



**INFORMATION HANDBOOK
FOR FAMILIES
CULLUNGHUTTI
EARLY LEARNING CENTRE**

CONTENTS

Welcome

Vision

Mission Statement

THE ORGANISATION

About us

The board

Management structure

Services provided at CACFC

Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics

Code of Ethics for families and Visitors

Confidentiality

Family involvement

EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

Hours of operation

Employees

Visitors

Marketing

Early start engagement centre

Transport service

What you will need to bring

Toys from home

Lockers

Lost property

Rest

National Quality Framework

Assessment and rating

Quality Improvement Plan

National Legislative framework

Regulations

Our Program

Child Carer's online programming

Children with additional needs

Kids Matter

Excursions

Photography

Social media

Nutrition

Breast feeding

Guiding Children's behaviour

Yarn Up

ENROLEMENT PROCESS

Privacy of information

Immunisation

Priority of access

Arrival and departures

Late collection fee

Fees

Withdrawal/changing days

Absences

Public holidays

Parent/guardian information

Child Care Benefit

Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Assistance

Grandparents Child Care Benefit

Child Care Rebate

Feedback and complaints

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Incident/injury/trauma/illness

Emergency procedures

Evacuation Procedure

Hygiene

Sun Safe

Asthma

Medication

Head lice

Exclusion due to illness

Safe food handling

Nutrition

Child Protection

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

APPENDICES

- 1- ACECQA- National Quality Framework overview
- 2- National Quality Framework
- 3- Early Years Learning Framework
- 4- Child Care Benefit information (Fact sheet 8)
- 5- Children's Health
- 6- Recommended minimum exclusion periods
- 7- Infectious diseases in pregnancy

WELCOME

Welcome to Cullunghutti Aboriginal Child and Family Centre (ACFC)/ Early Learning Centre (ELC). We are pleased to welcome you to our integrated service and we are committed to developing an ongoing relationship with you, your child and your family. Our educators and staff are available to assist you at all times, please do not hesitate to discuss your child's progress and voice any queries or concerns.

This handbook contains relevant information about Cullunghutti ELC policies and procedures. Following confirmation of your enrolment you will be required to sign an enrolment form to acknowledge that you have read and understood our policies and procedures.

Vision

Cullunghutti ACFC is an integrated service which brings together a range of early childhood, health and family support services to improve the overall health and wellbeing of children and support for their families.

Mission Statement

Cullunghutti Early Learning Centre is a special place of gathering with a unique cultural identity that provides a place of belonging, cultural respect and safety for Aboriginal children and families. Cullunghutti is a place where all children, families, and staff feel a sense of security and belonging through nurturing relationships and providing a safe and supportive environment.



THE ORGANISATION

About us

Cullunghutti ACFC provide services to Aboriginal children and their families 0-12 years of age & aims to support the most vulnerable members of our community.

We deliver Early Childhood Education & Care and operate a Family Centre that provides holistic support to at risk and disadvantaged families where they can access, social activities such as adult education, parenting workshops and community events. The Centre also provides a range of free medical services: including Paediatrics, Speech & Occupational Therapy, Adult & Children counselling, case management support, behavioural management, antenatal, maternal & children's health & hearing clinics

The Shoalhaven was identified under the COAG National partnership in Indigenous Early Childhood Development as having significant gaps in key areas of need.

- Indigenous children are born and remain healthy
- Indigenous children have the same health outcomes as non-Indigenous children

Cullunghutti as an organisation that is solely driven by its members and community, all services are designed through advice and consultation of members, with social enterprise providing opportunities of employment and increasing capacity within families and the broader community. With an integrated service provision that clearly promotes and enhances the cohesion of services being provided to said families ensuring a inclusive approach to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal children within our region.

THE BOARD

Cullunghutti ACFC Board of Management has eight members- four from local Aboriginal organisations and four from our local Aboriginal community.

Cullunghutti ACFC and ELC is managed by a voluntary Board of management, made up of local Elders, community members and parents of children accessing the service.

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The management structure consists of the volunteer Board of Management, General Manager- who is responsible for the operations of the entire organisation, Early Education Manager and ELC Director- are responsible for the Early Learning Centre and reports to the General Manager, and the Catering Manager- responsible for the catering team and reports to the General Manager.

