

Family Handbook

emali
early learning centre

**“All great people
were once
children”**

Welcome to Emali Early Learning Centres

Emali Early Learning is a privately owned and operated centre.

Childcare and Early Learning is an intense experience aiding children with fun, freedom, control, creativity and development. We aim to provide a home style environment for children to develop and explore, at their own pace.

The staff and management of Emali Early Learning Centres are committed to providing a high quality service and standard of care for every child and their family. Our job is not only one of the most challenging, but also one of the most rewarding. Together with you, we are involved in developing the future generation of Australia, and we can never take that for granted.

Please read this information carefully to assist you in answering any questions you may have about the operation of our centres. If you have any further enquiries please do not hesitate to contact our staff or management.

We look forward to getting to know you and your family, and to building positive and supportive relationships. We hope that your time spent at Emali Early Learning Centres is a treasured memory in your child's formative years.

Our Philosophy

At Emali Early Learning we believe that children are valuable members of society. We respect and acknowledge each child as an individual learner and value their uniqueness, regardless of their age, gender, race, religion or cultural background.

We aim to provide a safe, caring and homelike environment where children are able to feel comfortable, to explore their independence and be stimulated by their surroundings.

At our centres we strive to cater for each child's individual strengths and interests. We will transform each child's interest into a learning process, allowing them to share and develop experiences with staff and other children.

It is also important to value open and honest communication and recognise its importance when working as a team.

Staff will work together with parents to support each child's learning. We are committed to providing a high quality service and care for every child and their family.

Centre Goals

For Children:

- To provide a safe, stimulating and welcoming environment where children can grow and learn.
- To respect each child's individuality through the centre's programs, activities and routines, making sure these are flexible and developmentally appropriate.
- To provide a balanced program with the opportunity to develop physical, emotional, intellectual, imaginative and social skills through both free-play and organised activity.
- To make sure that toileting and nappy change procedures meet children's individual needs and are a positive experience.
- To ensure transitions between activities are smooth.
- To ensure that sleep times and dressing procedures meet individual needs for rest, comfort and self-help.
- To be consistent and balanced in the approach to all matters concerning individual children.
- To encourage children to express their selves, communicate and listen to others; to make choices and decisions, and to experience natural consequences.
- To encourage children to seek challenges as part of their exploration in a safe environment.
- To encourage children to be aware of, and to respect the needs of others and the environment in which they are in.
- To enable children to experience a familiar environment & develop trusting relationships with staff by having a stable staffing pattern.
- To encourage children to be culturally inclusive.

For Families:

- To treat and embrace each family equally and with respect for their particular needs and cultural diversity.
- To work in partnership through regular and open communication between staff and families.
- To share and exchange ideas and experiences between staff and families.
- To always provide guidance and support to families, allowing parents to be involved in ongoing training and development opportunities.
- To respect and understand the role and influences in the home and the valuable teachings it has to offer.
- To encourage the participation and involvement of families in the centre's program according to the needs, interests and opportunities of each family.

For Staff:

- To provide working conditions for staff that facilitate the employment and retention of a highly motivated and professional staff team, with a range of qualifications and experience.
- To involve staff in all decisions regarding service delivery and development.
- To ensure that all staff are treated in a respectful way, by children, parents and by staff and management.
- To employ staff with knowledge and understanding of the developmental needs of children.
- To encourage staff to extend and enhance their knowledge and skills through in-service workshops, professional training and professional networking.
- To provide staff with positive working environments that foster and encourage learning opportunities through modern facilities and working conditions.
- To provide staff with regular non-contact time in order to plan and evaluate the program.

For the Community:

- To provide a service that responds to the needs of this community and recognises and supports the diversity of social, cultural and economic backgrounds.
- To inform the community about the services that we provide.
- To provide equal access to affordable, quality care for all families including those with disabilities, those from non-English speaking, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.
- To use the valuable opportunities and resources that the community has to offer to enhance the experiences of the children.
- To make Emali a part of the larger community by taking an active interest in other groups, activities and by inviting others to share in ours.

Our Program

The curriculum provided for all children attending our centre is known as the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

At Emali we provide the environment and experiences which enable children to grow physically, emotionally, intellectually and socially. Our program is derived to strongly enhance the interests of the children, as well as further developing strengths of each individual child.

Children's home language, culture and religious differences will be included within the program. Using this programming method allows staff to observe, monitor, assess and report on your child's developmental progress.

