately and will be required to collect your child or make arrangements for your child to be collected as soon as possible. When caring for over 20 children a day, it is important to exclude unwell children to reduce cross infection.

(Please refer to the Medication and Medical Procedures Policy for more information).

**We feel privileged to be a part of this crucial time in your child's development. You can be assured that at Redlynch Kindergarten your child will be provided with opportunities to empower them to reach their full potential in a fun, safe and nurturing environment.**