

FAMILY INFORMATION BOOKLET

Please visit www.milestonekinder.com.au for more information.

How can I contact you?

An educator will be available to take your call during operating hours (7:00am to 6:30pm) on (03) 9727 4414. You can also contact us by email - milestonekinder@bigpond.com. Alternatively, our door is always open if you wish to visit.

What are your conditions of enrolment?

A deposit of the first week's fee must be paid before we can confirm your child's booking. Enrolment forms and immunisation records downloaded from MyGov must be submitted to the centre before the child can commence orientation.

Please Note: Every child needs to provide an up-to-date immunisation certificate from MyGov before commencement. Unimmunised children, or children with incomplete immunisation records, cannot be enrolled.

What is your policy regarding fees?

The Milestone fee schedule is as **\$132.00 (Daily)** and **\$630.00 (Weekly)**.

Fees are payable weekly or fortnightly (in advance) for the entire year that the centre is open. Fees are paid for public holidays and any days of absence. This includes days of illness and holidays.

A deposit of the first week's fee must be paid to secure your child's enrolment. Deposits can be paid by cash, credit card, or EFTPOS, as a once off payment. After enrolment, fees are to be paid via our nominated direct debit system.

Please see our *'Payment of Fees'* policy for more information.

What are your educator's qualifications?

All educators hold, or are working towards, a Bachelor of Early Childhood Education, Diploma in Early Childhood Education & Care, or Certificate 3 in Children's Services.

What is your orientation procedure?

When your child starts at our centre, we encourage you to bring them in for orientation before their first day to help them feel comfortable and settled in the new environment. We suggest that children attend at least two orientation sessions before they begin. Orientation sessions run daily from 10:00am to 11:00am. Families are welcome to leave the child in the room and retreat to another area of the centre or leave the child in our care. These orientation sessions help us to see how the child will handle separation.

Please see our *'Enrolment & Orientation'* policy for more information.

What can I expect my child to eat throughout the day?

Each day we provide a varied breakfast, morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and a late snack, which take into account the nutritional needs, likes, cultures, health and dietary requirements of all of our children. Our menu is rotated over a four-week period and is prepared by our centre cook of 8 years, Belinda.

Please Note: Our centre is entirely nut and egg free. Please do not bring in any nuts, eggs, or products containing nuts, eggs or nut oils into our service.

What is your policy regarding sick children?

A child will not be able to attend the centre for any period during which they are suffering an infectious condition that is contagious through normal social contact. Any child displaying symptoms of illness will be excluded for a minimum of 24 hours. Symptoms include, but are not limited to, diarrhoea, vomiting, fever of 37.5°C or above, unusual rashes etc. Generally, a 'clearance certificate' from a doctor is required in order to return.

Please see our '*Dealing with Infectious Diseases*' policy for more information.

How do I register a complaint?

Families can make complaints verbally to the director or an educator. Alternatively, they can submit their complaint in written form via milestonekinder@bigpond.com or a written letter in our letterbox.

Families also have the option of speaking to a Children's Services Authorised Officer from the Department of Education & Training:

Address: Level 3
295 Springvale Road
Glen Waverley VIC 3150
1300 651 940
emr.gar@edumail.vic.gov.au

Please see our '*Dealing with Complaints*' policy for more information.

How can families get involved in the centre?

We encourage family participation across all aspects of our program. Our open-door policy allows families to come in and play or share a story, talent, cultural experience etc. with the children. We regularly provide opportunities for families to visit the centre during our calendar of events, e.g. *Father's Day BBQ, Grandparents Day*. Families are encouraged to be involved in decision making at the centre.

What are your policies and procedures?

An extensive Policy and Procedure Handbook is available for you to peruse in the foyer at any time. This handbook outlines the most common questions asked of us. Alternatively, we can email these to families at their request.

What is your policy regarding children's clothing?

Families are encouraged to dress their children in comfortable & appropriate clothing, that may get dirty, as well as supplying sets of spare clothes for any accidents. All items of clothing should be clearly named. For warmer weather, we ask that each child wears loose-fitting, sunsmart cotton clothing, and an appropriate sunhat. For colder weather, we ask that warm and comfortable clothing is worn. As we provide an all-year round indoor/outdoor program, raincoats and gumboots are suggested for wet & cold weather.

