

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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

- **How can I contact you?**

An educator will be available to take your call during operating hours on (03) 9727 4414. You can also contact us by e-mail on 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 to secure your child's place in the centre. The enrolment form and direct debit form must be completed and submitted before the first day of attendance. This contains information relating to where families can be contacted, emergency phone numbers, and details of the child's health history. Families need to inform the centre of any changes to this form, to keep it regularly updated.

Please Note: Every child needs to provide an up-to-date immunisation certificate before commencement. These are downloaded from the MyGov App or accessed through Medicare. Unimmunised children or children with incomplete certificates will not be enrolled.

- **What is your policy regarding fees?**

The Milestone fee schedule is as follows:

Daily Fee - \$114.00

Weekly Fee - \$540.00

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 non-refundable deposit (the first week's fee) must be paid to secure your child's place in the centre. Then, on commencement, the following week must be paid. Deposits can be paid by cash, credit card, or EFTPOS, as a once off payment. After commencement, fees are to be paid via our nominated direct debit system.

Please ask us for a copy of our *'Payment of Fees'* policy for more information.

- **What are your educator's qualifications?**

All of our educators either hold, or are working towards obtaining, their Bachelor of Early Childhood Education, Diploma in Early Childhood Education and 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 as often as required for them to feel comfortable and settled in the new environment. Families are welcome to leave the child in the room and retreat to another area of the centre. This helps families and educators to see how the child handles the initial separation. Families can also leave their child at the centre for a one-hour orientation session.

Please ask for a copy of 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 takes into account the nutritional needs, likes, cultures and dietary requirements of our young children. Our menu is rotated over a four-week period.

- **What is your policy regarding sick children?**

A child will not be able to attend the centre for any period during which the child is suffering an infectious condition that is contagious through normal social contact. All reasonable and practical steps should be taken by families and educators to avoid the spread of illness within the centre.

Please ask for a copy of 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 ask for a copy of 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 become actively 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.

- **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, comfortable clothing is worn. As we provide an all-year round indoor/outdoor program, raincoats and gumboots are suggested for wet weather. Please ask for a copy of our *'Sun Protection'* 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.

Please ask for a copy of 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.

- **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 do I need to provide for my child?**

- A child care bag
- Sunsmart hat
- A bottle of water
- At least three spare changes of clothes
- A jacket/raincoat for colder weather
- Appropriate footwear (Gumboots can be provided for wet weather)
- Bottles of formula or breast milk (if required)
- A comfort item, *e.g. dummy, blanket (if required)*
- Sensitive sunscreen for children that may be allergic to our provided sunscreen

- **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 ask for a copy of 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 do you deal with challenging behaviours?**

Re-direction is the preferred method for behaviour management in the centre. If a child is behaving in a manner considered unacceptable, they are re-directed to a new activity. Diversion and distraction play a major role in behaviour management. Some rooms have provided children with a 'calm place' that they can go to when they are sad or angry.

Children are also given the opportunity to solve their problems by dealing with the problem themselves. Under the guidance of the educators, children can learn to deal with situations for themselves, until a time that educators consider it necessary to intervene.

All educators practice these behaviour procedures to maintain consistency in our adult/child interactions.

Please ask us for a copy of our *'Interactions with Children'* policy for more information.

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

Please follow us on Facebook to see lots of photographs, event invitations and information about what has been going on 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.

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 that 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.

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, culture, abilities, family background, appearance or behaviour.

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 and 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 and 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: Children experience ups and downs when they are trying to manage their feelings and behaviours. Finding ways to balance this is called self-regulation. We believe in encouraging and 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 and wellbeing of all children, educators and families is of the utmost importance. Policies and procedures have been implemented to develop positive health and nutrition habits, minimise illness and the spread of infection, and strengthen the mental health of each child and person at Milestone.

WHAT YOU WON'T SEE AT MILESTONE

Children will never be discouraged from:

- Playing outside in cold, wet or hot weather
- 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

Children will never be expected to:

- 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

WEEKLY DOCTOR'S SERVICE

Doctor Robert Chan visits our centre every Monday in the early afternoon to see children and educators as required. This service is bulk billed and provides piece of mind if you are concerned, on any level, with your child's health. Your Medicare number that is detailed in your child's enrolment form is used for the claim. An educator will accompany your child at the consultation in the centre's planning room.

Doctor Rob will provide you with a letter detailing his findings and will write a prescription, when required. If necessary, Doctor Rob may call you to discuss any concerns further.

Immunisations are also available. Families are required to provide the child's health record book for completion. A form also needs to be completed, detailing which immunisation is required.

The doctor's form is situated on the shelf, outside the office window. Please complete this form with as much detail as possible, and if necessary, consult with an educator so we can pass information onto Doctor Rob.

If your child does not attend on a Monday, you are still welcome to complete the form and leave a phone number for us to contact you with when Doctor Rob arrives.

Please note: Only children written on the list will be seen by Doctor Rob.

Please feel free to take advantage of this service as Doctor Rob comes highly recommended and can provide great peace of mind for working families.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you.



MILESTONE 4-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN & SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM

Milestone offers a 4-year-old kindergarten program with a qualified kinder teacher. This includes a comprehensive school readiness program. Our program runs all day from Monday to Friday. Children must attend a 4-year-old funded kindergarten at least 15 hours per week which can be achieved at Milestone over 2 full days.

