



Parent Hand Book

Our mission Statement

At Shooting Stars we strive to provide a healthy, safe and nurturing environment for your children. We aim for your children to feel confident and secure enough to grow, explore and develop in a stimulating and natural environment. We are committed to promoting and supporting all aspects of the Early Years Learning Framework. By allowing children to learn and develop at their own pace we are helping them on their journey to reaching their full potential.

Our Aim

We, at Shooting Stars, are a team of dedicated and qualified child care professionals who are committed to providing the best quality care for your children. We aim to guide your child in becoming an effective learner by creating an environment that is both challenging and stimulating. The overall aim of our program is designed to support the Early Years Learning Framework by guiding your child in developing a sense of identity, connecting and contributing to their world, developing a strong sense of well-being, becoming confident and involved learners, and effective communicators. Children learn through play, and the daily program reflects this, including creative experiences for your child both indoors and outdoors. The daily program reflects the interests of your child and extends on these interests to facilitate learning and growing.

To ensure your child's day at Shooting Stars will be an enjoyable learning experience, the educators will:

- Provide a safe and hygienic environment
- Promote respect and trust, and enhance self-esteem through recognition, praise and positive reinforcement
- Display a positive attitude towards all children
- Have a close partnership with families and the community

About the centre

Shooting Stars is open between the hours of 6.30am and 6.00pm Monday to Friday. The centre is not open on Public holidays or weekends. The centre is licensed for 44 children aged from 6 weeks of age. The centre is made up of 3 rooms; babies, toddlers and kinder.

Children remain in the room until they are age appropriate and developmentally ready to move to the next room. This is decided by the Director, Room Leaders and child's parents. Children moving to the next room will be slowly transitioned. The decision to move a child will take into account the best interests and development of the individual child.

Educators

Our educators are qualified professionals who have a passion for working with children. The education and development of educators' knowledge and skills is ongoing. They attend professional development workshops, listen to guest speakers at team meetings and participate in discussions. Our educators remain up to date on changes in the industry by reading journals and attending professional development sessions.

Daily Activities

Each room leader will provide a weekly plan, which will be displayed in each room. As all children develop at different stages, the room leader will ensure that all activities are age and stage appropriate. All children in the group, and their abilities and interests will be catered for in the program. The programs will consist of activities that reflect the interests of the children and extend on these to further children's learning and development. The programs will support children in achieving the outcomes outlined in the Early Years Learning Framework. This document can be viewed at www.deewr.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework

Enrolment

After visiting the centre and making the decision to enrol your child you will need to fill out the enrolment form that has been provided to you in the parent pack. Please ensure that all sections of the enrolment form are completed and that you provide a copy of your child's immunisation record. If your child's immunisations are not up to date you will be ineligible for Child Care Subsidy through Centrelink and will need to pay the full cost of child care. We require emergency contact details and ask you to please inform the people you list of their responsibility. Please ensure your details and those of your child remain current. All information provided to Shooting Stars will remain private and confidential at all times.

Orientation

We encourage parents to bring their child to the centre for a 2 hour orientation session prior to starting in care. If your child requires more than one orientation visit, please discuss this with the Director. During the orientation visit your child will meet the educators and children and participate in the daily program. We encourage parents to provide the educators with as much information as possible to make the transition from home to care a smooth one. To make the transition easier for your child we suggest that parents, say goodbye, reassure the child that you will be back later, give the child a kiss and cuddle, and inform educators when you are leaving so they can comfort the child. If there is any information that can assist educators in caring for your child, please inform the Director. Communication between educators and parents is a vital link in providing high quality care.

Changing Days

If you need to change your permanent days of care we will require 2 weeks written notice. We do not swap days as this is difficult due to educator to child ratios. If you require an additional day, other than your permanently booked days, this will depend on availability and will be charged at a casual rate.

Sign In and Out

Sign in books are located in the foyer of the centre. Names are in alphabetical order. Please ensure that you sign your child in when arriving at the centre and out when departing. You are also required to sign for absent days to acknowledge that your child did not attend the centre.

