



BUTTERFLIES CHILDCARE  
& EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

*Orchard Road*

# Parent Handbook

## **WELCOME**

Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre is much more than just a childcare centre. We are an extended family where your child will be valued, respected and nurtured. Our qualified team encourages every child to grow, learn and develop and leave our centre like a beautiful Butterfly. Each child will learn to spread their wings and leave us to continue their journey into their schooling life feeling confident and prepared. From the minute you visit our centre you will be welcomed and feel a sense of confidence and belonging.

Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre was formed on the lands of the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation. We acknowledge Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of this country and their connection to the land, water and community in which we operate. We pay our respect to them, their cultures and customs both past and present.

We welcome parents and relatives to participate in our program and value a close relationship between the centre and home.

## **PHILOSOPHY and PROGRAMS**

**Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre** offers a renewed approach to education that works at catering for the emotional, physical, cognitive and spiritual needs of each child in their care.

Through our program we prepare children for life and nurture the children at all ages to live happily together as members of a diverse community. From babies to kindergarten, children learn acceptance and understanding of all people and beliefs.

**Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre** recognises its responsibility to care for children in their foundation years. Our program responds to the individual needs of all children. The program at Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre is based on the Early Years Framework. It identifies five Early Years Learning Outcomes for all children:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators

The program is to provide age/stage appropriate planning that considers needs and interests of individuals and groups to ensure a well-balanced program:

- Intra-relations/Inter-relations, Values, Reflection, Multicultural and Multi-faith, Emotional, Social
- Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Space
- A balance of daily activities, Indoor and outdoor experiences, Creative play and transformation, Natural Play.
- Cognitive Development: Thinking and problem solving, Maths and measurement, Sensory, Science
- Language Development
- Language of values, Storytelling, Poetry/rhyme, Verbal/non-verbal, Musical/rhythm, Movement

### **Online Learning Observations**

Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre uses a cloud based, online platform called Storypark as a means to create a journey of your child's learning and development experiences:

- All children's learning is documented via this platform. The child will be involved and consulted in the content of their learning observations.
- Families will be encouraged to reflect on their child's learning observations to allow families to actively participate in the child's learning.
- Parents are encouraged to provide feedback about their child's learning
- Staff will add to each child's documentation reflecting the child's learning and experiences at Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre. For example:
  - Photos of the children's experiences
  - Photos of art work
  - Scripts of child conversations with peers
  - Learning Stories

Your child will be supported in their development and we communicate regularly with families on how their child is progressing and on their day-to-day experiences at the centre both in person and through the online app.

### **Programs**

Children enjoy innovative educational programs in age based groups that are joyful and exciting. A healthy mix of intellectual, language, fine and gross motor skill development is offered through:

- Art and craft
- Singing and dancing
- Reading
- Rest
- Indoor and outdoor play

**Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre** offers all the love, care and attention of home. Children are welcome for long day care from 6 weeks to school age every day of the year (except public holidays).

We provide:

- 5 healthy meals daily (Breakfast, Morning tea, Lunch, Afternoon tea and a late snack)

- High quality nappies
- Bibs
- All bed/cot linen
- 3 & 4 year old funded kindergarten
- All incursions and excursions
- A rich learning environment for your child to participate in many activities and experiences both planned and spontaneous.

### **Kindergarten Program**

At Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre, the kindergarten year is a rich and stimulating experience. We provide a range of important opportunities that not only prepare your child for school but prepare your child for life. Our Program is based on the Victorian Early Years Learning Framework.

Kindergarten is a program for children in the year before they start primary school. Children should be aged at least four years by 30 April to access the 4 year old program. Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre offers a funded kindergarten program for 4 year old children with a qualified Kindergarten Teacher. Our program is a play based approach that emphasises learning through socialisation, exploration, investigation and opportunities to practice problem solving and thinking skills.

In the kindergarten program, we will extend the above concepts but also concentrate on the importance for children to develop life skills in preparation for entering primary school. This is the time when staff and parents need to give the child additional opportunities to practice independence and self-help skills.

### **Partnering with families**

We welcome parents and relatives to participate in our program and we value a close relationship between the centre and parents.

We encourage you to share your talents with us by participating in whatever way you feel most comfortable - prepare for activities, read a story, share aspects of your culture or assist on an excursion.

The welfare of your child is paramount. You know your child best and **Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre** looks forward to supporting healthy open partnerships between the centre and home where your contribution is welcomed and heard.

Families are also supported to help create a sense of belonging and unity by active participation in the life of the centre. Staff will provide parents with daily verbal or written feedback regarding daily events and routines through our online platform, Storypark.