To prepare children for school we have incorporated Jolly Phonics into our curriculum. Jolly Phonics is a unique, phonics-based approach to teaching reading and writing.

Our program consists of small groups which foster interest based themes or activities. Through our program the children will experience the following:

- Guided group experiences which develop a sense of care and respect for others,
- Active play and exercises which enhance physical development and gross motor skills.
- Story time, drama, poetry, music and movement to stimulate the imagination.
- A range of experiences which encourage curiosity, experimentation and language development.
- Activities to strengthen perceptual skills, necessary for eventual academic success.
- Events that promote multiculturalism.
- Involvement in the community.

Languages

At each Early Learning Centre a language is taught once or twice a week. There is Indonesian at Salisbury, Italian at Hectorville and Findon, Spanish at Broadview, AUSLAN and Brighton and Chinese at Athol Park.

These languages were specially picked to reflect the community they are in, and the languages that are taught at the surrounding schools. Our children will be able to have that extra knowledge about the languages before starting school.

We also believe that it is vital for languages to be taught at a young age. Knowing more than one language has great benefits for the development of children. Learning additional languages can increase critical thinking skills, creativity and flexibility in young children in the future.

Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures are formulated to ensure a high quality of care for our children. It is imperative that we meet all requirements and regulations of the Department of Education and Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

Please find a copy of both handbooks in the reception area and in each individual room for you to read. If you have any questions or concerns regarding them please make a time to speak to the Director.

Enrolment Procedures

Before your child starts at the centre, it is very important that we meet with your family. Upon entering our centre you will have the opportunity to see all the facilities including the classrooms, play areas and rest areas. You will also see examples of the program and meet the staff who will care for your child.

To secure a position for your child at the centre there is an enrolment fee of \$40 (which includes a free Emali hat & drink bottle). This fee to be paid in full prior to commencement and is non-refundable. This fee covers administration setup and development folders for your children.

Orientation

Emali provides an orientation process for new children to familiarise the child with the daily routine and activities. This enables both the parent and child to gain a better understanding of the environment at the centre.

Once your child has been offered a position in our centre we recommend that you and your child attend orientation days. The number of orientation days will vary from family to family, so please make sure you make management aware of any particular needs we need to take into consideration.

Settling In

Each child reacts differently to being away from their parents. On the first day that your child attends, parents are encouraged to stay for a short time to aid the child with the settling process. You may also have to stay on subsequent days if we find that the child is not settling well.

It is imperative that as a parent you are comfortable and ready for childcare, as your child will know if you're not. Parents are always advised of how their child's day has been and meetings will always be organised if you need some assistance with the settling-in process. Please feel free to speak to your child's carer or the Director if you have any questions about this process.

Please feel free to call the centre during the day to make sure your child has settled into care.

What to bring with you to Emali

We ask parents to ensure all children's belongings are clearly labelled. We encourage parents to send their children with comforters that will assist them with settling in and during transitions.

We kindly ask parents not to send their children in with toys as they may become broken or misplaced. Children get opportunities to bring in their favourite toys during *show and tell*.

On each day that your child attends Emali Early Learning they will need to bring the following:

- Bag
- Spare clothes (please be aware of changing temperatures and take into consideration toilet training pants)
- Sunhat – (Provided by Emali on Enrolment)
- Piece of fruit to share
- Drink Bottle with water only – (Provided by Emali on Enrolment)
- 1 home nappy, if required
- Milk bottles, if required
- Comfort items such as dummies, soft toys, blankets etc.

Please make sure that there are no items smaller than a 50cent piece, plastic bags or medicine left in children's bags.

Please do not send your child in good clothes and ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. Children need play clothes that can become a little dirty, and that enables your child to play with ease. Hats need to be worn at all times while outside. **No thongs or strapless shoes. Shoulders need to be covered from the sun.**

Unfortunately at times parents forget to label their children's belongings. You will find a box in the foyer for lost property. Please check this regularly as the amounts may build up. All items that are collected at the end of each month will be donated into our spare clothes for the children or the local charity. The centre will not be liable for any lost or damaged items.

Operating Hours

Our centre is open between the hours of 6.30am and 6:30pm, Monday through to Friday. Emali Early Learning operates for 52 weeks per year, only closing for Public Holidays. The centre operates throughout school holidays. Dates of closure will be advised through newsletters and notices.

