



FAMILY HANDBOOK

Collaborative Partnership with Families

Welcome | Our Family Handbook provides important information you need to know to ensure the best possible start to quality education and care at Circle Early Learning

Circle Early Learning Journey is a progressive and educational long day care service focused on inspiring children to embrace their unique potential for learning every day.

Circle early learning strives to make parents busy schedules a little bit easier by creating a relaxed home like environment where children can interact and learn within the bounds of a safe and professional space.

Our programs are run by qualified, passionate professionals that believe in providing the best possible Early Childhood Education.

Circle Early Learning is a caring environment that promotes positive attitudes and not only gives children an opportunity to learn but also to grow with a strong sense of identity and belonging

Our Core Values

- Each and every child needs to have their voice heard and be leaders of their own learning
- Connection with Community is mutually beneficial and supports children's belonging.
- The Natural environment is vitally important to a child's development.
- Relationships are the key to successful learning and successful life.
- All children and families are acknowledged and respected.
- Research, inquiry and practise based evidence inform quality education and care

Our Philosophy

Circle Early Learning acknowledges that children come to us as part of a family and that our service is an integral part of the broader community. We strongly believe in the importance of family and strive to form strong relationships with each and every child and their extended family that attends our service.

Relationships are key to how successful Circle Early Learning can be. We will strive to strengthen these relationships daily.

We regard the natural environment to be vitally important to a child's development and the exploration and wonder it can provide gives a wide range of learning opportunities. Circle Early Learning strives to engage and promote true sustainability. We encourage the children to form a respectful relationship with the natural environment around them.

Circle Early Learning ensures that the needs and beliefs of all children and their families are acknowledged and respected. We believe in providing a caring environment that promotes positive attitudes and high self-esteem, an environment that is inclusive to all.

Circle Early Learning believe that children need their voice to be heard and that they need to be provided with opportunities to act upon their own ideas, opportunities to explore new experiences and be actively engaged in their own learning, Learning through play we recognise that all children have their own learning style and should have control over the path of that learning.

A strong, visible connection with community allows children to feel a sense of belonging and ownership and it actively advocates for the role of Early Childhood within our community.

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*The child has a hundred languages,
a hundred hands
a hundred thoughts
a hundred ways of thinking, of playing, of speaking*

Service Information

Our Service caters for children aged 6 weeks to 6 years. We are open from 6.30am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday, 50 weeks of the year and closed on NSW public holidays.

We have 4 classrooms:

0-1-year-old room – Baby Room

1-2-year-old room - Toddler

2-3-year-old room - Junior

3-5-year-old room - Preschool

SERVICE TYPE: Privately owned Long Day Care Service

Contact Information

Phone: 02 6368 4495

Email: director@circlearlylearning.com.au

Website: www.circlearlylearning.com.au

Management Structure

Approved Provider: *5 Star Care Pty Ltd (Robert and Katherine Wilson)*

Nominated Supervisor: *Katherine Wilson*

Director: *Katherine Wilson*

Educational Leader: *Katy Matheson*

Our educators and staff

Our Service is made up of a team of high-quality professional educators who are committed to and passionate about early childhood education and care. Our staff promote the human rights, safety and wellbeing of all children and consider and respect the diverse backgrounds and needs of children.

We create an environment that promotes and enables children's participation and is welcoming, culturally safe and inclusive for all children and their families.

Our educators are continually evaluating how our curriculum meets the educational needs of our children and reflecting on ways to improve children's learning and development and are supported by a team of highly qualified professionals. Our educational leader and early childhood teachers guide our educators in providing quality, research based educational programs.

Our educators take into account children's learning styles, abilities, interests, linguistic and cultural diversity and family circumstances when planning and implementing learning programs. We support and respect the history and backgrounds of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and aim to foster each child's sense of identity.

All staff are encouraged and supported to attend professional training and development to further their knowledge and skills.

All staff hold valid Working with Children Checks/Cards and all Responsible Persons (placed in charge of the day-to-day running of the service) have current ACECQA approved First Aid, Emergency Asthma and Anaphylaxis qualifications.

For further details on the qualifications of the educators, please see Katherine.

National Quality Framework

Our Service complies with the Australian Government's National Quality Framework (NQF) which consists of the legislative framework of the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations, the National Quality Standard and a rigorous assessment and rating system. Our educational program and curriculum are based on the Australian Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). We regularly self-assess our practices against the National Quality Standard and strive for continuous improvement through our Self - Assessment Tool, this assists our service to identify quality aspects of care we are already providing and assists in developing future goals for further improvement. Families are welcome to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement.

Additional information about the NQF can be found at [ACECQA/nqf/about](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/about)



Regulatory Authorities

Our Service is regulated by the national body for early education and care – the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) as well as the NSW Department of Education.