### **SUSTAINABILITY**

Butterflies Childcare aims to help children learn about and implement sustainable practices and foster respect and care for the living and non-living environment. Children are encouraged to develop positive attitudes and values about sustainable practices by engaging in learning experiences, joining in discussions that explore solutions to environmental issues and watching adults model sustainable practices. Educators will model sustainable practices by embedding

sustainability into all aspects of the daily running of our service operations, including recycling materials for curriculum and learning activities, minimizing waste and effectively using service resources and using the least hazardous cleaning substances appropriate.

Educators will guide children in developing an appreciation for the environment and sustainable practices to protect and preserve our world. We will aim to achieve a sense of wonder, a feeling of belonging to and a love of the land, nature and animals so that children develop a lifelong, respectful relationship as well as a positive & proactive attitude toward the environment and a sustainable future.

## **STRUCTURE OF THE CENTRE**

### ***Licensee***

*Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre* is a family operated Centre. The Centre will be licensed by the DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES and the licensees will be Terry and Sue Franklin. The Centre will be licensed as a Long Day Care Centre for a maximum number of 100 children per day licensed to operate six rooms, grouped ranging in ages :- **6 weeks to 5yrs (school age)**. The License is located on the wall in the foyer for your perusal.

The centre Directors are Amanda Franklin and Jessica Kuppe, who are available 5 days a week at the centre for parent enquiries, concerns or discussions about anything to do with Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre.

The Program Administrator, in charge of all inquiries relating to your account, fees, etc. is Amanda Franklin. You are welcome to make an appointment to discuss all matters relating to your account or CCS (Child Care Subsidy) rebates, with Amanda.

### ***Hours of Operation***

Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre is open Monday to Friday between the hours of **6.30am and 6.30pm** 52 weeks per year. We are closed on all public holidays.

### ***Rooms***

*Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre has 6 rooms.*

***Bumblebees*** (0-15 months) – holds 8 children with two staff members

***Ladybugs*** (15-24 months) – holds 16 children with four staff members

***Witchetty grubs*** (2-3 years) – holds 16 children with four staff members

***Caterpillars*** (2.5-3.5 years) - holds 16 children with three staff members

***Dragonflies*** (3-4 years) – holds 16 children with two staff members

***Butterflies Kindergarten*** (4-5 years) - holds 28 children with three staff members

## ***Enrolments***

Prior to your child attending *Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre*, you will be given an enrolment pack with the necessary paperwork required by the Centre.

Upon enrolment you are required to complete and sign the Enrolment Form and Enrolment Agreement. These provide us with vital information about your child so that we can provide the highest quality care for them while attending the Centre. Please ensure these are completed accurately and that the Director is notified of any changes which may occur, such as changes of address or phone numbers as soon as possible. It is most important that these forms are returned to the Centre prior your child's first day of attendance.

If there is a court order in place then the Centre needs to be given a copy of this on enrolment, to be kept on file. It is most important that the Director be notified of the circumstances relating to this order and be kept up to date of any changes to these details. Should any child or staff member be put in a potentially dangerous situation at any time at all, Police will be notified immediately.

## **STAFFING**

At *Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre*, our team is made up of the most caring, professional and dedicated staff, and all children will be treated with respect, love, kindness and understanding. Building **unity and teamwork** among staff through in-service programs ensures a happy, joyful, stress-free environment where staff look forward to coming to work each day and children look forward to coming to *Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre*. The Centre is staffed in accordance with the Child Care Regulations to the levels of staff Qualifications required in each group. Staff are assisted to undertake various in-service training courses as often as possible, and are encouraged to further their qualifications.

## **CHILDCARE ASSISTANCE (Fee relief)**

The Child Care Subsidy (CCS) commenced in July 2018. It is a single, means-tested subsidy. You need to complete a Child Care Subsidy assessment online to check your eligibility and entitlement to CCS. You need to sign into your Centrelink online account through myGov. Select Complete your Child Care Subsidy assessment task. Work through the steps to give Centrelink new information and confirm your current details.

Australian residents using child care provided by approved child care services may receive CCS.

***Please note: 5 per cent (5%) of your weekly Child Care Subsidy entitlement will be withheld until the end-of-year reconciliation.***

If for any reason you are not eligible for CCS payments, you will be charged full fees for days that your child attends.

The percentage of Childcare Assistance you are entitled to is based on the family's income.

Centrelink will be able to advise you of your subsidy.

