



parent handbook

Kardinia

childcare & kindergarten



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welcome to kardinia



Rick & Leonie Wright
Senior Pastors

Kardinia is a vibrant and growing church that has multiple church campuses across Victoria that aim to serve God and its community. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for selecting Kardinia Childcare and Kindergarten as part of your child's learning experience. At Kardinia Church in 2006, we set out to provide a centre to our community that placed the children's needs first, staffed by people that believe in the values of family and drawing out the potential in each child. Our desire is to create an experience for your child that will prepare them for the next stage of their learning journey. May your time with us be an enjoyable one for both your child and yourself.



Sue Bunting
Managing Director

I would like to extend a warm hand of welcome to you from all the educators and staff at Kardinia. For many parents, leaving their children in someone else's care can be a very stressful time. We want to work in partnership with you to make the transition into child care and kindergarten as stress free as possible. Having worked as a young mum, I remember the guilt I felt when leaving my children. Therefore I want to work with you to ensure you are able to go about your day, without feeling worried or guilty about leaving your child. Our doors are always open and you are welcome to visit the centre and experience the programs we have on offer. We work hard to make you feel at home and part of the Kardinia family and want you to feel comfortable to visit at any time. Partnership means working together, so your input and feedback are essential if the quality of care and education for your child is to be high. Please feel free to contact me at anytime if you have questions, queries or comments. I look forward to beginning this journey with you and your family.

centre philosophy

At Kardinia Childcare and Kindergarten, we recognise early childhood as a unique and valuable stage of life and accept that each phase within this development is important in its own right. Our centre aims to work in partnership with families and the community to provide an environment of security and love that collaboratively works toward positive outcomes for the children, families and staff.

The principles that guide our program are:

1. Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships
2. Partnerships
3. High expectations and equity
4. Respect for diversity and
5. Ongoing learning and reflective practice

We believe that children learn and develop through active and constructive involvement in play. The children in our centre will experience a 'hands on' approach to learning where they will be challenged to explore, investigate and discover. We will build on a child's natural desire to learn by providing experiences and routines that are open-ended and flexible.

The children will be encouraged to take control of their own learning through an emergent curriculum to promote confidence, trust and self-esteem. We will ensure that our work with children is based on their interests and needs and lets them know the valuable contribution they have to make. Carers will promote learning and development through observation of individuals and evaluation of learning taking place. We believe learning outcomes are most likely to be achieved when early childhood educators work in partnership with parents.

At Kardinia Childcare and Kindergarten, we want all people, regardless of age, gender or race, to be able to contribute, feel accepted and have a sense of belonging. We will therefore role model and teach an inclusive, tolerant and respectful attitude toward others.

We will help children learn to interact effectively and honestly and in so doing learn to balance their own rights, needs and feelings with those of others. Further to this, we will engage only in practices that are respectful of and provide security for children and in no way degrade, endanger, exploit, intimidate or harm them psychologically or physically.

The educators at Kardinia Childcare and Kindergarten recognise that children need to form strong attachments and that these relationships underpin a child's confidence to explore and persist in their educational environment. To understand and support each child's learning and development; staff will endeavour to build solid partnerships with parents and the community through formal, informal, planned and spontaneous events.

We believe the centre plays an active role in the local community through participation in local activities. We act as advocates for children helping the broader community understand the significance and importance of early childhood.

Acknowledging the fragile state of our world, the children will be encouraged to care for their environment and to understand the responsibility they have to reduce, re-use and recycle.

The Committee of Management at Kardinia Childcare and Kindergarten recognise that staff are our most precious resource and we will at all times strive to offer a supportive and safe workplace. We invest in every staff member through our commitment to individualized training and development programs.

Together we value the opportunity to care for and educate your children and lay foundations they will keep with them for the rest of their lives.

important policies & procedures

the first weeks

The introduction into long day care can be difficult for children and parents. Children's welfare and happiness are the priority of our educators when welcoming new children to the Centre and when assisting the family to settle into the centre environment. It is recognised that families needs will vary greatly in the orientation process and individual needs will be met as best also.