To contact our Regulatory Authority, please refer to the contact details below:

NEW SOUTH WALES

Early Childhood Education Directorate

NSW Department of Education phone: 1800 619 113

Locked Bag 5107 PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

www.education.nsw.gov.au/ email: ececd@det.nsw.edu.au

Educator to child ratios (NSW) –

We comply with the National Regulations for educator to child ratios across our Service to ensure adequate supervision is provided for all children. Ratios are calculated across the service (not by individual rooms). This provides us with flexibility to respond to children’s interests and needs at different times during the day.

AGE OF CHILDREN:

Birth to 24 months

EDUCATOR TO CHILD RATIOS:

1:4

Over 24 months and less than 36 months	1:5
Over 24 months and less than 36 months	1:10

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) was developed to ensure all children in early childhood education and care settings across Australia, experience quality teaching and learning through play-based, holistic learning. The EYLF is made up of learning outcomes, principles and practices which educators use in their documentation of children's learning and in their reflection and planning. Fundamental to the EYLF is a view of children's lives as characterised by *belonging, being and becoming*.

From before birth children are connected to family, community, culture and place. Their earliest development and learning takes place through these relationships, particularly within families, who are children's first and most influential educators. As children participate in everyday life, they develop interests and construct their own identities and understandings of the world.

Educational Program

We are committed to providing a developmental and educational program which caters for each child's individual needs, abilities and interests. Our educational program is delivered through an intentional, play-based pedagogy aligned to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

Our program continues to develop as we use the relationships children have with their families and communities, working in partnership with parents, to ensure each child's knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of our programs.

We encourage children to be responsible for their own learning through choices in experiences, interests and routine. We use conversations, actions and play as the basis for teaching which involves the children being partners in teaching by seeking out ideas, opinions, thoughts and questions. We encourage children in promoting their independence and self-help skills by assisting within the routine and involving the children in interest-based projects to further enhance their learning and knowledge. We value children and family input and encourage family involvement in order to gather a comprehensive and holistic view of the child.

We know that children learn effectively through play and educators who are diligent in their responsiveness to each child support this. Applying strong intentional teaching practices provide the children with an authentic and meaningful learning environment that challenges, supports and nurtures a child's development.

If we as educators have any areas of concern about your child's development, we will inform you and share our observations and advise of follow up assistance e.g. speech therapy. We understand this may be a sensitive topic and it is always your decision to follow up intervention. Educators are willing to discuss any aspect of learning and development with parents and support discussions with allied health professionals.

Goals for your child at our Service

“We discovered that education is not something which the teacher does, but that it is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being.”

Maria Montessori

Educators' practices and the relationships they form with children and families have a significant effect on children's involvement and success in learning. Children thrive when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children's learning. Children's early learning influences their life chances.

Wellbeing and a strong sense of connection, optimism and engagement enable children to develop a positive attitude to learning. (Early Years Learning Framework p.9).

We will create a range of short and long-term goals for your child that we will program to and observe on which will be based on the outcomes in the Early Years Learning Framework and include:

- mutual respect and empathy
- concern and responsibility for self and others
- a sense of self worth
- social awareness
- importance of sustainability
- self-discipline and self-regulation
- habits of initiative and persistence
- creative intelligence and imagination
- self-confidence as an independent learner
- a love of learning.

We strongly encourage communication between families and educators to ensure continuity in what we are delivering to your child and acknowledge that the role of the educator is to work in partnership with families, children's first, and most influential educators.

Documentation Statement

Circle Early Learning uses many different forms of documenting and communicating your child's journey with us.

Such as:

Individual Portfolios

Daily Emails

Project Books

Documentation displays

Notice boards

Weekly Newsletters

Documenting and reflecting is the process of gathering evidence of children's learning, described in the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) as 'Assessment for Learning'. Our Educators observe and listen to find out what children know, can do and understand. They collect information that shows children's learning, describes their progress and identifies their strengths, skills and understandings.

Portfolios

These books contain: observations and stories of children's learning, photos, drawings or recordings, samples or artefacts of projects, investigations and representations, individual and collaborative works as well as contributions from families. These books are available to you and your child at any time and located in your child's room.

At particular points in time, educators make assessments about each child's knowledge, skills and dispositions, to discuss with families and colleagues.

This information is used to:

- validate what children know and can do
- look for and see children's learning in new ways
- build learning bridges from what children know and can do to new learning
- determine the level of individual support required to progress children's learning
- engage families and other educators in conversations about children's learning.

Children's learning is not always predictable and linear. It can start at different points and continue along different pathways. At any time, children may demonstrate learning described in any one of the contexts.

