

WELCOME

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to Smithfield Child Care Centre. Please read through the following information about our centre to give you an idea of how we operate and what is included in our service to you and your family.

It is our practise to provide a warm, responsive and caring environment for all children, and one in which families can feel confident in the knowledge that their children are well cared for in a supportive, safe setting which stimulates their individual growth and development.

Your children are encouraged to experiment, explore and ask questions about the activities and the environment that surrounds them. They are able to choose between a wide range of activities, providing them with a range of experiences, so that they can grow and develop at their own pace.

We have adopted the *Emergent or Negotiated Curriculum* across the centre wherein children and staff work together to determine what experiences and activities they become involved in each day and how these same experiences are extended into projects and exciting ventures! We utilise digital photography to ensure you have easy access to what is happening during our day. We also invite you to share your thoughts and ideas for inclusion during our day.

Support is available for any additional needs (developmental, cultural, language etc) that may present and we ensure that you are fully advised prior to any steps being taken to assist your child in these areas.

As parents you are your child's first and most important teacher and we value your input into the programming and the operation of the centre. Please feel free to spend whatever time you can with us.

We want you and your family to feel welcome here. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to speak with me. I value your feedback, input and constructive comments.

Regards,

**Kathy Lochlin
Director**

MANAGEMENT

Smithfield Child Care Centre is a 61-place community based early childhood service. We operate on a not-for-profit basis, and aim to set fees to meet our expected expenses each year. We are sponsored by Cairns & District Child Care Development Association Inc who are a voluntary body of committed people keen to ensure high standards of childcare are available in the Cairns region. We have a supportive Parent Committee that meet regularly and are involved as an Advisory Body with all important decisions affecting the service provided to families. New parents are welcome to join this committee at any time.

This centre commenced operation on the 6th July 1992.

The centre is guided by the Child Care Act & Regulations (2003) and is re-licensed every three years by the Department of Communities. Smithfield Child Care follows the Accreditation guidelines as presented by the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC). These guidelines focus on staff and management of our centre and the interactions with parents, children and other staff. Team work, planning and programming content, health, hygiene and safety in all areas are continually assessed by ourselves and our peers. We have an Accreditation committee comprised of parents, staff and management and we are currently accredited to the highest standard. Please feel welcome to join our committees.

Children at the centre are grouped into four areas, depending on age and development. Infants: 0-2 years; Toddlers: 2-3 years; Kindy: 3-4 years and Pre-school: 4-5 years of age. Moving into the next age group will be done in consultation with you and factors considered will include age, development, maturity and naturally, space availability! Siblings at the centre have many opportunities to spend time together throughout the day.

ENROLMENT PROCEDURE

The Smithfield Child Care Centre's enrolment for the waiting list may be done personally or over the phone. Preference is given to visiting personally as this enables you to meet our staff, view our centre and collect written information to take away and read. For those on the waiting list, a reminder is given to contact us regularly (every 6-8 weeks) to ensure your details remain on the list and to advise us of any change in your information. If you do not contact us after a 3 month period, your name will be removed from our Waiting Lists.

Priority of Access guidelines are specified by the Department of Communities. Whilst every effort is made to provide parents with care required, you may be

offered part of the care requested until the additional time/care is available. We do also prioritise siblings of current children using the centre.

At this centre we have an open door policy. That is to say, parents and extended family members are welcome to spend as much time as they can with their children in the Centre. The benefits of this are that they will be able to build a rapport with staff and show their children that they have an interest in them and their activities. We appreciate being advised of visits by family members to ensure our security systems are not breached and staff are aware of who is in the centre at all times. Visitors are asked to sign in at the front desk if staying a while.

PRIORITY OF ACCESS

Due to the high demand for childcare, Priority of Access guidelines have been set by the Department of Communities. We are required to abide by these guidelines especially if you are in receipt of fee subsidies from the Government.

First Priority	A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
Second Priority	A child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under section 24 of the Family Assistance Act.
Third Priority	Any other child.

STAFFING

INFANTS:	8	Children aged 6 wks – 2 year olds with 2 staff
TODDLERS:	12	Children aged 2 – 3 year olds with 2 staff
KINDY:	18	Children aged 3 – 4 year olds with 2 staff
PRE-SCHOOL:	23	Children aged 4 – 5 year olds with 2 staff

We also have our Cook who provides all food (morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea) for every child (catering for special diets and a full nutritiously balanced meal for each child); an Administration Officer; Floating staff who relieve regular room staff for tea and lunch breaks; extra staff to provide further opportunities for interactions, communication, supervision and the Director. All these staff are here five days per week.

The management of the Centre supports professional development for all members of staff and believes that it should continue throughout each staff member's career. Group Leaders are allocated non-contact time for planning & evaluation and maintenance of records. Each room is also allocated extra staff regularly to maintain displays, and activity preparation. All staff have a wide variety of experience in long day care settings and hold First Aid Certificates. All staff qualifications and child/staff adult ratios are in accordance with the Queensland Childcare Regulations. Every staff member and volunteer or student over 18yrs also hold a current Suitability Card – as issued by the Commission For Children, Young People and Child Guardian.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Smithfield Child Care opens to families at 7.30am and closes at 6pm, Monday to Friday, 51 weeks a year.