The following outlines some helpful hints for parents on settling their child into care:

- Make sure you familiarise your child with the environment and the people in the environment (children and adults) by coming in for visits before commencing care.
- Ease your child into care with short stays to begin with. An orientation program that is free of charge will be organised when you first enrol.
- Provide a favourite toy, blanket or comforter to support your child when they are separating from you or settling to sleep. This can help your child feel more secure.
- If your child is unsettled, short visits with you helps your child to gain trust with an unfamiliar environment. These visits can be made on a day when your child is not booked to attend.
- Interactions between educators and parents or educators and other children can produce positive role models and be reassuring. This experience can help to establish trust in an unfamiliar setting.
- Try to talk at home about child care. Mention the names of the educators and other children. Talk about the things the child will be able to do at child care that are fun and enjoyable.
- Talk to the educators about your child, for example, what they like to do; successful ways of settling them to sleep; foods they like and dislike and so on. This helps educators to get to know your child.
- When leaving your child it is best to make sure you say goodbye and then leave. Hesitating and not going after you have said your goodbyes, if a child is upset, only confuses them. Reassure your child that everything is alright and you will return later, this can help them to settle.
- It sometimes helps to establish a routine when leaving. For example, giving your child a cuddle and giving them to a educator or sitting down with them for a short play or reading a book together then leaving.
- At first some children protest strongly while others may take a day or two to realise that you are leaving them and begin to protest after several days. Children soon learn that you do return and in the mean time they are well cared for.

the educational program

The educators at Kardinia are committed to the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education. The Early Years Learning Framework describes the principles, practice and outcomes essential to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school. The Framework has a strong emphasis on play-based learning as play is the best vehicle for young children's learning providing the most appropriate stimulus for brain development. The Framework also recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development.

Educators aim to create positive learning environments and guide experiences for each child in conjunction with their family. Educators will observe children and facilitate their learning to provide each child with an individualised portfolio by documenting their learning throughout the year. Children and their families will be encouraged to participate in the ongoing process to promote engaged learning.

guiding children's behaviour

Our service, in partnership with parents, aims to ensure all educators form positive relationships with children that make them feel safe and supported in the service. Educators will encourage positive relationships between children and their peers as well as with educators and volunteers at the service.

Educators follow the Relationships with Children policy which extends across every centre giving consistency of expectation in all rooms. This policy allows the children to develop self discipline, a respect for others, property and self. The policy aims to:

- Give all children the opportunity to expand their experiences of life in a productive, safe environment that allows individuals the right to safety, tolerance, self expression, cultural identity, dignity and the worth of an individual, and honesty in dealing with peers and caregivers
- Be taught to respect the rights and needs of others by foreseeing the outcome of their behaviour and the consequences of their behaviour
- To encourage the individual social development of each child.

If you require further information on this policy, please ask staff and refer to policy book located in the foyer.



what to bring

- A change of clothing that is weather appropriate (younger children- especially those toilet training- will need extra changes). Please ensure all clothes are named.
- A hat – a wide brimmed or legionnaires style
- A security item for rest time (if required).
- Babies bottles will need to be brought to the centre

made up ready to drink with formula. (Cow's milk is supplied)

- Gumboots and coat in winter.

clothing

Parents are advised to send their children to the Centre in comfortable, inexpensive clothing. The children need to be able to move around during their play period and should be unimpaired by clothing. While paints, etc. will come out in the wash, accidents do happen so it is best to send the children along in their "less than good clothes". Young children enjoy and need "messy" play with paint, clay, sand, water and mud.

The Centre will only have a limited supply of spare clothing. Please supply at least one change of clothing and underclothing in case of accidents.

Please mark your child's clothing and replace name tags if they fade in the wash. Ensure clothing is weather appropriate.