Floor Books/ Project Books

The books include very large pieces of blank paper that enable children and adults to record their ideas as a group and to work on a collaboration of group writing. The adult provides a role model for the process of thinking, listening, supporting, suggesting ideas, accepting challenge, of being a writer, making of diagrams, Mind Maps™ to name just a few then encourages the children to follow them into this journey of learning. Circle Early Learning chooses this method over more technology-based programming methods because we want the children to have ownership of their learning through these books. The children have the ability to discuss, plan and have a sense of here and now through touch, having the books available to them at all times. Within these books are your children's, thoughts, friends, memories, adventures and their voice.

We use these books to record children's ideas and thoughts without re-framing or interpretation so that they are a genuine record of their thinking.

We challenge children to create links in their own learning, revisiting their ideas over long blocks of time to allow them to see their process of thinking and learning is full of experimentation and adaptation.

The flow of the books follows the children's desire to explore an area in depth. Depth of learning is only created when you give children time to explore their own thinking, this is the key to long term embedded knowledge. Collating the children's ideas in a book form ensures that the group focus on continuity and progression over longer blocks of time.

Our Educators

Lead educators each get a rostered day to do their programming on this day they will email through the learning stories that they also put into your Child's portfolio. They will work on their weekly plan of activities that is on display around the entrance to their room. They will also work on our project books which as it sounds like follows the children's projects throughout the year.

Educators aim to email families daily with photos of their children and how they spent their day. However, some days we may not get a chance. As you can imagine some days are simply too busy and our educators are trained to put their relationships and interactions with the children before paperwork and programming.

Families

Throughout all our documentation we appreciate and seek out your input. We recognise that you are your child's first Teachers and hope to have your thoughts and feelings recorded within our documentation also.

Communication

We work in partnership with you and your family. We support and encourage communication with your child's educators about your child's unique needs and their general enjoyment of their day at our Service. Everybody has a preferred time and method of communication. Sometimes, mornings and afternoons can be a little rushed, and not the best time to discuss your child's progress. You are encouraged to talk to our Nominated Supervisor to arrange to meet your child's educator at a mutually convenient time.

Our Service uses Kidsoft and Gmail to provide real time updates about your child.

We have many types of communication we use for families, including:

- Newsletters
- Phone calls
- Emails
- Letters
- Face to face
- Daily floor books
- Formal meetings

Enrolment Information

Prior to your child commencing at our Service, you'll be required to complete an enrolment form, provide documentation and pay the bond and administration fee.

Enrolment Form

If you require assistance completing the enrolment form, please contact Katherine for assistance.

We will require a copy of your child's birth certificate and immunisation history statement from the Australian Immunisation Register. This must show that your child is up to date with vaccinations for their age OR your child is on a recognised vaccine catch up schedule OR has a medical condition preventing them from being fully vaccinated.

Please note, the names written on the enrolment form must match the names on your child's birth certificate to meet legal requirements.

Family law and access

Our Service will uphold any responsibilities or obligations in relation to Family Law and access to the service. We require certified copies of any court order, parenting orders or parenting plans, relating to your child and request that if situations change, a copy of the Court Order is provided to our Service. We will only allow children to leave the Service with the written permission of the custodial parent/guardian. Without a Court Order we cannot stop a parent collecting a child.

Authorised Nominees

You will be requested to provide information about authorised nominees on your child's enrolment form.

These are persons that you provide permission to:

- collect your child from the Service

- provide consent for medical treatment for your child from a medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service
- provide consent for the transportation of your child by an ambulance service
- provide consent to go on an excursion.

Please understand that it is essential we have up-to-date information on your child's enrolment record in case of an emergency. It is important that you notify the Nominated Supervisor (or Responsible Person) of any changes to enrolment information including:

- your residential address
- health of your child
- telephone/mobile numbers
- contact details for any parent or authorised nominee
- family changes (parenting orders)
- emergency contact information details etc.

Authorisations

The enrolment form will include additional authorisations for our Service to seek medical treatment and emergency transportation for your child if required. Authorisations will also be requested for application of sun cream, permission to administer emergency medication to your child in the case of an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency. (Ventolin or Epi-pen), permission for an educator with current first aid to administer paracetamol in an emergency and permission to access medical treatment and transport in case of an emergency.

Photographs, social media, promotion

As part of the enrolment process, we will also ask for your permission to take photographs and video of your child during normal activities and excursions for sharing with our parent community through social media and/or to promote our Service to the community through marketing and promotional materials. Photographs and video may also be used as part of our observation and programming process.

Excursions/ Regular Outings

Excursions are an important and valuable part of learning in early education. They expose a child to a range of different experiences and help them to observe and understand the world around them. For any excursion or regular outing in our community, we will complete comprehensive risk assessments to minimise any identified risks as part of our planning for excursions. We provide parents with information about the excursion in advance.