In order to receive CCS, parents **must sign** every child in and out EVERYDAY they attend the Centre. To receive CCS for a child's absences, a record must be made of the reason for absence, including date and parent signature. Upon your child's return to the Centre please sign the appropriate day in the sign in folder and indicate the reason for absence eg. sick/holiday.

## **FEES**

The following outlines how the fees can be paid:

- Upon enrolment, families must pay their first 2 weeks of fees upfront.
- Fees must be kept one week in advance at all times. Fees must be paid weekly, fortnightly or monthly in advance by Debit Success. Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre absorbs all fees charged by Debit Success.
- Fees are payable in advance for every day that your child is enrolled at the service. This includes pupil free days, sick days, public holidays and family holidays.
- The Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is available to all families who are Australian Residents. To find out their eligibility, families must contact Centrelink.

A receipt will be issued for all fees. This will include the child/children's full name/s, date of care, date of payment, amount, etc.

Should you wish to end your child's place at the service or should management make the decision to terminate your child's place, 2 weeks written notice is required from the ending/terminating party. If this does not occur, 2 weeks fees will be billed to you without any fee reductions. Centrelink will not pay Child Care Subsidy for any absences for a child **after** the last day they physically attend the service unless it is for an additional absence reason with supporting documentation and the child has already used their 42 initial absence days. (eg. Medical certificate).

### ***Overdue Fees***

Any family who's Debit Success declines for any reason will be emailed a notification email which will request that the family make a manual payment via Bpay to make up the full declined amount immediately. If this payment is not received by the end of the week, the child's position will be placed on hold until the full payment is received.

If full payment is not received within 14 days of the original scheduled payment date the child's position will be cancelled.

Families can make appointments to speak with the approved provider or nominated supervisor regarding payments if there is a need to do so.

A fee of \$10.00 per week will apply to any overdue fees.

If there is a need to pass your account on to a Debt Collection Agency, you will incur the 30% fee charged by the agency and any other cost involved in retrieving your fees.

### **Holiday Half fees**

You can apply for these when your booking occurs on a public holiday or when you can give 2 weeks' notice for booked holidays. **We will reduce the "Gap Fee"** (money you pay to the Centre over and above your CCS) **by 50% per day**. Please give Two weeks notice in writing and pay your fee in advance. This will ensure that you retain your booking. This is available for up to four weeks in every calendar year.

(If your child has a 2 day per week booking, your annual holiday entitlement is 8 days. If your child has a 5 day per week booking, your annual entitlement is 20 days) **All fees need to be up to date to receive your reduction**. Public holidays at 50% will be taken out of your 4 week holiday entitlements and need to be applied for in advance.

Because your child occupies a **Permanent booking** at the Centre, fees are payable for **all booked days including absences**, whatever the reason.

### **FEES**

**2024**

| Room  | Daily                          | Weekly                             |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Bumblebees</b><br><b>Ladybugs</b><br><b>Witchetty grubs</b><br><b>Caterpillars</b> | <b>\$158</b><br><b>Per Day</b> | <b>\$711</b><br><b>(5 days)</b>    |
| <b>Dragonflies</b>  | <b>\$154</b><br><b>Per Day</b> | <b>\$693</b><br><b>(5 days)</b>    |
| <b>Butterflies Kindergarten</b>   | <b>\$149</b><br><b>Per Day</b> | <b>\$670.50</b><br><b>(5 days)</b> |

(This fee schedule is for 2024 only. Fees are reviewed annually)

### **Changes and terminations**

Please give us **two weeks notice** of any alterations or terminations of your normal booked days, otherwise two weeks fees in lieu will be charged.

### **Allowable Absences**

Normal fees are applicable for any booked days that your child does not attend (including non-attendance due to illness, holidays, etc).

Child Care Subsidy is applicable for up to 42 absences per financial year (including Public Holidays). Once your child has reached 42 absences you will not be eligible for CCS for any additional days absent and will incur the cost of full fees for these absent days, unless you provide approved documentation (eg. doctors certificate, court orders detailing custody arrangements, etc).

The Centre closes sharply at the prescribed time, and any extension beyond that time is very costly owing to Government Regulations on staffing requirements, which must be observed. Accordingly, the Centre reserves the right to impose a **late fee of \$15.00 for each quarter hour or part thereof** if a child remains at the Centre after closing time. This money is paid by you, directly to the staff who have stayed back to care for your child, at the time of picking up your child.

### **ILLNESS**

#### ***Sick and unwell children***

If your child is sick and requires medication then please do not bring them to the centre. Remember sickness is spread easily and quickly when large numbers of children are in close contact with each other.

It is extremely difficult for staff to provide the appropriate care for children who are ill and still give attention to the rest of the group.