The organisations role is to manage, advise and support employees, families, the local community, local/state/federal governments and related children's services agencies in the provision of quality education, and care.

SERVICES OFFERED AT CACFC

- Early Links worker
- Paediatric Clinic
- Children's counselling
- Adult's counselling

- Binji and Boori Outreach services
- Parenting programs
- Occupational Therapy and Speech Pathology
- Waminda Outreach Services
- Case support

EARLY CHILDHOOD AUSTRALIA'S (ECA) CODE OF ETHICS

Cullunghutti employees abide by Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics.

The Code of Ethics provides a framework for reflection about the ethical responsibilities of early childhood professionals in relation to children, families, colleagues, the community, students, the employer and to one's self.

Ask the service for a copy of the Code of Ethics or it can be downloaded from Early Childhood Australia's website at www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR FAMILIES AND VISITORS

As a parent/guardian or visitor of a child using the centre's services it is expected that you abide by a code of conduct, this includes

- Develop positive relationships based on mutual trust and open communication.
- Develop partnerships with employees and engage in shared decision making where appropriate.
- Talk to and listen to employees, in order to build knowledge about the strengths and competencies of your child.
- Not being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs on the premises.
- Not smoking tobacco or other substances on the premises and grounds.
- Acting courteously at all times, refraining from using inappropriate language.
- Being respectful of the service's environment and property.
- Arriving and departing at the arranged times unless negotiated with employees.
- Respecting the privacy of employees, other children and families who use the service.
- Maintaining confidentiality.
- Discussing any concerns with the Service Director or Cullunghutti Management.
- Being aware of and abiding by our policies and procedures.



CONFIDENTIALITY

Cullunghutti Board members and staff from time to time will have access to information in relation to employees and clients. Cullunghutti Board members are required to respect the privacy and confidentiality of that information.

On appointment Board members and staff are required to sign a Disclosure of Information document and complete a Police Check and a Working with Children Check.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Family participation is an integral part of our service; we strive to foster a partnership between Management, service employees, families and the community. Families are encouraged to be involved in the day-to-day activities and experiences of the service and are eligible to participate in the management of the organisation. Cullunghutti ELC has an open door policy for families.

We encourage local Aboriginal Elders, family and community members to engage with our service to support our children grow strong in culture, strengthen identity and language whilst creating a sense of belonging to community.

Our Policies and Procedures are available for families to view. Policies and Procedures are regularly reviewed and parent/ guardian consultation is encouraged. If you wish to comment on existing policies, please talk to the service Director.



EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

Cullunghutti ELC provides:

- A safe, caring and stimulating environment for children 0-5 years
- Qualified enthusiastic early childhood educators
- Transition to School Programs
- Well-equipped indoor and outdoor environments
- Nutritional meals and snacks
- Air conditioning
- Cultural respect and value
- Aboriginal culture embedded in the children's program
- Access to Child Care Benefit

HOURS OF OPERATION

Cullunghutti ELC operates from Monday to Friday excluding public holidays, we are open to children and families from 7:30am until 5:30pm.

The Family Centre operates Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

EMPLOYEES

Cullunghutti ELC employs University and Tertiary educated Early Childhood professionals, and are supported by a centre administrator, cook and bus driver. Each employee has their photo displayed in the foyer. Employees are required to wear identification name badges.

Employees attend professional development in order to keep up with current trends and information which will enhance their work and professional performance.

Employees attend regular team meetings to discuss current issues, and self-assessment which contributes to the smooth running of the service.

All employees are required to have a police and working with children's check completed prior to working at Cullunghutti ELC.

RELIEF EMPLOYEES

In order to maintain educator: child ratios, relief employees will be employed when necessary to comply with the services regulations. Relief educators are required to work with a permanent employee at all times.

All relief employees are required to have a police and working with children's check completed prior to working at Cullunghutti ELC.

VISITORS

Students and volunteers are welcome in the service and required to abide by Cullunghutti policies and procedures. No student or volunteer will be given responsibility for direct care of children. Families are made aware of the presence of the student or volunteer in the service.

MARKETING

From time to time Cullunghutti brochures, presentation materials, promotional banners, and website are reviewed and updated. Photographs of children, families and employees are used to provide visual information in relation to services Cullunghutti provides.