Diagnosed disability

If your child has a diagnosed disability, please speak to our Nominated Supervisor prior to enrolment.

We provide a supportive and inclusive environment that allows each child to fully participate in quality education and care. We aim to develop and sustain supportive relationships with families and encourage discussions about how we can support your child to have equitable access to resources and participation. If your child has a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) package, we may need your consent to make contact with services and/or therapists who are working with your child to seek information regarding their learning plan to support continuity of learning.

Our Service may be able to apply for additional support through the Inclusion Support Program (SIP) to assist your child's access.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

Child Care Subsidy offers assistance to families to help with the cost of child care aged 0-13 years. There are 3 factors that will determine a family's level of Child Care Subsidy, which include:

- **Combined annual family income**
- **Activity test** – the activity level of both parents
- **Service type** – type of child care service and whether the child attends school

Families who wish to receive Child Care Subsidy as reduced fees must apply through the [myGov](#) website. This includes completing the Child Care Subsidy activity test. Child Care Subsidy is paid directly to our Service to be passed on to families as a fee reduction. Families will contribute to their childcare fees and pay the difference between the fee charged by our Service and the subsidy amount received. This is called the '*gap fee*'.

On enrolment we will need the Customer Reference Number (CRN) of the person linked with the child, along with the child's CRN so we can confirm the attendance and ensure that you are receiving the appropriate subsidy.

Absences

We encourage families to notify the Service as soon as possible if your child will be absent for any day or session you have booked.

Child Care Subsidy will be paid for any absence from an approved child care service your child attends for up to 42 days per child per financial year. Additional absences beyond 42 days may be approved for specific reasons with supporting documentation. Please talk to us about additional absences.

Public holidays will be counted as an absence if your child would normally have attended the Service on that weekday, and fees have been charged for that day for your child.

If your child has not attended our Service for 14 continuous weeks, your child's enrolment will be cancelled, and Centrelink will stop paying your CCS subsidy.

Withdrawal from care/Reducing Enrolment Days

We require **2 weeks** written notice to withdraw and/or reduce enrolment days for your child/ren from any permanent booking. Please see the Katherine to obtain the required form to complete. Children are not able to attract CCS for any days after the last day your child physically attends our Service. *There are some circumstances where CCS can be paid after the last day your child physically attends with an approved reason.*

Service Closing Time and Late Collection Fees

Please be aware our Service and program closes at 6:00pm. In accordance with National Regulations and licensing, we are not permitted to have children in the service after 6:00pm. A late fee is incurred for children collected after 6.00pm.

The fee is \$15 per child for every 15 minutes or part thereof and will be added to your next account. The late fee is strictly adhered to, as two staff members are required to remain at the Service until all children are collected.

If we are unable to contact either the parent or a person nominated by the parent on the enrolment form to arrange collection of the child/children within an hour of the Service closing, we may need to contact the Police or other authorities to take responsibility of your child.

Service Policies and Procedures

You will find a copy of our Service policies and procedures in the foyer of the service sitting at the reception desk. We expect our staff and families to adhere to our policies and procedures at all times to ensure we maintain compliance and abide by the National Law and National Regulations.

Educators cannot make exceptions for individuals unless the Nominated Supervisor or Management do so on account of serious and/or unusual circumstances.

We are constantly reviewing our policies and procedures and ask for staff and family participation to ensure our policies and procedures adhere to the needs of our families and meet required regulations. Your involvement helps us to improve our Service and may lead us to change our policies and procedures.

Orientation-Preparing for your child's first day

Orientation is an important start for your child and family to connect to our Service. We encourage each child to attend our Service in the company of a family member before they start their first day with us. This gives you and your child the opportunity to gain an understanding of our program, the lay out of the room, where to put your child's belongings, provide educators with additional information about your child and how we can best support their transition and settling in period. Please organise with Katherine and the educators suitable times and days for visits.

If your child is reluctant to attend, please discuss this with their assigned educator so that they can develop strategies with you to support the transition from home to the Service. You are welcome to take photos of your child in our environment to show and discuss at home with them.

Arrival and Departure

Each day, you must sign your child in upon arrival and sign out upon departure and note the date and times. We are required by legislation to maintain our attendance record at all times. This record may be used in the event of an emergency situation at the Service.

Our staff have a duty of care to your child and will only allow your child to be released into the care of either a parent, guardian or an authorised nominee as listed on your child's enrolment record. If your child needs to be collected by another person for some reason, an authority to collect form must be provided in writing to the Nominated Supervisor. Our staff may ask to view photo identification of the adult collecting your child from care to confirm their identity.