When children are sick they need more attention and rest, and it is impossible to give a child who is placed in a group situation this type of care, as it requires staff members to lessen their involvement with the remainder of the group. So before bringing a sick child to the Centre you should ask yourself - *'Is my child well enough to attend daycare or should they be at home?'*

If your child develops any of the following conditions please do NOT attend until symptoms disappear or your doctor states in writing that your child is no longer infectious and is able to return to the Center:

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Thick, coloured runny nose (paired with any other symptom)
- Fever (Temperature above 38)
- Severe Coughing
- Head lice
- Rashes /severe itching
- Cold sores
- Any other contagious illnesses

**FOR THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN, WE RESPECTFULLY REQUEST THAT CHILDREN WHO ARE SICK OR UNWELL ARE NOT BROUGHT TO THE CENTRE.**

**Parents must also provide information on any Ambulance cover available to their child in the case**



of an emergency.

### **MEDICATION**

**Medication Folders** are located in each room and a medication form needs to be completed before any medication can be administered. It is important that all medication be placed in the kitchen or in the fridge if it requires refrigeration.

Remember to let a staff member know that your child requires medication.

**Prescribed Medication** must have a pharmaceutical-dispensing label clearly marked with the child's name, date and the dosage required on it.

**PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE MEDICATION OF ANY DESCRIPTION IN YOUR CHILD'S BAG, LOCKER OR IN THE ROOMS**

### **GENERAL DETAILS**

#### ***What to bring each day***

Each day your child attends *Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre*, it is most important that they have a bag containing the following:

- At least two full changes of clothes - including underwear.
- If your child is toilet training please ensure you supply several changes of clothes.
- Please bring a named sunsmart hat (summer) and named beanie (winter) for your child upon enrolment to leave at the centre for outdoor play.
- Comfort items eg. Dummy, blanket, teddy.
- Bottle, formula in formula container (babies)
- Nappy cream to leave at the centre

Please ensure that your child's name is clearly marked on each item. Please dress your child in play clothes that can become a little dirty, and that enable uninhibited play and that can be easily managed by them.

Please do not send children in good clothing. Remember to provide spare clothes according to the weather.

#### ***What we supply***

Each day, we will provide three nutritional, well-balanced meals as well as healthy drinks.

For the children who arrive early in the morning (prior to 8am) we also provide breakfast. We also supply disposable nappies for children in need.

### **Food**

For the benefit of children with allergies we ask that **no food or drinks are brought into the centre**. This includes sandwiches, chips, lollies and biscuits. We are strictly a "NUT FREE" centre. If your child has a special diet, please speak to the Director to see if we can cater to your child's needs.

### ***Toys and other treasures from home***

Please discourage your children from bringing toys etc. to the Centre. As you may understand, we cannot take responsibility for these items brought from home. Perhaps if your child wishes to bring an item to show their caregiver, you can then take it home with you once they have seen it. If your child brings a toy or piece of equipment home with them that belongs to *Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre*, please return it as soon as possible as a missing piece can make the toy/game unusable.

### ***Excursions***

From time to time throughout the year we take the children on excursions. Prior to these, parents are given information on the excursion regarding the type of transport to be used and a permission form to sign and return. Parent participation is always welcome and adult to child ratios are always followed. Children not attending the excursion will be catered for at the Centre.

### ***Arrival and departure***

Children must not be left at the Centre before 6.30am, as they are not covered by insurance prior to this time. We recommend that you drop your child at the Centre by 10.00am. This is because children need to be given enough time to settle in and be part of our daily routines and programs. Late arrivals can disrupt the group and may be upsetting to the other children as well as your own. It is essential that you **sign your child in and out every day** they attend the Centre. These records are used in case of an emergency such as a fire etc. as well as for claiming Child Care Subsidy. If this is not followed through, you will be charged full fees.

Children **must** be brought to the Centre by a responsible adult known to the staff. If for some reason someone else other than yourself needs to bring your child please phone and let us know. It is Centre Policy that persons under the age of **eighteen** are not permitted to bring children to the Centre or collect them from the Centre.

**On arrival** please take your child to a caregiver and share any relevant information, which might be important to your child's wellbeing throughout the day. If your child is upset when you leave, chances are that before long they will have settled. If you are concerned in any way, please do not hesitate to give us a call to put your mind at ease. We will call you if we feel your child is unduly upset.

Always say goodbye to your child and reassure them that you will be back later to pick them up. If your child cries when you leave, try not to be anxious, as children are quick to sense your feelings. Our staff are very experienced and have strategies in place to help your child settle.