Children can be picked up and dropped off at parental convenience; however a late fee will be applied after the scheduled closing time. If you are going to be late then you are required to make other arrangements for another authorised person to collect your child. If this is not possible, the late fee of \$2.00 per minute, per child will apply. The late fee is not subject to Childcare Benefit (CCB) and will be added to your weekly account.

Arrivals and Departures

To ensure children's safety, only the main entrance will be used during arrival and departure by a responsible adult. For further safety each parent will have a unique code required to enter the centre. If you forget the code please ring the doorbell.

That adult must sign their child in and out of the centre on the sheets provided at the front desk. Please ensure that at enrolment you make management aware of your child's approximate arrival and departure times. Some rooms may require that a departure time is noted for each individual day.

It is a licensing and CCB requirement that you sign your child in and out each day. If your child was absent for any reason you are still required to sign for that day.

If your child will be absent from the centre for any reason, it is expected that you telephone the centre as soon as it comes apparent that your child will not be attending.

All authorised persons other than the parents need to be, at a minimum of 18 years of age. Should parents require someone other than themselves or an authorised person to pick up their child, a prior written authorisation is required for each case.

If you are unavoidably unable to collect your child on time, please phone through to the centre and notify your expected time of arrival or arrange for another person to collect your child.

Please **do not** send children to collect your child as they will not be released.

Our Team

Our centre employs professional and dedicated staff that understands the needs of the children and their families. Our team members are approved by the Department of Education and each staff member has a police clearance.

Our qualified staff members hold either of the following qualifications:

- Bachelor in Early Childhood
- Diploma in Children's Services –or equivalent

You can recognize the staff at Emali as they are all required to wear a pink embroidered shirt. Photos of all our staff members are located in the foyer of each of our centres. Centre Management encourages and supports staff to further develop their knowledge and skills, so that they can give your children the best of care and education.

Family Participation

Family is the most important influence on the way that children grow, therefore it is important to encourage family involvement. Working together will allow caregivers to work effectively with your child, to have a better understanding of your child and to respect them as unique individuals.

Parent participation is vital for each child's education. Parents may gain valuable insights and techniques from the expertise of the staff, share their own talents and interests, to maintain and enhance the quality of education offered to our children.

Meetings can be held for staff and parents to discuss any developmental questions, issues or concerns. This is also a great opportunity for families to assist staff in making the child's time at our centre valuable.

Parent Feedback

At Emali we endeavour to provide the ideal environment to care for your child. In the event you need to raise a concern relating to your child's care, we ask that you speak to the staff member you feel most comfortable with.

If you do not feel satisfied with the outcome you should make your concerns known to the centre Director who will take the appropriate steps to remedy the situation. All concerns are treated in the strictest of confidence.

Communication

It is very important that you spend some time communicating with the carers who care for your child.

The centre will provide a communication book for each child. These books will be placed in your child's communication basket in their care room and filled with information about their day.

Through your communication pocket you will receive Newsletters and other information concerning the centre. We ask that you ensure ongoing communication by emptying your child's pocket upon arriving or departing the centre daily.

Fees, Sessions and Bookings

Fees are payable two weeks in advance and can be paid using our Ezidebitsystem. Fees are to be paid to the administration staff and once payment is finalised a receipt will be issued out to you in person or can be found in your child's pocket located in their foyer.

The centre offers permanent or casual sessions. Casual sessions are only subject to availability.

A bond is required at commencement of care. We require two weeks fee (minus your CCB contribution) to be paid either in advance or paid over a short period of time. This will be allocated as a bond payment and will be refunded when care is cancelled with two weeks written notice. However in the event of 2 weeks written notice not being received in writing by the Management, the deposit will not be refunded.

Child Care Benefit

Child Care Benefit (CCB) is a payment made to families to assist with the cost of childcare. Australian residents using childcare by approved childcare services or registered informal carers may receive CCB. CCB is based on each family's income and the onus is on each family to ensure that they have a current assessment notice in order to receive benefits. It is also up to the family to notify the department of any income changes.

Families using an approved centre such as Emali Early Learning are able to choose to receive CCB through upfront fee reductions or lump sum payment.

CCB is applied to your fees once notification of your assessment percentage is received, therefore it is important to lodge these application forms prior to your child's commencement. These forms can also come directly from the Department of Human Services (DHS). For a full explanation of Child Care Benefit, please refer to the DHS website: <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/themes/families>.