The first day/week

The first day in a new service is a big step for you and your child. Please don't be alarmed if your child experiences some separation anxiety. This is normal and our experienced educators will assist you and your child through this transition period. We encourage parents to stay as long as they like during the morning drop off to help your child settle into an activity. There may be tears and extra

tight hugs when saying goodbye for the first few weeks but there are always cuddles, reassurance and genuine care from educators for both the children and their families. Sometimes this experience is upsetting more so for the family, not the child. We understand this and offer support through phone calls during the day, photos and open communication.

Saying goodbye

Introduction to Playspaces:

Morning drop off can be a stressful time for both parent and child as well as for our educators.

To help minimise this stress we follow Playspaces, this is a new way for your child to start and finish his or her day at our service. When you arrive in the morning and come back in the afternoon you will see the educators sitting still in their Playspaces. This makes educators more available to your child and allows them to concentrate on his or her needs. It enables them to slow down and be more reflective so that they can make both ends of the day feel less busy and more predictable and welcoming for you and your child.

Research shows that when children arrive at an Early Childhood Service, they look for a connection with an educator as a starting point.

With this in mind, instead of focusing on how to get children engaged in an activity the first task in the morning becomes one of welcome.

The child, parent and educator physically come together, the educator is sitting, and the parents and child come and sit with them

A conversation takes place between the adults so that the child experiences the responsibility for their care as it shifts from parent to educator. The child needs to know that both adults have him or her in mind as they communicate in a relaxed way about the transition.

Children want to be sure that this person (the educator) is there for them and that this is someone whom their parents enjoy and trust. After this they will be figuring out where to begin exploring and who to begin with. Their educator can then function as a secure base to launch-off from, and a safe haven to return to for reconnecting.

The Greeting

Educator – “hello Sophie, I’ve been waiting for you, its good to see you both (educator acknowledges child first then parent.)

Educator to parent - “Steve, are you ready for me to take charge of Sophie and keep her safe until you come back this afternoon?”

Parent to educator: Yes, I am ready

Educator to Child: The good news is its my job to take Charge and keep you safe today, it’s your job to say goodbye to Daddy, (goodbye hug between child and parent)

Daddy will think about you all day!

This dialogue may feel strange at first, but it is soothing for the children because it is direct.

After you leave in the morning the educators will remain in their Playspace, if your child is upset, they will sit with them until they feel better. From this, your child learns that feelings are safe, my educator can be with me in my feelings and I can manage them. Children need recovery time, at their own pace, to process saying goodbye to you before they can venture into the new day.

Reference to R Dolby, B Freizer and E. Hughes, Secure Beginnings

What you need to bring

BACKPACK

For independence, we work towards all children being able to recognise and open their own bag. You can help by allowing them to be involved in selecting their bag and taking ownership of it. Please ensure it is large enough to hold all their belongings and is clearly labelled.

SPARE CLOTHING

Every now and then, accidents occur, and it may be necessary for your child to get changed into a fresh set of clothes. Please include a complete change of clothes every day which can stay in your child's bag...just in case!

DRINK BOTTLE

A labelled drink bottle is required every day for water. Children are able to refill their drink bottle when necessary throughout the day. We always provide water and cups, but a drink bottle is a great start to school readiness.

MORNING TEA, LUNCH AND AFTERNOON TEA

For morning tea please place a piece of fruit or vegetable into our morning tea basket placed in your child's room. This is then cut up with the children and shared as a progression meal where children are free to come and go as they please when they feel hungry.

Children are asked to bring their lunch in a plastic/metal lunch box with a lid that they can open. We ask you clearly mark your child's. We also ask that you think about your child's ability to unwrap their lunch and open such things as muesli bars. Educators can provide tips to make this easier for your child.

We try to encourage healthy food choices at the Service and request that you provide sandwiches or wraps with nutritious fillings. Sprinkles & chocolate spreads are discouraged. Celery and carrot sticks or a salad are good additions to your child's lunch. See the following Information on the nutrition requirements recommended for 0-5year old children.

Breastfeeding

We are a breastfeeding friendly service. Mothers who are breastfeeding are welcome to attend the Service during the day to feed their infant. We have a private, clean and quiet area for mothers to breastfeed their infants or express breastmilk.

Families that are breastfeeding should speak to the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person to be aware of our policies on storing and serving breast milk.

Families that are formula feeding should also consult our Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person to be aware on how we need the formula prepared and stored. Regular communication is encouraged to ensure your infant's needs are met as they grow.

Please refer to our *Breastfeeding Policy*.

Clothing

It is helpful to your child if they are dressed in non- restrictive, serviceable and easy to wash clothes so that they feel free to join in all the activities and to develop independence. Shoes also, need to allow children freedom to run, climb, hop and jump as well as being easy for the child to take off and put on by themselves. Joggers and sandals are appropriate shoes to wear.