Please see our '*Sun Protection*' policy for more information.

How do you deal with challenging behaviours?

Learning acceptable behaviour & being able to regulate their own behaviour in different social and emotional environments can be challenging for children. Our program promotes a positive approach to managing the behaviour of all children. We believe in encouraging and supporting children to resolve problems and frustrations where appropriate. This can be achieved by exploring possible solutions, and helping children understand and deal with their emotions, dependent on their age & level of development.

Please see our '*Interactions with Children*' policy for more information.

What is your policy regarding sleep and rest?

The centre will ensure that each child is given adequate and flexible rest periods during the day. All children will be encouraged (but not forced) to sleep or rest for a period during the day to rejuvenate after a busy morning of activities and give their body the rest it requires. The centre will provide the children with an opportunity to rest in a pleasant environment which meets the needs of the individual children.

Children who are showing visible tired signs will not be forced to stay awake, even if there has been a parental request. On the same note, children will also not be woken up during rest times, to ensure they're getting adequate sleep.

Please see our '[Sleep and Rest](#)' policy for more information.

What is your cancellation policy?

When you no longer require a place for your child at our centre, a minimum of two full weeks written notice via email must be given to enable the centre sufficient time to fill the vacancy. Full fees are charged for the cancellation period when a child does not attend the centre after the date that the cancellation email is received at the office. Child Care Subsidy is removed back to the child's last day of attendance at the centre.

Do you provide a holiday reduction?

The centre offers up to 2 weeks of holiday fees for each child per financial year. The amount is determined by how regularly the child attends, *e.g. a child that attends for 2 days per week receives 4 days at the holiday rate per financial year*. Holidays will be charged at 50% of the usual fee. This is applicable if you have notified the director in writing via email at least two full weeks before you require the leave for holidays.

What is your policy regarding accidents and injuries?

In the event of an accident or injury, your child will be comforted & given appropriate first aid. Immediate medical attention will be sought, if the educators consider it necessary. We will notify you via phone as soon as possible to inform you of what has happened. In the event that your child needs to go in an ambulance, we will notify you of the hospital where we are going, so you can meet us there. If we cannot reach you, we will contact your nominated emergency contacts.

Please see our '[Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness](#)' policy for more information.

Do you allow families to do 'day swaps'?

Milestone does not do day swaps. If you require an extra day, you must pay for your current booked days as well as your extra day. We cannot supply day swaps if your child's booked day falls on a public holiday or if your child had an absence due to illness or a personal holiday. Extra days can only be granted if there is a vacancy in that room on the day required by the family.

How can we stay updated on what's happening at Milestone?

Families are kept informed via emails, social media updates, notices at the centre and in person during drop-off's and pick-ups. The centre sends out weekly updates at the end of each week via email and also bi-monthly newsletters.

We encourage families to follow us on Facebook so they can see photographs, event invitations and information about what has been happening at the centre –

www.facebook.com/milestonekinder

Alternatively, send an email to milestonekinder@bigpond.com to let us know you would like to join our email list to receive our updates and newsletters.

What does Milestone provide?

- Separate, tranquil sleep room
- 4-weekly menu which caters for all dietary requirements and covers all meal times.
- 3-year-old kindergarten program
- A comprehensive 4-year-old kindergarten and school readiness program
- Nappies (*families are welcome to provide cloth nappies, if preferred*)
- Linen, e.g. cot sheets, blankets, bibs
- Daily consumables, e.g. wipes, sunscreen
- 2 large outdoor recreational playgrounds with an undercover verandah area
- Doctor that visits weekly, bulk-billing to Medicare
- Highly qualified & experienced educators with a very low staff turnover
- Annual calendar of events including a range of incursions & special celebrations
- Primary school transition reports and processes
- End of year pre-school graduation ceremony

What do families need to provide?

- A child care bag
- A bottle of water
- Bottles of formula/breast milk, or formula accompanied by empty bottles, *if required*
- Comfort items, e.g. dummy, blanket, sleeping bag (*if required*)
- SunSmart hat
- SunSmart clothing (at least 3 changes)
- Raincoat and gumboots (*for wet weather*)

What is Milestone's quality rating?