Please ensure that toddlers have about three complete changes of clothing and plenty of training pants.

clothing safety

Please do not dress your child in clothing with cords e.g. shorts, hats etc. As these have the potential to become caught on equipment and may cause serious harm to your child. Singlet tops and thongs are not permitted in warmer weather.

belongings

Please ensure all belongings are clearly labelled such as dummies, clothes etc. Lost property will be displayed for parent collection in your child's room. Parent co-operation in labelling assists the Centre in keeping your child's belongings together.

possessions

A soft toy or security item are acceptable for rest time. It is appreciated if personal possessions are not brought to the Centre e.g. toys etc. Any possessions brought must come entirely at the parent's own risk with regards to breakage or loss.



lockers

Each child is allocated a locker. Please place bags etc. in your child's locker. If your child attends less than five days per week, they will share their locker with another child.

All medications and/or food items are to be removed and handed to a staff member. Please ensure no items that pose a danger to children are kept in children's bags or lockers.

partnership with families

We believe the best way to work with you and your child is by building a partnership of care. To do this we want you to feel that;

You're given lots of information about what is happening and asked for your views

communication & educators

What is the best way to communicate with you?

Everybody has a different communication style and time for communication. We understand that mornings and afternoons can be a little rushed, and not the best time to discuss your child. We have many types of communication we use for families in the centre just like you.

Confidentially and Discretion

Information received through written and spoken communication with families will be treated with discretion

At any time if you require a private discussion with our staff please inform us. This can happen face to face or by phone.

How do you like to be communicated with?

- Newsletter
- Phone calls to your work
- Emails
- Letters
- Face to face

Ways we will be communicating the events of the centre by:

- Face to face verbal interactions at arrival and departure times.
- Regular eNews will be emailed to you.
- A notice board where various messages and notices are displayed, advertising current issues and upcoming events.
- A communication book is located in each room. Parents are able to leave more detailed written messages, for the purpose of expressing concerns, positive or evaluative input that they feel they need to let staff know about. These can be anonymous if so desired.
- Occasionally staff will ask parents to complete short surveys in order to maintain up-to-date records and seek parent feedback on various topics.
- Each family will be allocated an individual pocket for accounts and other written communication to be placed. *It is the parent's responsibility to read these notices and ensure they're aware of current issues and events in the centre.*
- Policies will be regularly reviewed in a variety of ways to enable parent feedback on centre practices.

What can you expect from staff?

Staff will make efforts to communicate effectively with families.

- Staff will inform families promptly and sensitively of any out of the ordinary incidents affecting your child.
- Staff will share with children's families some of the specific interactions they had with the children during the day.

- Information on children's eating and sleeping patterns at the centre will be provided to families through verbal communication and through the room sign-in sheet.
- When families and staff make joint decisions that affect children's progress, interest and experience, this will be recorded in the appropriate form (these may include new events like toilet training).

Please feel free at any time by phone, email or in person, to discuss your child's progress, relationship, interest and experiences.

hours of operation

Centre hours are from 6.30am to 6.30pm, Monday to Friday, 51 weeks of the year. Kardinia Childcare and Kindergarten is closed over the Christmas break.

enrolments

A completed Enrolment Booklet must be returned to the centre before care can commence.

Under Family Assistance Office guidelines in respect to Child Care Benefit there are guidelines to Priority of Access to Care, which are:

1. Workforce participation or training.
2. Children with disabilities
3. Children at risk
4. Parents at home

court orders

Parents must notify the Centre if there are any Court Orders affecting residency of their children and a copy is required for the Centre. Without a Court Order we cannot stop a parent collecting your child.