Arrival and Collection of Children

A responsible adult (over 18 years of age) must accompany your child to and from the centre. Please inform an educator of your arrival or departure. Children are only permitted to leave the centre with parents or other authorised persons. If someone else is collecting your child it is your responsibility to inform the centre by phone. If the person is not known to educators at the centre they will be required to provide photo identification. No child is permitted to leave the centre without a parent, guardian or authorised person. If the educators at Shooting Stars consider someone to be in an unfit state, we will not release the child until a suitable person is available to collect the child.

Leaving the Centre

Should you no longer require care for your child at Shooting Stars we ask that you provide 2 weeks written notice. If your child is absent during the last two weeks of care, you will be charged full fees and you will not be eligible for your Child Care Benefit or Child Care Rebate. If your child is ill during this time, you are required to provide a medical certificate to the centre. Your account must be up to date prior to leaving the centre.

Late Collection of Children

The centre closes at 6.00pm. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that children are collected by this time. If a nominated person has not collected your child by 6.00pm an educator will contact the parents. If we are unable to contact the parents or emergency contacts we will contact the Police. The Police will arrange for a member of Child Protective Services to accompany your child to alternative care. Two educators will remain in the centre until the child has been removed. A letter will be placed on the door of the centre with a number for you to contact, and Child Protective Services will continue to try to contact you. Parents will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 per minute per child after 6.00pm. **This is not covered by your Child Care Subsidy and you are required to pay the full cost.**

Students and Volunteers

Throughout the year we have visits from students attending school or college, and from volunteers. Children enjoy the company of new and interesting people in their lives and therefore we feel it is important to include students and volunteers in the program. All students and volunteers are required to obtain a Working with Children Check prior to starting at the centre.

Court Order Arrangements and Child Abuse

If you have any court orders in place, you must provide the centre with a copy of the order. If these orders change, you are required to provide the centre with updated copies as soon as possible. All children have the right to feel safe and secure at all times. Our educators have had training in recognising signs of child abuse or neglect as part of their professional development. If there are signs that indicate to the educators that a child is being abused or neglected, we are legally obligated to report to the Department of Human Services Child Protection Unit.

Communication between Parents and Educators

Strong, positive communication between parents and educators is important in ensuring that the children receive the highest quality care possible. Please feel free to share any concerns or information you have about your child with the educators. By creating a strong link between parents and educators we are ensuring a holistic care is being provided.

Emergency Evacuation

A copy of the emergency evacuation plan is displayed in each room. The centre conducts emergency evacuation drills regularly. This drill is aimed at ensuring that in the case of real emergency educators are able to evacuate the children safely and quickly. If parents are present at the centre during a fire drill they are required to participate.

Car Parking

Please park in the parking bays provided and be mindful of the speed limit in the car park. There are children present and we wish to prevent any unnecessary incidents from occurring. Please ensure that the door to the centre is securely closed behind you when entering or exiting the building. This is important for the safety of everyone, particularly the children in our care. We also ask that no children be left unattended in cars in the car park. This is an unsafe and dangerous practice.

Hygiene

We are committed to providing a safe and hygienic environment for your children. Bathrooms and nappy change areas are cleaned twice daily, or when necessary. Floors are mopped twice daily and spills are cleaned immediately. Children are encouraged and assisted to wash their hands before and after meals, after toileting or nappy changing, and after messy play. Educators' use disposable gloves for food handling and nappy changing. All cleaning cloths and mops are colour coded for specific use. Our centre is a totally SMOKE FREE zone, including the car park and surrounding areas. We ask parents to adhere to this for the health and safety of the children, families, educators and visitors who attend the centre.

Nutrition

At Shooting Stars we provide your child with a healthy breakfast up till 8:30am, morning and afternoon tea, lunch and a late snack after 5:00pm. This will consist of a 4 week rotating menu which is nutritionally and culturally appropriate. All meat used in cooking meals for the children is purchased from a Halal certified butcher. If your child has any food allergies please inform us so this can be catered for. The centre will provide milk and water for your child to drink throughout the day. We provide a named drink bottle for each child.

Toilet Training

Educators will consult with parents about a child's readiness for toilet training. No pressure is put on children to toilet train. We offer support and positive encouragement.