Allowable Absences

It is a requirement that our centre keep detailed records of all absences of Child Care Benefit recipients as determined by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Each child is limited to 42 days per year of absence. Once the child has reached this limit of absences CCB is not paid and will be charged at FULL FEE rates.

If you wish to take holidays, two weeks written notice must be handed to administration staff or a Leave Notification form can be filled out. Allowable holiday absence is up to 20 days and is included in the 42 allowable absence days. These days will be charged at \$10 less than the normal rate.

Withdrawing from the Centre

Two weeks written notice is required if you wish to cancel your child's booking. Parents should be aware that non-attendance will result ineligibility of CCB as it is not payable if the child is not attending. This will result in full fees being charged.

Health and Hygiene

Maintaining a healthy environment is the responsibility of the staff and parents. The strict practices of hygiene that we adhere to allow us to minimise the risk of cross infection.

Daily, as well as weekly, Health and Hygiene routine checks are conducted by staff which includes the cleaning of the centre and sterilisation of toys.

Any children suffering from an infectious illness must not attend the centre until they are no longer in an infectious state. It is difficult for staff to provide the appropriate care for sick children and still attend to the whole group, so please use discretion when deciding to send your child to the centre.

Parents are requested to telephone the centre as soon as possible if their child has a communicable infection and will be absent from the centre.

In any instance where a child becomes ill at the centre, parents and/or the nominated emergency contact will be notified.

Further information can be found in the Centre Policy Manual situated in the foyer.

Administering of Medication

The staff at Emali are all trained to administer medication to the children and to ensure suitable procedures are undertaken during the administration process.

All medication must be prescribed by a doctor and hence to have a label with clear instructions and details. A Medication plan from the Doctor is strongly recommended.

Parents are to ensure that medication is given to a staff member, which will be stored out of the children's reach, and an authorisation form must be completed. This form must detail the name of medication, the recommended dosage, the date and the time of dosage.

Children are monitored closely for signs of a temperature. If a child's temperature reaches 38°C or above, the parent will be notified and asked to collect the child. As recommended by the Department of Education Children's Services, Panadol WILL NOT be administered by any staff member at the centre.

First Aid and Accidents

All staff at Emali have a current First Aid certificate. A fully equipped first aid box is maintained frequently at the centre in a variety of localities.

Despite having adequate supervision and monitoring equipment, accidents do happen. If your child has an accident at the centre, staff and management will take every necessary action to provide appropriate first aid measures, record the event leading up to the injury. If the incident is relatively minor then you will be advised and shown the accident form upon arrival to pick up your child. The form will need to be read and signed by yourself and kept in your child's files.

If an ambulance is required for any reason such as injury or illness, we will not hesitate in calling one, and you will be contacted. If the parent cannot be present to accompany the child then a staff member will accompany the child. The Centre will not be liable for any medical fees or other cost which may arise due to these emergencies.

Emergency and Evacuation

Evacuation procedures are displayed in each room and explained to the children on a regular basis. Our centre is fitted with appropriate safety devices. These are all maintained on a regular basis.

Emergency evacuation drills will be practised, and anyone in the building is required to participate by law. If the evacuation of the building is necessary three blows to a whistle will happen. In case of an unforeseen emergency situation, all efforts will be made to contact parents to collect their children.

Sun Protection

Children at Emali must wear a hat during outdoor play. Sunscreen is provided by the centre and is reapplied at regular intervals throughout the day. Children not wearing a hat will have their play directed to a covered area or indoors. The staff at Emali will make sure that they have a positive attitude towards skin protection.

During daylight saving hours and summer we will avoid being outside in the hottest part of the day, 11am to 3pm.

If you know of any allergies your child may have towards sunscreens please note this on your enrolment form and advise staff. Permission slips will need to be signed to enable us to apply the necessary lotions. If you wish to supply individual sunscreen for your child it should be clearly labelled with your child's name and handed to one of the staff in your child's group.

Immunisation

Upon enrolment records of immunisation must be presented. These records can include either, a baby blue book, a certificate of immunisation, or a letter from your doctor.

A Child with the following infections must be excluded from care, until medical clearance in the form of a doctor's certificate is received:

- Chicken Pox
- German measles
- Hepatitis A
- Measles
- Mumps
- Ring Worm
- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting
- Impetigo
- Cold Sores
- Hand, Foot and Mouth disease.

Parents of other children in the centre will be notified via the Parent Notice Board and Parent Communication Book if a contagious infection has been detected.