The centre is closed on public holidays and for approximately one week during the Christmas period. Closure dates will be advised well prior to enable you to organise your family. Families are not charged fees for the periods we are closed for care (public holidays and week between Christmas/New Year).

FEES

PLEASE NOTE: Normal fees will be charged when your child is absent due to illness or other occasional absence. No fees are charged on public holidays.

Child Care Benefit (CCB) is available for eligible families and can be obtained by contacting FAO (Family Assistance Office) on 136 150.

Our centre reference number for CCB is 407 268 769S – you need this when you speak with FAO. A childcare benefit percentage will be calculated and you will be informed in writing of the percentage of fees to be paid by the Government. We are also notified of these details and can then calculate your fees due.

For families already receiving CCB at a previous centre, you must advise FAO within the first week of commencing care with us that you have changed centres. If you have other children using care elsewhere, (ASC, FDC etc) please advise us as a higher CCB% applies.

Payment of fees, which become a fortnight in arrears, (outside your usual payment schedule) may result in cancellation of your child's place. If there are any difficulties in paying fees, please see the Director before action needs to be taken.

Fees may be paid in cash, Eftpos, direct deposit through the internet, credit card or by cheque, payable to the centre.

EQUITY STATEMENT

This centre supports the rights of all children to access child care, including those that have additional needs, belong to a minority group or speak another language. We, the staff of this centre, will endeavour to the best of our ability, to support all children and their families in their quest for equality. We believe that all children are to be respected and need a stable, supportive environment in which to grow and learn.

CENTRE PHILOSOPHY

“We aim to provide a safe, secure and hygienic environment with a warm and friendly atmosphere for all persons. We will support all families in their care giving role and through positive guidance and a nurturing attitude, will assist children to grow and develop socially, emotionally, physically and cognitively.”

CENTRE OBJECTIVES

- * As a centre, we aim to provide an environment where children and their families feel safe and secure.**
- * To be aware of, and responsive to, diverse cultural needs and values.**
- * To develop positive relationships with families attending the centre, encouraging and supporting parental involvement as appropriate.**
- * To encourage and extend liaison and participation with the community and local network of family and children's services, within the Cairns District.**
- * To create an environment which promotes the development of trust, self-expression, acceptance and respect of another's rights and needs.**
- * To provide children with a range of experiences so that they can grow socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually.**
- * To regularly monitor and re-evaluate the centre, to ensure a continuing standard of high quality care is provided.**

WHAT TO BRING

A complete nappy service (including training pants), all linen for sleep & bathing, sunscreen and all meals are provided for you at Smithfield Childcare. Prior to 6-10 months, when your child will go fully onto solid food, parents are asked to provide milk (formula or expressed breast) and small portions of solids as individually required. Your home routines are what we will follow for your young child whilst they are here.

Babies will need: **Bag with 2 shirts, plus warm pants & jumper if necessary.**
(under 6-10mths) **Hat, broad brimmed or legionnaire style.**
 Cream or nappy lotion that you use at home.
 Enough milk/formula/food for the time your child is here.
 (Please refer to Nutrition policy regarding our guidelines and the “No Nut” policy)

Older children will need: **Bag – with a change of clothes**
 Hat - broad brimmed or legionnaire style.
 Kindy & Pre-school: plastic cup with handle.

We are a sunsmart centre and require all children and staff to dress appropriately.

OTHER CENTRE POLICIES

Below, please find a list of centre policies adopted by Smithfield Child Care that work in conjunction with the policies described in this handbook. Some policies are extensions of those you have just read, and others compliment these ones.

Copies of each full policy are kept in a folder in the foyer and in each room. Do feel welcome to read through these at any time and seek clarification on any that you wish.

- Hours of Operation
- Waiting List
- Enrolment Procedures
- Parent Responsibilities
- Parent Information
- Parent Participation
- Parent Grievance
- Authorised Persons
- Financial
- Late Fee
- Holiday Notification
- Gender Equity
- Multicultural
- Special Needs Integration
- Emergency Procedures
- Child Abuse and Neglect
- Hand Washing
- Sunsafe
- Nutrition
- Confidentiality
- Toxic Products
- No Nut
- Security Items
- Clothing
- Nappy Changing
- Sickness
- Illness exclusion
- Medication
- Immunisation
- Dental
- Staff
- Professional Development
- Private Baby Sitting
- Behaviour Management
- Centre Programs
- Air conditioning
- Intoxicated Persons
- Fundraising
- Pregnant Staff
- Head Lice
- Excursion
- Birthday Cakes
- Food
- Maintenance
- Protection
- Workplace Health & Safety
- Sleep/Rest
- Tsunami