Head Lice

If your child has head lice, you will be informed by the Director. Your child will not be able to return to the centre until they have been treated, and all lice and eggs removed. We encourage parents to check their child's hair regularly for head lice. Please ask an educator for information about the treatment of head lice.

Sun Smart

Shooting Stars is a Sun Smart centre. To help in this aim we have provided large shade sails in the playgrounds and verandas around the building. We ask you to supply your child with a hat which is named and is to remain at the centre. These hats are washed weekly or sooner if necessary. Children are discouraged from sharing hats. Hats must be worn during outdoor play between September and April. Shooting Stars provides 30 plus broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen. This is applied to the children every 2 hours during outdoor play; please advise the educators if your child has any allergies. When planning outdoor activities educators will consider sun protection measures. Children will not be permitted outside without their hats or sunscreen. Educators will act as role models by wearing hats, sunscreen and appropriate clothing. We ask that parents dress their children with sun protection in mind. Sleeveless clothing is not permitted. Children wearing inappropriate clothing will be offered alternative activities inside or in shaded areas.

Clothing

Children are to be dressed in comfortable clothing. Jackets, scarves, beanies and closed in shoes are advisable for the cooler weather. Shorts and t shirts are suggested for the warmer weather. Please refrain from sending your child to care in thongs as they not safe for running and climbing. Children are encouraged to keep their shoes on during indoor and outdoor play. Art smocks are provided for use during messy play to protect children's clothing. Please don't send your child to care dressed in good clothing as it is likely to get dirty. Ensure that all of your child's clothing is clearly named.

Medication

If your child requires medication to be administered while at the centre it is to be handed to an educator on arrival. NEVER LEAVE MEDICATION IN YOUR CHILDS BAG. An educator will provide you with a medication form to fill in detailing your child's name, name of medication, dosage to be administered and when the last dose was given, times and date to administer medication and parent's signature. The medication will be kept in a basket in the storeroom in your child's room or in the fridge in the kitchen area. Medication can only be administered when in the original container with the label intact. Prescribed medication should indicate your child's name, date of birth and the dosage that is required. We cannot administer medication to your child if their name and date of birth are not indicated on the packaging. Only a qualified staff member will administer medication to any child. All medications, whether prescription or over the counter, must have a chemist's label with the child's name, date of birth and dosage. Any medication not properly labelled will not be administered.

Accidents/Incidents

If your child is seriously injured while at the centre, you will be contacted immediately. All incidents, minor or major are recorded on an Accident Form or register, which parents are required to view and sign. If an ambulance needs to be called the parents will be responsible for this cost. Any educator can make the determination to call an ambulance after assessing a child's injury. At Shooting Stars we err on the side of caution, the health and well-being of the children is our first priority.

Illness and Health Considerations

With a large number of children at the centre at any one time, it is inevitable that children will come into contact with a variety of ailments. If your child is unwell please keep them at home or arrange alternative care. This will help stop the spread of infection through the centre. The Director reserves the right to send a child home if they are considered not well enough to remain at the centre. Should this happen you will be contacted and asked to collect your child as soon as possible. Should your child have a temperature of 38.5 degrees or higher, you will be contacted to collect them. The educators at Shooting Stars will call an ambulance for a child with a temperature over 40c as this is dangerous and can lead to febrile convulsions. For all contagious illnesses a medical clearance will be required before the child resumes care at the centre.

Asthma Management

Asthma is a common respiratory condition that is usually well controlled with medication. Our centre is committed to ensuring that children diagnosed with asthma are treated and medicated appropriately to allow them to participate fully in the program. Parents are required to have a doctor complete an Asthma Management Plan on enrolment. The well-being of a child with asthma is the primary responsibility of the parent/guardian. Please notify the centre of any changes to your child's condition or treatment.

Celebrations

At Shooting Stars we enjoy celebrating special occasions with your child. We encourage parents to inform your child's educator of upcoming events such as birthdays. We will provide a cake for birthday celebrations.