Please consider clothing that enables the child to move around easily and allows children to be independent in dressing. Clothing such as long dresses, overalls, braces, belts and stiff buttons can prove a problem for children who need to go to the toilet. We require all t-shirts to have sleeves

Toys

The Service has an abundance of toys and we ask that children do not bring in toys from home. This eliminates toys getting lost, broken, disappointment for other children and responsibility on educators to track numerous toys throughout the day.

Rest and Sleep

Rest and sleep routines vary according to individual needs. We aim to make rest time a relaxed, pleasant time for all children. We provide beds for children and play soft music in the background. Your child may wish to bring a security item to have at rest time. Please feel free to discuss your child's rest or sleep needs with educators. Each day we provide information about the times your child rested or slept.

Quiet activities, such as puzzles and books are available for those children who do not sleep.

Introducing the Circle of Security

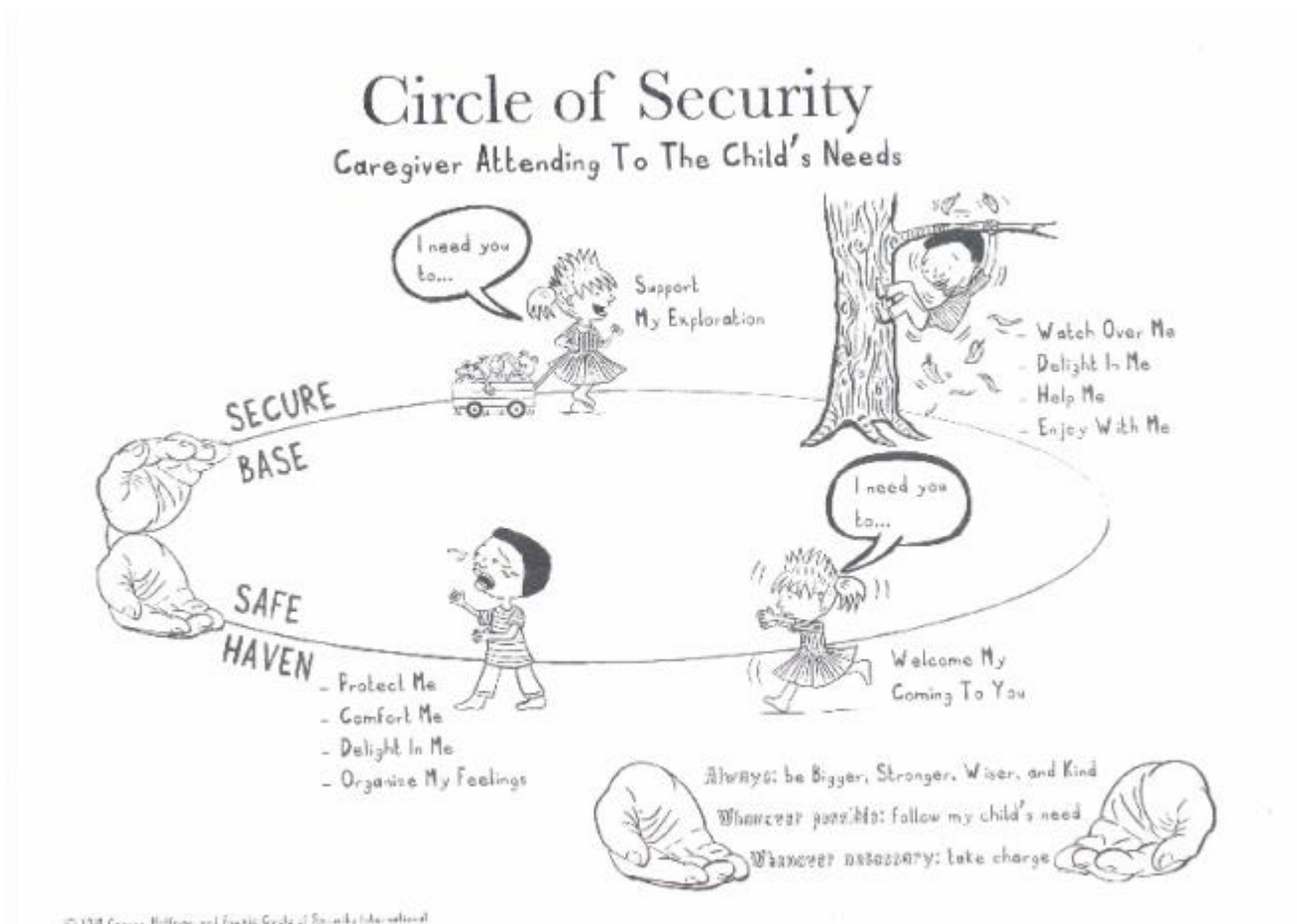
The Circle of Security is a relationship-based program designed to enhance attachment security between parents, educators and children. It has been confirmed, through decades of university-based research, that secure children exhibit increased empathy, greater self-esteem, better relationships with parents and peers, enhanced school readiness, and an increased capacity to handle emotions more effectively when compared with children who are not secure.