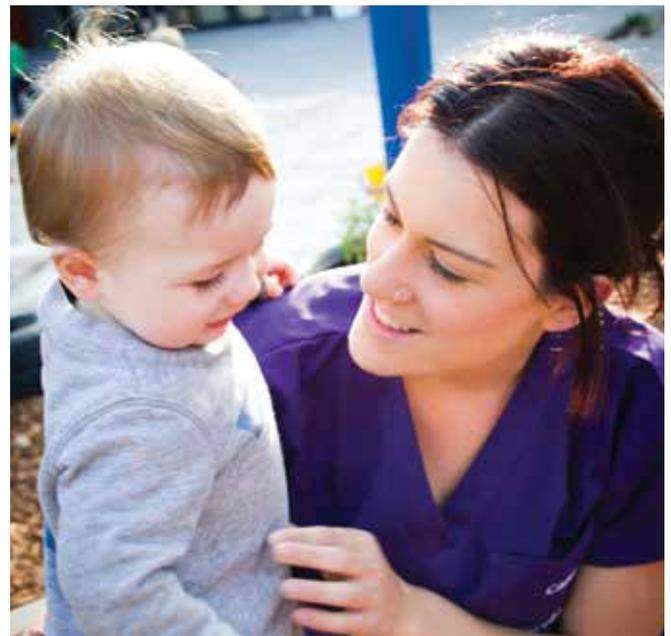
parent involvement

This is vital to ensure maintenance of a quality service. Your contribution of ideas, experiences and skills are welcomed and greatly valued. You may be able to share your skills and experiences in music, craft, cooking and storytelling etc, to enhance your child's program at the Centre. Please complete your availability or what you can offer the Centre on the enrolment form.

Parents are welcome to visit or call the Centre at any time. If you have any talents or hobbies, we welcome and encourage you to please share them with the children.

If you have any concerns, please see your child's teacher or the Director. We have a grievance policy and procedure if you would like to formally raise any concerns.

waiting list



When our rooms have full enrolment, children's names will be put on a waiting list. Once a position is vacant, parents are then contacted about placement. When parents wish to change days to other days, this can be effective immediately provided the group enrolment is not full. If it is full the child's name will be placed on a waiting list. Once a position is available, days will then be adjusted. Our waiting list does give priority to working parents as per Priority of Access Guidelines.

notice of withdrawal

It is our policy that parents must give two weeks written notice before they withdraw from the Centre. If notice is not given, 2 weeks of fees will be added onto your account. Children must attend their final session in order to claim CCB and CCR entitlements. If children do not attend their final session full fee will apply.

arrival & departure of children

It is extremely important you approach one of our early learning professionals to let us know your child has arrived or is about to depart for the day. Only parents/guardians and authorised nominees are permitted to collect your child from our early learning program. If you're unable to collect your child, please contact us to provide the name of the person who will be collecting your child. To ensure we release your child into the care of the correct person, this person must be an authorised nominee on your child's enrolment form. Photo identification will be requested from any authorised nominee unknown to our early learning professionals so we can ensure the safety of your child at all times.

If your child is not collected from the centre and we're unable to contact you, we will contact the authorised nominee listed on your child's enrolment form.



birthdays

Your child's birthday is a special event in his/her life. To celebrate your child's birthday we will make a special time for all the children to sing happy birthday and recognise how special it is that your child is celebrating growing up. Though we do not celebrate with birthday cakes due to our health and nutrition requirements, we will ensure that your child has a wonderful time with their friends. Please note that staff will not be responsible for distributing birthday invitations within the child's group and that invitations must be placed in individual parent pockets, not given to children directly. If you would like to provide something for the group to acknowledge your child's birthday we suggest a balloon, party hat or small toy for each child to be taken home at the end of the day.

rest & sleep

Rest time routine varies according to individual needs. We aim to make rest time a relaxed, pleasant time for all children. We provide mattresses for children. Your child may wish to bring a security item, pillow or blanket to have at rest time. Please feel free to discuss your child's rest needs with staff.