Upon enrolment parents/guardians are to sign permission for use of photos for these purposes. If you have any concerns in regards to this, please speak with the service Director.

EARLY START ENGAGEMENT CENTRE

There is a network of 41 Early Start Engagement Centres which are situated in areas of recognised disadvantage across NSW and CELC were selected by the University of Wollongong to be a part of this program.

Being an engagement centre will improve connections between 'experts' in children's health, education and development, families and communities. Staff also have access to professional development opportunities and increases access for educators and children to interact with and gain valuable experience with a variety of technologies.

TRANSPORT SERVICE AT CULLUNGHUTTI ELC

Cullunghutti ELC operates a transport service for children who require transport assistance to attend the service. The transport service operates to a scheduled timetable throughout the Shoalhaven on selected days.

The bus service provides transport to and from the service, children will not be permitted to travel on this service without written authorisation from a parent/guardian (attached to enrolment form).

Bus routes are determined annually taking into consideration enrolments and routes that travel close to children's homes, while ensuring the practical timing of the bus run so that children are not travelling for long periods of time. Routine risk assessments will be undertaken of the chosen bus route and if at any time these indicate that the safety of children or employees is at risk they will be reviewed.

Government funds are provided to assist with the cost associated with the running the transport service, therefore the type or availability of the transport service may be subject to review dependant on funding allocations.

Families wishing to access the transport service are required to complete a request for transport application (Attached to enrolment form) to determine eligibility.

*Please speak with an educator for further assistance.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED TO BRING

Children

- A piece of fruit or vegetable per day (this will be shared with other children)
- Spare clothing, CLEARLY LABELLED
- Comforter or cuddly toy for rest time if required
- Jacket for cold weather, CLEARLY LABELLED

WHAT YOU WILL NEED TO BRING (Continued)

Infants

- Several changes of clothing, CLEARLY LABELLED
- Disposable nappies, CLEARLY LABELLED
- Empty bottles, formula in separate dispenser/tin, CLEARLY LABELLED. (We provide cow's milk and have boiled water to prepare formula.)
- Dummies if required, CLEARLY LABELLED
- Comforter or cuddly toy for rest time if required

Please ensure all of your child's belongings are clearly labelled with your child's name.

WHAT NOT TO BRING

- Lollies
- Beaded necklaces
- Toys
- Aggressive toys



TOYS FROM HOME

The children are welcome to bring a cuddly or security toy, which should be clearly marked with their name. We do not encourage children to bring toys to the service as we cannot accept any responsibility for these items, which could be misplaced or damaged. Guns and other aggressive toys are not permitted.

LOCKERS

A locker is allocated for each child; please place the child's bag in their locker. Please do not put your child's belongings in a disposable plastic carry bag or leave lotions or medication in their bag as they are a possible hazard.

Please ensure that all your child's belongings are CLEARLY LABELLED.

LOST PROPERTY

There is a basket in each room for lost property.

Please check this regularly for items which may belong to you. Unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity or recycled at the end of each school term.

REST

All children are encouraged to participate in rest time, this can involve participation in quiet time activities. In accordance to the Regulations no child will be forced to rest against their wishes or needs. Cots are provided for babies and a stretcher for the older children as required by the Regulations.

NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK (NQF)

On 1 January 2012, the National Quality Framework was established and will apply to most long day care, family day care, preschool (or kindergarten) and outside schools hours care services. This is a National strategy and Cullunghutti ELC have implemented these objectives.

The National Quality Framework aims to raise quality and drive continuous improvement and consistency in education and care services through:

- a national legislative framework
- a National Quality Standard
- a national quality rating and assessment process
- a new national body called the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority.

The National Quality Framework took effect on 1 January 2012 with key requirements being phased in overtime. Requirements such as qualification, educator- to-child ratios and other key staffing arrangements will be phased in between 2012 and 2020. [\(See appendix 1\)](#)

NATIONAL QUALITY RATING AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Approved Services will be assessed and rated against each of the seven Quality Areas of the National Quality Standard and the National Regulations. They will also be given an overall rating. The rating and assessment process aims to drive continuous quality improvement at services and provide families with better information for making choices about their children's education and care.