The Circle of Security increases our educator's awareness of your children's needs and whether their own responses meet those needs.

We deal with the children's emotions in the moment and teach the children how to recognise those emotions. Our educators become your child's secure base, we support the children to go out and explore and we are available to welcome them back in when they need.

Forming strong relationships forms the basis of all our interactions at Circle Early Learning, Research shows relationships are central to children developing acceptance, self-esteem and higher functioning thinking skills that contribute to positive learning and life outcomes.

You may hear us use language like "do you need your cup filled up?" and "I can see you are feeling...." This language helps the children to regulate their emotions and feel connected to their educators.



Sustainability

Our Service is passionate about sustainability. We believe in supporting children to appreciate and care for the environment by embedding sustainable practice into the daily operation of our Service, infrastructure and teaching.

Living sustainably means living within the capacity of the natural environment to support life and ensuring our current lifestyle has minimal impact on generations to come. Sustainable practices relate not only to the natural environment, but also our society and culture, including aspects such as consumerism and community well-being.

As the need for greater sustainability becomes more apparent globally, so does the importance of embedding sustainability in children's programs. Through hands-on experiences and relevant educator pedagogies, children can explore and learn about their local contexts and environmental issues. They can develop the creativity and critical thinking skills necessary to make informed decisions for change, improving the quality of their lives, and those of future generations.

Practicing sustainability empowers children to construct knowledge, explore values and develop an appreciation of the environment and its relationship to their worlds. This lays the foundations for an environmentally responsible adulthood.

Parent Participation and Feedback

Our Service has an Open-Door Policy and actively seeks and encourages families to be involved in the Service. This can range from evaluating and adding input to your child's program and observations, volunteering within the Service and sharing skills and experiences that the children and the program will benefit from and providing feedback.

You can be involved in our Family Committee. Your involvement can be as formal or active as you like as time permits. We respect that time is limited for most families and we ask that you inform us as to your preferred way of communication. We can arrange meetings with your child's educator at a time that suits you throughout the year and offer email, SMS, Facebook, Newsletters, Day Book Journals and pride ourselves on strong verbal communication on a daily basis. We seek input from families on all aspects of the Service but in particular, your child's goals, observations and program.

If, for any reason you question or do not understand any aspect of the Service or your child's experience we have a *Grievance Policy* that supports all stakeholders in our community and like all policies, is available for

families to consult and implement at any time. Copies of our policies are available in each room, the office and parent library. You are welcome to take a copy home and review at your leisure.

Family involvement

We welcome and encourage the involvement of all parents/families at our Service. Your ideas, experiences and skills are greatly valued and will enable us to extend each child's interests, abilities and knowledge. There are many ways for your family to be involved. We understand that our busy lives can't always afford the time, however any contribution no matter how big or small is much appreciated. Here are just a few ideas.

Recyclable items

We are always on the lookout for recyclable items for the rooms. Empty food containers, ribbons, wrapping paper, towel tubes (not toilet or egg or milk because of hygiene and allergy issues) paper or anything interesting from your work is much appreciated.

Suggestions

Parents are welcome to visit or call the Service at any time. If you have any suggestions or ideas on how we best can work together in the Service, please let us know.

If you have any concerns, please see your child's educator or the Nominated Supervisor. We have a grievance procedure if you would like to formally raise any concerns.

Health and Hygiene

Our Service has effective and systematic risk management systems in place to identify any possible risk of hazards to our learning environment and practices. All staff diligently practice and model personal hygiene measures such as hand washing, cough and sneeze etiquette and disposal of tissues. We request that all children and visitors to our service wash their hands or use the alcohol-based hand sanitiser upon arrival.

Our educators teach and model correct hand washing techniques to children and regularly clean and disinfect high touch objects throughout the service to reduce the spread of infection.

When should I not send my child to the Service?

Our Service is a busy and demanding day for the bodies and minds of our children. We are not equipped to care for sick children; however, we will do everything we can to comfort a child who has become sick whilst in our care.

To minimise the spread of infections and diseases, and maintain a healthy environment for all children, educators and staff, we implement recommendations developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)- *Staying Healthy in Childcare*. Our policies and procedures for *Sick Children* and the *Control of Infectious Diseases* are available for all families to view.

Please monitor your child's health and do not bring your child to the Service if they are suffering from an infectious disease/illness or are generally unwell.