food & nutrition

The convenience of dropping off your child without having to worry about what to pack for lunch, is a benefit to many busy families. In addition to any bottles provided by you, all children are provided with nutritious balanced meals, meeting at least 50% of their daily needs, with a focus on fresh, healthy foods. Our chef prepares a wide variety of fresh meals every day, and the children really enjoy them!

safety

We have regular independent, external audits to review a range of aspects concerning safety around our centre - from food handling, to hygiene, to OH&S and more. Each time we receive incredibly high results. Our educators are incredibly proud that the hard work they do, and the systems, processes and procedures we have in place, ensure that your children are safe at all times. Kardinia maintains a safe and secure environment where children are free to explore and learn more about their world. The approved provider and educators are familiar with regulatory requirements and standards regarding supervision. The education and care service encourages educators to evaluate their supervisory practices and implement plans that increase their awareness of the layout, risk management and supervisory choices within the education and care environment. All educators must hold a current first aid certificate which is renewed when it becomes necessary.

child protection

Meeting the needs of children and making sure they are safe in the family is a shared responsibility between individuals, the family, the community and the government. When adults caring for children do not follow through with their responsibilities, are abusive or exploit their positions of power, then it is the child

protection system that becomes responsible for taking action. As educators, we're part of the system to protect children and will provide notification to the relevant authority in accordance with state legislation when necessary.

medical conditions

To ensure appropriate identification and management of children with medical conditions, we will implement best practice and risk minimisation strategies. This includes the provision of suitable first aid training for all staff to ensure a rapid response in the event of a medical emergency. If your child has a medical condition, you may be asked to complete a medical management plan to be followed in the event of an incident relating to the specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition.

evacuation procedures

In the event that the service needs to be evacuated, we aim to conduct this in a rehearsed, timely, calm and safe manner to secure the safety of each person using the service. The safety and wellbeing of each child, educator and person using the service is paramount above any other consideration in the time of an emergency or evacuation. Any other procedures will be carried out only if it is safe to do so. An evacuation may be necessary in the event of a fire, chemical spill, bomb scare, earthquake, siege, flood etc.

inclusion support

Our aim is to provide each child, regardless of their needs and abilities, with a supportive and inclusive environment that allows each child to fully participate in the program. Educators will remain positive, open-minded and honest at all times when working with families and external support professionals to most positively meet the additional needs of each child being educated and cared for at the centre.

sun safety

It's important to have a healthy balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure. Too much of the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Overexposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk.

Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.

This Sunsmart Policy has been developed to:

- Ensure all children and educators get some UV for vitamin D.
- Encourage children and educators to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above to minimise skin and eye damage and skin cancer risk.
- Work towards a safe outdoor environment that provides shade for children and educators at appropriate times.
- Assist children to be responsible for their own sun protection.
- Ensure that families and new educators are informed of the service's sun protection policy.

Educators are encouraged to access the SunSmart UV Alert at sunsmart.com.au to find out daily local sun protection times to assist with the implementation of this policy. We use a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities from September to the end of April and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, (the level that can damage skin and eyes.) Our Sunsmart practises consider the special needs of infants. All babies under 12 months are kept out of direct sun when UV levels are three and above.



important information about your account

commencement fees

\$100 bond & 2 weeks fees need to be paid before commencing at the Centre.

centre fees

For daily and weekly fees please contact your nearest centre location.

It is the Centre's policy that all accounts are to be paid 1 week in advance at all times.

Accounts in 2 weeks arrears will be automatically cancelled.

accounts

Any change of financial income will alter your fee structure, please advise our Centre and FAO (13 6150) if this occurs. Payments can be made via EFTPOS or direct deposit.

late fees

If your child is collected from the Centre after 6.30pm, you will be charged a late fee of \$15.00 for the first 10 minutes + \$1.50 per minute after 6.40pm. This will be added onto your account.

child care benefit (CCB)

CCB is a payment from the Government that will provide financial assistance towards the cost of your child's care. CCB reduces the cost of your total child care fees. It's available to you if you're a parent, foster parent or grandparent with a child in your care, who is attending a childcare program approved by, or registered with the Government. There are certain eligibility requirements you need to meet to be eligible for CCB. Until your CCB has been approved and has commenced we will require full payment of your child's early learning and care fees.