Services covered by the National Quality Framework are assessed and rated against each of the 7 Quality Areas of the National Quality Standard as well as the National Regulations. Milestone was assessed in February 2018 and is officially '*Exceeding the National Quality Standard*'.

ROOM INFORMATION

Nursery Room (6 Weeks to 14 Months)

- Our nursery room can have 12 children per day with 3 educators.
- The staff/child ratio is 1 educator to every 4 children.
- We have a separate sleep room with soothing music and dimmed lighting.
- The daily routine is relaxed and progressive and follows each child's individual preferences and routine times regarding bottles, meals, sleep and play.
- Each child is given a daily book where staff record the children's meals, sleeps, nappy changes, and bottles for the day.
- Children move up to the Toddler room around 14 months of age.
- You can view a video of the room on our YouTube account.
- Families are welcome to contact the room at any time via phone, email, or Facebook:
 - (03) 9727 4414
 - nurseryroom@live.com
 - Facebook: *Milestone Nursery*

Toddler Room (12 Months to 2 Years)

- Our toddler room can have 20 children per day with 5 educators.
- The staff/child ratio is 1 educator to every 4 children.
- There are core daily routine times which are flexible when it comes to meals, sleep and play, giving children the opportunity to rest when they are tired.

- The room utilises daily information boards to record the children's meals, sleeps, nappy changes, and bottles for the day.
- Children move up to the Pre-Kinder room when they turn two.
- You can view a video of the room on our YouTube account.
- Families are welcome to contact the room at any time via phone, email, or Facebook:
 - (03) 9727 4414
 - toddlerroom@live.com
 - Facebook: *Milestone Toddler Room*

Pre-Kinder Room (2 to 3 Years)

- Our pre-kinder room can have 24 children per day with 6 educators.
- The staff/child ratio is 1 educator to every 4 children.
- There are core daily routine times which are flexible when it comes to meals, sleep and play, giving children the opportunity to rest when they are tired.
- The pre-kinder team can help with all stages of toilet training.
- The room utilises daily information boards to record the children's meals, sleeps, nappy changes, and toileting for the day.
- Children move up to the Kinder room around 32 months of age.
- You can view a video of the room on our YouTube account.
- Families are welcome to contact the room at any time via phone, email, or Facebook:
 - (03) 9727 4414
 - prekinderroom@live.com
 - Facebook: *Milestone Pre Kinder Room*

Kinder Room (32 Months to 4 Years)

- Our kinder room can have 32 children per day with 4 educators.
- The staff/child ratio for children over the age of three is 1 educator to every 11 children. However, with children under the age of 3 also in the group, we are able to provide staffing that meets their ratio requirement of 1:4 on top of the normal 3-year-old staff ratio of 1:11. Additional educators allow existing room staff more opportunities to meet the individual needs and routines of each child, as well as allow for more one-on-one and small group engagement.
- We provide a comprehensive 3-year-old kindergarten program daily.
- The program is led by our room leader, Asten, and our kindergarten teacher, Philippa.
- Children must attend 3-year-old kinder for at least 5 hours per week which can be achieved at Milestone by attending for at least 1 day.
- There are core daily routine times for meals and sleep, but children still have the opportunity to rest when they are tired.
- The kinder team can help with all stages of toilet training.
- Our kinder program focuses on growing self-confidence, problem-solving skills, self-esteem, skill development and independence.
- The room utilises daily information sheets to record the children's meals & sleeps.
- Children move up to the Pre-School room when they turn four.
- You can view a video of the room on our YouTube account.
- Families are welcome to contact the room at any time via phone, email, or Facebook:
 - (03) 9727 4414
 - kinderroom@live.com
 - Facebook: *Milestone Kinder Room*

Pre-School Room (4 to 6 Years)

- Our pre-school room can have 32 children per day with 3 educators.
- The staff/child ratio is 1 educator to every 11 children.