Only **authorised persons** (as indicated on the enrolment form) will be allowed to collect children from the Centre. If your child is to be collected by someone other than those stated on the enrolment form then you need to notify the Director, either verbally or in writing. An adult that is to pick your child up other than one known to the staff requires photo identification.

### **Sunscreen**

At *Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre* we follow the Victorian Sunsmart policy. This involves all children wearing hats for outdoor play which are supplied by the family, at appropriate times throughout the year. We also supply and apply sunscreen to all children before outdoor play which we also supply. If your child has special sunscreen due to skin irritation you will need to supply this clearly labeled with your child's name.

### **Orientation procedure for new families**

Welcome to *Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre*.

You will find that at *Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre* we do things a little differently. We care that much more about your child's wellbeing so we go the extra distance to ensure that your child is settled into their new environment.

Here is the procedure we adopt to settle your child at *Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre*.

- Upon enrolment each family will receive a current parent handbook and enrolment form.
- Parents will be asked to fill out an information form about their child for staff to become familiar with his/her routine and personal information.
- The parent and child will be given a tour of the centre and meet the staff and children in his/her new room.
- Before children start at *Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre*, parents are encouraged to have an orientation process where they come and spend time at the centre with the child, to help both be at ease and familiar with the environment. This process is tailored to meet the individual needs of the family and the child. Staff are flexible and encouraging at all times during this process.

Here at *Butterflies Childcare and Early Learning Centre*, we have modified our orientation sessions to be in line with Government and Department recommendations as part of our COVIDsafe plan.

We offer the following sessions to help you and your child settle into our centre:

- **1st Orientation session (via Zoom)** - This orientation session is 1/2 hour in duration (12.00pm- 12.30pm) and is held via phone call or Zoom session. You and one of our educators will liaise about your child's likes and dislikes, their needs and how we can best support your child once they commence care here at *Butterflies*. This session is about helping you to feel safe and comfortable with our team so that you can comfortably drop your child off into our care once your child commences with us. (There is no charge for this session)
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- **2nd Orientation session (drop off)** – This visit lasts 2 hours in duration (10.00am- 12.00pm). This is just a short visit to ensure that your child is not overwhelmed, discovering their new environment.

Your child will engage in lots of fun and engaging activities and experiences with other children and will get to know their new teachers. Your child also stays for lunch. (This session is free of charge).

- **3rd Orientation session (drop off)** – This visit is 4 hours in duration (10.00am- 2.00pm) Your child should now feel comfortable with their teachers and our centre. Your child can now attend for a half day session. Your child will participate in activities and experiences, will have lunch with us and will have a sleep or rest at the centre. (A half day rate applies for this day). This process is very important for parents, children and our team members. It builds trust with your child and shows them that you will come back for them at the end of the day.

- **First full day** - From this visit, we will implement our COVIDsafe drop off and pick up procedure (please see attached information regarding this).

- You are now ready to leave the child for the whole day. Parents are welcome to telephone throughout the day and staff are happy to discuss the child's daily progress.

- Information about the child's eating, sleeping and play habits will be recorded for the parents to access when they pick up the child.

- Staff will be in constant communication with parents about their child's day and how he/she is settling in and ways to provide continuity of care between home and the centre.

- Communication books, parent carer interviews, daily routine sheets, daily evaluations, verbal and phone communication are just some of the ways we work together with parents to keep them updated with their child's progress at the centre.

### ***Grievances and concerns***

If a parent has a concern, please discuss it with us as soon as possible.

We suggest that you follow up your concern in the following order:-

- Speak with the Group Leader in the room concerned.
- Make an appointment to speak to the Directors Amanda Franklin or Jessica Kuppe.
- Should your concern still not be resolved then you may like to contact the Department of Education and Training on 1300 307 415. This Department is the licensing body for Child Care Centers and has a statutory responsibility to ensure that regulations are adhered to.

### ***Responsibilities***

Parents are responsible for

- Ensuring details are up to date at all times on enrolment forms.
- Signing each child in and out each day of attendance.
- Notifying the Centre of your child's absence.
- Reporting to the Centre illnesses, medical conditions or allergies your child may have.
- Completing medication forms when necessary and notifying staff of this.

**PARENT HANDBOOK AGREEMENT**

By signing the Parent Handbook Agreement, it is understood that all of the policies and procedures of Butterflies Childcare & Early Learning Centre are understood and agreed upon.

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign and date and return this page only of the Parent Handbook to the Centre Director.

Please keep the Parent Handbook for your reference.

Review Date: 01.01.2025