Parents need to inform the Family Assistance Office of any changes that may affect their assessment. Please let your Centre Director know if your child's siblings are attending another approved early learning program and you would like to claim the multiple Child Care Benefit percentage.

child care rebate (CCR)

The CCR is additional assistance if you are using approved child care for work, study or training-related reasons. The CCR covers 50 per cent of your out-of-pocket cost for approved child care. The CCR does have a limit. To learn more about CCR, please contact the Family Assistance Office or visit the website at www.familyassist.gov.au.



absences from the centre

We understand that sometimes due to illness, vacation or other reasons children need to have time away from the early learning program. Please let us know if your child is unable to participate in the program on their usual day/s of attendance. If your child is absent you will need to sign the attendance record indicating your child has been absent.

We recommend you provide documentation to support absence days, including:

- Medical Certificates
- Shared Care Plans (signed by both parents)
- Court Orders

Initial absence days

As with most early learning centres and preschools, your child's place is reserved when they are away so the day still needs to be paid for. Each financial year, the Family Assistance Office will pay your child's CCB entitlements for the first 42 absence days. These absences can be for any reason, including public holidays. These initial 42 absence days must be used before any additional absences can be claimed (see below).

Additional absence days

You may receive CCB for absence days after the initial 42 days each financial year. For all absences beyond the first 42 absent days, CCB will only be paid if you are able to provide evidence to demonstrate the absence has occurred under permitted circumstances. There is no limit on these days but you will be required to provide documentation to support the absence.

Exceptional absence days

You may receive CCB for an additional 20 exceptional absence days after the initial 42 absence days per financial year. These CCB entitlements can be claimed without evidence if documentation is provided for 31 of the initial 42 absence days.

public holidays

Our Centres are closed on public holidays. Fees apply for all public holiday closures that fall on your usual day of attendance. CCB will not be paid for public holidays if 42 absences have already been used.

priority of access

We comply with the Australian Government's Priority of Access Guidelines for allocating childcare places where the demand for childcare exceeds supply. The guidelines set out three levels of priority, which we must follow when filling vacant places:

- **Priority one** - a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- **Priority two** - a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training study test under section 14 of the New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
- **Priority three** - any other child

Within these main categories, priority should also be given to the following children:

- Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- Children in families that include a disabled person
- Children in families that include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold or whose partner is on income support
- Children in families with a non-English-speaking background
- Children in socially isolated families
- Children of single parents.

When there are no vacant places and we are providing care for a child who is a priority 3, under the Priority of Access Guidelines the service may require that child to vacate the place in order to provide a place for a child in priority one or two.



important contacts & informative websites for parents

Department of Education and Training

www.education.vic.gov.au

Family Assistance Office

P. 13 61 50

Australian Childhood Immunisation Register

P. 1800 653 809

Early Childhood Association (ECA)

www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)

P. 1300 422 327

www.acecqa.gov.au

Raising Children Network

The Australian parenting website; comprehensive, practical, expert child health and parenting information and activities covering children aged 0-8 years.

www.education.vic.gov.au

Better Health Channel

Quality consumer health information. Regularly reviewed health and wellbeing information and services. This site is sponsored by the State Government of Victoria.

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Kardinia playgroups



**15 sessions
a week**

**All ability and
allergy friendly**

"Kardinia Playgroups has been a great support and stepping stone to kindergarten and school. With 5 different kinds of playgroups with age focused activities, Kardinia is sure to have a session to meet your family's needs."

Larissa Taylor
Playgroups Co-ordinator



Locations: North Geelong | Grovedale | Ballarat | Melbourne

www.kardiniachurch.com



ONE CHURCH

FIVE LOCATIONS



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