- We provide a comprehensive 4-year-old kindergarten and school readiness program which runs between 8:30am-4:30pm daily.
- The program is led by our two kindergarten teachers, Vanessa and Karen. They both have early childhood degrees.
- Children must attend 4-year-old kinder for at least 15 hours per week which can be achieved at Milestone over 2 full days.
- There are core daily routine times for meals and generally children no longer require a sleep. If they wish to rest, they will always have the opportunity.
- We move recent 4-year-olds up to this room so they will be with children of a similar age group. The program is flexible and caters for the range of ages and developmental levels of the children in the group. It is very common for children to spend 2 years in pre-school.
- Formal teacher interviews are available at any time at the family's request, to discuss development in the year prior to school.
- 4-year-old hearing checks are conducted yearly by Knox Audiology.
- This is the final room at Milestone. Children move off to primary school from Pre-School.
- At the end of the year, children celebrate with a kinder graduation ceremony.
- You can view a video of the room on our YouTube account.
- Families are welcome to contact the room at any time via phone, email, or Facebook:
 - (03) 9727 4414
 - preschoolroom@live.com
 - Facebook: [Milestone Preschool Room](#)

Centre Office

- The centre is open from Monday to Friday between 7:00am and 6:30pm daily.
- We are closed on all weekends and Victorian gazetted public holidays.
- Milestone is managed by our centre director, Alyssa, and our 2IC, Lisa.
- The Milestone office is staffed daily for enquiries, calls and emails.
- The director can help with any questions, information updates, booking changes, grievances, enrolments, cancellations and general centre operations.
- Families are welcome to contact the centre at any time via phone, email, or Facebook:
 - (03) 9727 4414
 - milestonekinder@bigpond.com
 - Website: www.milestonekinder.com.au
 - Facebook: www.facebook.com/milestonekinder

CENTRE PHILOSOPHY

Our centre philosophy has been developed over many years with help from educators, families, children, management and the community. It outlines the principles under which we operate. We welcome any family feedback to help further develop our philosophy.

Play Based Learning Program

At Milestone, we believe that play is a vital component in the development of all children which is why we follow a play-based learning program. The implementation of an indoor/outdoor program has given children the freedom to decide where they wish to play regardless of weather. We value outdoor play and think of our indoor and outdoor environments as one whole space rather than separate areas. Through the provision of a wide range of materials, children have the opportunity to explore and extend on their learning and experiences. We believe in letting the children play without interruption from adults and encourage them to take risks and make their own choices.

High Expectations for Children

We pride ourselves on having high expectations on what children can achieve. Every child at Milestone is viewed as a capable and active contributor to their own learning. We allow children to make choices and inspire them to engage in risky play. Children are provided with many opportunities to demonstrate their independence and are encouraged to further extend on their skills throughout their day. We allow

the children to regulate their own play while also encouraging them to respect their environment and others.

Inclusive Environment

At Milestone, we respect all cultures and believe in unity in diversity. The centre challenges stereotypes surrounding gender bias, culture, age and ability. We believe that the cultural blend of families in our community has a positive effect on our centre via the opportunity to explore these cultures through experiences and celebrations. Our team is committed to providing an environment that is inclusive for every child and family at the centre.

High Quality Relationships

The development of high-quality relationships with children and families is of the utmost importance at our centre. We aim to provide a home-like environment that is warm, friendly and nurturing. Educators work closely with families to foster collaborative relationships that will assist children to achieve quality outcomes. We believe that a working partnership between families and educators is beneficial to the ongoing development of each child. Families are encouraged to be involved in all aspects of the centre's operations and are invited to participate in all events. Our families have identified communication as being of the highest standard. We endeavour to act on concerns raised by families quickly and efficiently.

Committed Educators

We are proud to provide warm, affectionate, dedicated and compassionate educators who are available to children & families when required. We feel that our team is one big, happy family who are devoted to continuously evolving in the early childhood field. All of our educators work collaboratively to improve practice and relationships through team meetings, reflection and professional development. They are excited and open to change, show a thirst for knowledge, and are proactive in providing children with engaging play spaces. The relationships we foster with our families and the local community is of the highest priority.