If your child becomes ill whilst at the Service, we will contact you or an authorised nominee to collect your child. If your child is unable to be collected, educators will contact the child's emergency contact for collection. When your child is collected, you will be provided with an *Injury, Incident, Trauma and Illness Record* completed by the educator which includes information about your child's illness, their symptoms, general behaviour and any action taken. You will be requested to sign and acknowledge the details in this record.

Your child should not attend the Service if they have had paracetamol within 24 hours for a temperature. Children who are on antibiotics are to be kept away from the Service for the first 24 hours to allow the child to rest and the risk of spreading the infection to decrease. If your child has been vomiting or had diarrhoea, they will be excluded for 48 hours. For certain illnesses, a medical clearance certificate may be required before your child returns.

Immunisation

The Public Health Act 2010 requires all families to provide an Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) for their child prior to enrolment in an early childhood education and care service. The immunisation history statement must show that each enrolled child is up to date with immunisations for their age.

The relevant vaccinations are those under the National Immunisation Program (NIP), which covers the vaccines usually administered before age five. These vaccinations must be recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR).

The only unimmunised children who can be enrolled in child care (after 1 January 2018) are those who are on a recognised catch-up schedule or those who are unimmunised due to medical reasons as described in the Australian Immunisation Handbook. Parents must provide an AIR Immunisation History Form or an AIR Immunisation Medical Exemption Form upon enrolment.

In the case of an outbreak of any vaccine preventable disease, management will contact families as soon as possible. We ask that families immediately inform our Service if someone in their family is diagnosed with an infectious disease to help minimise the risk to other children, families and educators.

We are legally required to notify the Public Health Unit of any cases of vaccine preventable diseases occurring at our Service. For an up to date immunisation schedule, please refer to your enrolment pack.

Medication

If your child requires medication whilst at our Service, you must complete an *Administration of Medication Record* to give your consent for an educator to administer prescribed medication to your child. Medication must be given to directly to an educator for appropriate safe storage.

Educators can only administer medication that is:

- prescribed by a registered medical practitioner (with instructions attached to the medication or in written form from the medical practitioner)
- in its original packaging and have the original label clearly showing your child's name
- before the expiry/use by date.

Upon collection of your child at the end of the day, you or an authorised person will be requested to sign the *Administration of Medication Form*.

Drop off and Pick Up Times

Early childhood education and care services are busy places especially during the morning drop off and afternoon pickup. We ask that parents be extremely mindful of danger when arriving and departing from our Service.

- Please always hold your child's hand in the carpark area
- Be alert of reversing drivers in the car park as it is very difficult to see small children
- Use the kerbside, rear passenger door when getting your child into and out of their restraint
- Never leave a child or infant in the car unattended
- Never leave the front entry door/gate open
- Always do a visual check around your vehicle before driving
- Please ensure children do not enter areas in the Service that are for adults/staff only.

Social Media

We use social media to communicate, share information and celebrate what is happening in our Service with enrolled families and our service community.

We promote safety and wellbeing of all children and are committed to ensure safe online environments when engaging in digital technology including social media. Our social media accounts are managed by Katherine and we set the highest level of privacy and security settings on the accounts. Content is regularly scanned, and any offensive language or comments removed immediately, and these users blocked.

Photographs of your child will only be added if written authorisation has been provided on the enrolment form. We maintain appropriate privacy of families, children and educators by not publishing any personal information online.

Stay connected and find us on Facebook and Instagram

Privacy and Confidentiality

We are committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of children, individuals and families and have policies in place to ensure strict confidentiality is maintained.

To plan programs for your child/ren, we need to collect information from you. This information helps us to assess and plan programs in partnership with you. We do not disclose personal information about you or your child to other people or organisations without your consent, unless we are required to do so by law. We do not ask for personal information about you or your child from other professionals or organisations without your consent. You can look at the information in your child's file at any time or request a copy of information in the file.

Our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* is available to view at any time. This policy sets out how we ensure our Service acts in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Privacy Principles and the Privacy Act 1988. We ensure all personal information is protected, records and documents are maintained and stored in accordance with Education and Care Services National Regulations and that all staff understand the requirements of the Notifiable Data Breaches (NDB) scheme. Any Privacy complaints will be managed promptly and in a consistent manner as outlined in our *Grievance Policy*.

Our Service is required to keep and maintain detailed records about children, parents and staff in accordance with relative legislation contained in the National Law and Regulations and Family Assistance Law. We ensure all records are stored in a secure and locked location. We must keep records for the prescribed periods of times as legislated related to child enrolment, attendance, medication records, incident, injury, trauma and illness records, child assessments and any relevant legal information/documents. Full details about record keeping is available in our *Record Keeping and Retention Policy*.