Each child is observed & planned for, and their needs addressed, to prepare children for school. Our teacher is more than happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have. Teacher interviews take place twice a year, to discuss development in the year prior to school.

We believe that children learn best through play, so we incorporate those elements into our programs, and refrain from making children write their name or trace letters unless they show an interest.

When planning the children's activities, we aim to present a program that is structured to a certain extent, yet allows for a lot of choice, spontaneity and flexibility. Our kinder program prepares each child for the move to school, in a manner which is non-threatening and educational.

Play is the children's work through which they learn and make sense of the world around them. Play is also a process of development in everything a child does whereby a child's curiosity is fulfilled by use of fantasy, imagination, independence and sensory exploration.

Our play-based curriculum is child-oriented; emerging from current interests, needs and developmental levels of the group. We provide an indoor/outdoor program where children can choose where they wish to play and explore. We find that kinder aged children learn most readily when the curriculum is relevant to their lives.



Our program is interactive and exploratory involving interaction with a rich variety of materials and equipment. We also incorporate as many 'real life' play experiences as possible into the program, e.g. home corner.

Our first priority is to instil a love and appreciation for meaningful learning, thus helping to ensure children reach their full potential in later years. It is through this child-oriented play-based curriculum that children gain a range of social, emotional, cognitive, lingual and physical skills.

At Milestone, we do not focus on the alphabet or learning to write letters, names and numbers. The way we incorporate letters and numbers in our program is with experiences such as group games that include counting or recognising letters & numbers, singing songs and the letter of the week show and tell.



We don't have specific times in the day where we focus on academic skills or knowledge as we know that children learn all they need to know through play (with gentle intentional teaching by educators).

We like to encourage family participation across all aspects of our program. Families can contribute to our programs through many ways, such as parent duty, feedback and an open-door policy which allows families to come in to the centre to play or share a story, talent, cultural experience etc. We value contributions from families and part of our aim is to make your family feel that this is a home away from home.

Some of the areas that we focus on are:

Independence – e.g. getting the children to put their own belongings in their bags, self-serving themselves meals, using “real-life” objects in play

Social Interactions – e.g. helping the children solve problems during social interactions so they can negotiate their way out in the playground

School Readiness – e.g. providing the children with scissors, sticky tape, glue sticks, hole punchers etc.

Sustainability – e.g. growing our own produce, becoming environmentally responsible, recycling

By providing small group activities such as home corner and block corner, we believe this gives children the opportunity to work on social and problem-solving skills like working out an issue between two or more children, turn taking, sharing etc.

Throughout the year, we provide numerous learning experiences that will assist children in the transition to school, such as:

- Responsible Pet Ownership incursion
- Lunch Box Days in term 4 where children bring lunch boxes to kinder & are familiarised on how to open wrappers, peel fruit, punch through straws etc.
- Cooking experiences
- ‘Letter of the Week’ show and tell
- Events and celebrations on our calendar of events
- Gardening and growing fruits, vegetables and herbs
- Free Hearing Screenings in term 3 by Knox Audiology
- Multicultural and community projects and discussions
- An end-of-year graduation ceremony

If you wish to have any further information, please do not hesitate to ask. Thank you.

NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK

The National Quality Framework (NQF) raises the quality of education and care across Australian services through the National Quality Standard. This is a standard that all services have to work to. The implementation of this framework means increased educator to child ratios, qualification requirements and a national assessment and rating process. The NQF provides families with information on the quality of care to help them make informed choices about which service will best meet their needs.

National Quality Standard

The National Quality Standard is divided into 7 Quality Areas:

- Educational program and practice
- Children's health and safety
- Physical environment
- Staffing arrangements
- Relationships with children
- Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- Leadership and service management.

The National Quality Standard aims to promote:

- The safety, health and wellbeing of children
- A focus on achieving outcomes for children through high-quality educational programs
- Families' understanding of what distinguishes a quality service.

National Quality Rating and Assessment Process

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. They will also be given an overall rating.

Rating Levels

The rating levels are:

- Exceeding National Quality Standard
- Meeting National Quality Standard
- Working Towards National Quality Standard
- Significant Improvement Required

Milestone was assessed in February 2018 and is now officially ***'Exceeding the National Quality Standard'***.

You can view our quality profile on the next page.



Milestone Kindergarten & Early Childhood Centre

(SE-00004788)

Has achieved the following ratings

Quality Area 1	Educational program and practice Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 2	Children's health and safety Meeting NQS
Quality Area 3	Physical environment Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 4	Staffing arrangements Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 5	Relationships with children Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 6	Collaborative partnerships with families and communities Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 7	Governance and leadership Exceeding NQS
Overall Rating	Exceeding NQS

The overall rating for a service is determined by the combination of the Quality Area ratings achieved. If a service is rated below the National Quality Standard in any Quality Area, the overall rating will reflect the lowest Quality Area rating. To achieve an overall rating of Exceeding National Quality Standard, a service needs to achieve Exceeding National Quality Standard in four or more Quality Areas of which two must be from Quality Area 1, Quality Area 5, Quality Area 6 or Quality Area 7.

This service has been assessed against the *National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care* and these ratings have been awarded in accordance with the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* and the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*.



Department of Education and Training

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