Toys and Special Belongings

At Shooting Stars we understand that children like to bring in toys or special belongings from home. However, this is not a practice that we encourage as toys become lost or broken causing upset children. We ask for parent's support on this matter.

Rest/Sleep Time

All bed linen is supplied and washed by Shooting Stars. Babies are assigned their own cots for use on the days they are in care. Linen is changed weekly for full time children and at the end of use for part time children. If linen becomes soiled it is changed immediately. If your child has a particular requirement for rest time, such as a dummy or teddy, please inform the educator in your child's room. Please ensure all items brought to the centre are clearly labelled with your child's name. At rest time educators will assist children to remove their shoes, socks and jumpers before getting on their beds. Any clothing with hoods or cords is a danger and will be removed before sleep time.

Suggestion Box

We appreciate everyone's suggestions and encourage them. A box is provided in the foyer for parents to place suggestions in anonymously if desired. Please feel free to approach an educator or Management if preferred.

Incursions

At Shooting Stars we are committed to providing a varied educational program. Part of our program involves having visitors from the community attend the centre in the form of incursions to share their experiences, knowledge and skills with the children.

Behaviour Management

All children need a safe, secure and nurturing environment. Positive interactions between adults and children help our children to develop into competent individuals. Shooting Stars is committed to ensuring that children experience consistent and positive approaches to behaviour guidance. Our emphasis is on encouraging, approving and reinforcing appropriate behaviour in children.

Our goal is to assist children to develop:

- An understanding of their own needs and rights
- The ability to self-regulate their behaviour
- Respect for the needs and rights of others

Educators at Shooting Stars will demonstrate:

- A positive approach to behaviour guidance
- Differentiate between the child and the behaviour
- Take into account the individual child as well as the whole group
- Support parents and educators working together on behaviour management issues
- Deal with inappropriate, difficult and dangerous behaviours
- Limit the number of guidelines to those that are important to avoid confusing children
- Recognise the developmental influence on behaviour at different stages
- Be sensitive to cultural differences
- Be sensitive to the child as a whole

To encourage appropriate behaviour the educators at Shooting Stars will:

- Take a positive approach and show children what they can do instead of what they can't do
- Avoid using negative words such as don't
- Avoid giving children attention only when they behave inappropriately
- Actively promote cooperation
- Offer children choices that will guide them towards making appropriate behaviour choices

In setting up the environment the educators at Shooting Stars will:

- Set up the environment in a way that encourages appropriate behaviour
- Allow children to make choices
- Encourage children to resolve conflict with minimal adult intervention
- Be aware of potential problems and respond accordingly

The team at Shooting Stars are responsible adults and will:

- Model appropriate behaviour
- Be consistent
- Show no favouritism or bias
- Respond in a calm and rational manner
- Ask another team member to step in when assistance is needed
- Consult with other educators and Management on issues of ongoing behavioural problems
- Inform parents of behaviour concerns and discuss behaviour guidance strategies
- Present children with alternative experiences when inappropriate behaviours occur
- Follow the guidelines contained in the centre's Behaviour Guidance Policy

Educators at Shooting Stars DO NOT:

- Use words that may contribute to a child's poor self-image
- Label the child naughty or bad
- Raise their voices for disciplinary purposes
- Move children to a part of the room that is considered a punishment area

Shooting Stars enables children to achieve these goals through positive strategies that are developed to assist children to learn appropriate ways of behaving. Behaviour guidance is based on the notion that reinforcement of behaviour will increase the likelihood of that behaviour occurring again. Therefore, positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviour is the most successful way of guiding children towards appropriate behaviour and effective relationships with others

Daily Requirements

It is important that your child has the necessary items for their day in child care. Please pack the following items for your child:

- At least 2 full changes of clothes
- Bottles and formula (if required)
- Dummies (if required)
- Plenty of underwear or pull ups for children who are toilet training
- Any special teddies or blankets for sleep time
- A hat

Parents Responsibilities

Parents are expected to:

- Pay your child's fees regularly
- Ensure your child has the necessary items for their day
- Close all doors and gates behind you
- Sign your child in and out each day
- Keep all your details up to date
- Keep educators informed of any changes