Meal Times

Meal times are an important part of your child's day at Emali Early Learning. Besides learning about nutrition these times foster a learning opportunity for the children's social and language development.

Our daily menu is displayed on the Menu Board and we provide the children with a delicious variety of nutritious meals and snacks throughout the day. The menu is varied on a four weekly basis and accommodates multiculturalism and the likes and dislikes of the children. We include fresh fruit, vegetables, whole grain bread, meat, poultry, and dairy. Water is provided at each meal.

Children's lunch is served at the tables indoors or outdoors and in their age groups. The age appropriate children serve themselves using appropriate utensils which develop their self-help skills. Children are always encouraged to try new foods but never forced. The children are encouraged to feed themselves and staff will assist if required.

If your child has an allergy or cultural/religious food requirement of any sort, staff must be notified. This is a requirement that must be filled out within the enrolment form provided. We also discourage food from being brought into the centre as many of our children have allergies which can be life threatening.

For this reason our centres, are Nut Free.

Toileting

Parents are asked to dress their child in clothing which they are able to manage by themselves, or with minimal assistance. This promotes self-help skills, develops their confidence and prevents accidents. Self-toileting is always encouraged with supervision and assistance is happily given when required.

Toileting accidents are a common occurrence at any centre and your child need never feel embarrassed or uncomfortable if this does occur. Please reassure your child that staff are here to help and they should ask for help if needed.

The centre has specific times throughout the day when children are encouraged to use the bathroom, such as before mealtimes or rest. However, children are free to use the bathroom at all times during the day. Please inform staff if your child needs reminding to use the bathroom.

Children who are in nappies are changed at frequent times during the day, with a changing record kept for each child.

Behaviour Management

Our Behaviour Management policy is centred on the importance that children should be treated with respect for themselves, others and the environment. This encourages the individuality and confidence of children to never diminish their self-esteem.

Limits are set and kept clear, simple and consistent. Staff use positive approaches to behaviour management, and are encouraged to use them at all times. Staff members will appropriately supervise children, and act to divert and direct problems before they occur. Children are given positive directions, clear alternatives, praise and encouragement for their strengths. Acceptable behaviour is reinforced and promoted positively.

Staff will involve children in discussions about dealing with conflict and will encourage children to show empathy and healthy assertiveness.

Excursions

Occasionally the centre will conduct excursions as an alternative to the in-house learning. Parents will receive a written itinerary as well as a permission form for any activity which requires the children to leave the centre. Reasons for the excursion will also be given. Parents will be required to send the form back signed and with payment for their child to attend. Parents are invited to attend excursions if available. Staff ratios on excursions will comply with regulations and be sufficient to ensure the safety of the children during the excursion.

If a parent does not give permission for their child to go on the excursion then the centre will provide appropriate care at the centre on that day.

Prior to any excursion the site will be accessed and reviewed for safety and facilities by a staff member.

Birthdays and Celebrations

At times there are special celebrations for your child, birthdays, going to school, or just moving on from the centre, and we enjoy sharing these occasions with your children.

Due to children's allergies and health and hygiene reasons, it is not possible for families to supply a cake. The centre has developed a process where you can place an order to purchase a cake for \$10 and the cook will make a special cake for the child to share with their friends. Each individual room will also do something special so that all children do not feel left out. If you would like the staff to take some happy snaps for this event please feel free to bring your camera in.

If you do not want your child to be involved in birthday celebrations then please let the Director know.

Our program incorporates numerous cultural and religious events celebrated by children attending our centres and in the wider community. The kinds of activities that are incorporated into the program are: stories, rhymes, music, clothes and foods these are the things that will help children acknowledge different cultures and religions.

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Athol Park

13 Gateshead Street,
Athol Park SA 5012

P (08) 8447 6333 F (08) 8447 3633

Brighton

397 Brighton Road,
Brighton SA 5048

P (08) 8358 5384

Broadview

611 Regency Road,
Broadview SA 5083

P (08) 8266 6895

Findon

127 Findon Road,
Findon SA 5023

P (08) 8244 4404

Hectorville

38 Montacute Road,
Hectorville SA 5073

P (08) 8365 7571 F (08) 8365 7591

Morphett Vale

215-219 Main South Road,
Morphett Vale SA 5162

P (08) 8186 6166

Salisbury

60 Winzor Street,
Salisbury SA 5108

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