Connected to the World

Our centre is committed to embedding sustainability within our daily practices. We encourage children to be environmentally responsible and engage them in many sustainable practices such as recycling and maintaining edible gardens. We provide play environments, both indoors and out, that allow children to explore a multitude of natural materials. We aspire to build many meaningful relationships within our local community and regularly utilise social media as a more sustainable and effective way of staying connected.

WHAT YOU WILL SEE AT MILESTONE

Indoor and Outdoor Play: Our indoor/outdoor program operates all year round regardless of the weather. Families are encouraged to provide appropriate clothing for children to play outdoors at all times & experience all types of weather. Generally speaking, children are not well enough to attend if they are unable to go outside due to illness.

Messy Play: We provide children with many different opportunities to get messy. This means they will explore paint, water, dirt, slime, sand, mud etc. Children will not be discouraged from engaging in messy play at any time.

Barefoot Play: We believe children need opportunities to explore indoor and outdoor environments without shoes. Going barefoot is beneficial to children as it nourishes, strengthens, and promotes agility in a child's growing feet, ankles, legs, knees, and hips.

Risk Taking: Children both need and want to take risks in order to explore their limits, venture into new experiences and develop. Any injury is distressing for children and those who care for them, but the experience of minor injuries is a universal part of childhood and has a positive role in child development. Risky play promotes resilience which is critical for children to be able to self-regulate, make good decisions and negotiate the challenges in life.

Mixed-Age Grouping: We provide multiple opportunities during the day for children to interact with children of all ages, and throughout all rooms and outdoor spaces. Mixed-age grouping provides

opportunities for younger and older children to learn from each other, with older, more competent children often providing leadership and support to those who are younger and less capable. It also provides siblings, cousins and friends the opportunity to interact with one another.

Loose Parts Play: Loose parts are materials that can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up, and taken apart and put back together in multiple ways. They have no specific set of directions and can be used alone or combined with other materials. Some may consider it “junk” but we know these items are very beneficial to children’s development.

An Anti-Biased Approach: We encourage children to engage in any activity or with any child or educator at the centre regardless of their gender, race, age, culture, abilities, family background, appearance, behaviour, qualifications or years of experience.

High Expectations for Every Child: We believe that children achieve better outcomes when they are expected to succeed. The concept of high expectations relates closely to acknowledging children’s agency. Children are able to construct their own understandings and initiate, contribute to and lead their own learning. From infancy, children are capable of making choices and decisions.

Exploration of Nature: It is not enough for children to look at trees & plants in children’s services. They must be able to actively explore, engage with, and experience different types of natural spaces. This is why we encourage children to touch & interact with the natural environment in their everyday play.

Choice and Independence: Allowing children to make choices for themselves is an important yet relatively easy step towards encouraging independence and agency. When we make materials and resources easily accessible, without the need for adult assistance, we promote children’s ability to resource their own learning independently and successfully.

Free Choice Art: We believe that the process of exploring art is more important than the end product which is why we provide a range of materials for children to explore rather than providing teacher-directed art experiences.

Self-Regulation: Finding ways to balance one’s own feelings and behaviours is called self-regulation. We believe in encouraging & supporting children to resolve problems and frustrations, where appropriate. Children who play and learn in an environment which promotes independence are less likely to display inappropriate behaviours.

Commitment to Health and Wellbeing: The health & wellbeing of all children, educators & families is of the utmost importance. Policies have been implemented to develop positive physical and mental health, minimise illness and control the spread of infection.

WHAT YOU WON’T SEE AT MILESTONE

Children will never be discouraged from:

- Playing outside in cold, wet or hot weather
- Engaging in activities where they will get messy, wet and dirty
- Taking calculated risks
- Engaging in experiences that are usually regarded as only “for boys” or “for girls”
- Attempting tasks that may be considered “outside of their abilities”
- Taking off their shoes when exploring indoor and outdoor environments
- Playing with children of differing ages or exploring other rooms & outdoor spaces

Children will never be expected to:

- Stay indoors or keep away from messy, wet or dirty experiences
- Make gifts for special events without showing an interest
- Participate in formal lessons on topics such as numbers or the alphabet
- Engage in teacher-directed or end-product art, *e.g. we would never ask all of the children to colour in the same template or construct the same snowman*
- Participate in any experience that they are not comfortable with or interested in