The National Quality Framework has replaced the National Childcare Accreditation Council. [\(See appendix 2\)](#)

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (QIP)

The national regulations require approved services to have a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The aim of a QIP is to help services to self-assess their performance, deliver quality education and care and to plan for future improvements. The QIP also helps the regulatory authority with their assessments.

We have developed a QIP which documents the strengths of our service and areas for improvement. Educators, families, children and the community are involved in the self-assessment process. Our QIP is available for families to view, please speak to the Director.

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The National Legislative Framework is established through an applied laws system and consists of:

- the Education and Care Services National Law
- the Education and Care Services National Regulations.

It creates a jointly governed uniform national approach to the regulation and quality assessment of education and care services and replaces existing separate licensing and quality assurance processes.

A Regulatory Authority in each state and territory will be primarily responsible for administering the National Quality Framework, including approving, monitoring and

quality assessing services. It will be the first point of contact for services.

A new national body the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) will oversee the NQF and ensure the consistent and effective implementation of the new system.

REGULATIONS

Cullunghutti ELC follows the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulation. A copy is available at the service.

OUR PROGRAM

Cullunghutti ELC room programs are developed from the principles of the Early Years Learning Framework and the emergent curriculum. The Early Years Learning Framework is an early childhood curriculum framework, which guides early childhood educators in developing quality, early childhood educational programs. The framework describes the principles, practice and outcomes to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years, as well as their transition to school. This will help ensure consistency in the delivery of learning programs around Australia. The Early Years Learning Framework (See appendix 3) has a strong emphasis on play-based learning. The framework also recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development. In addition, the framework has a focus on successful transition to formal schooling.

Each child will have a primary educator who will plan for your child's developing strengths and interests and will address any areas that require support. The service program will provide opportunities for children to learn with their peers in a safe and well-planned environment. The program is more than a planned series of activities as it is designed to provide a range of experiences where children can learn, explore and interact as individuals and as part of a group. Programs allow opportunities for children to become self-reliant and develop a positive self-esteem.

Educators are allocated release time on a weekly basis to develop and plan for individual focus children, the service program, and small and large group programs. Please see the Service Director for programming formats and release times.

Educators will develop an online learning journey for each child. The online learning journey will reflect the individual child and demonstrate the child's development, interests, family and friends over the year. The online learning journeys include information collected about the child from home and the service, through observations, photographs, artwork, projects and discussions.

CHILD CARERS ONLINE PROGRAMMING (Parents have access)

We use a digital program to record children's learning and development.

Child Carers allows you to view your child's documented learning and development securely online. The service uses Children's updates to inform families about the program for the day. The updates are completed daily and they document all aspects of the children's day. The online programming includes photographs and observations of children at play, group experiences, formalised discussions, routine times and special events. For educators the children's updates and child carer's online programming is used to evaluate the daily program.

Educators then incorporate this information into future planning for individual children

and programmed experiences.
The Director will discuss this with you on orientation.

CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Cullunghutti ELC has a commitment to the inclusion of children with additional needs at our services. Cullunghutti ELC will work together with employees, families and support agencies to develop programs and environments that promote access and participation for all children at the service.

KIDS MATTER EARLY CHILDHOOD

Cullunghutti ELC implement Kids Matter Early Childhood, a national initiative focusing on children's mental health and wellbeing in Early Childhood Education and Care Services (ECECS).

Experiences in the early years affect long term mental health, relationships, and learning. This knowledge forms the foundation of our work as educators with children and families.

Kids Matter Early Childhood:

- Assists educators in recognising when children may be at risk of experiencing mental health issues
- Improves understanding of pathways to access professional intervention
- Supports and complements the implementation of the Early Years Learning Framework and the National Quality Standard
- Involves all members of the ECECS, community, working together.
- Is a flexible approach that can be adapted to different contexts
- Provides evidence-based resources and tools for educators, families, and health professionals.
- Offers professional development and implementation support that informs daily practice.

EXCURSIONS

From time to time excursions are organised as part of the service program. Excursions are seen as a valuable component of the program and are planned and organised in accordance with the relevant regulations. Written parental/guardian permission is required for children to participate in excursions and parents/guardians are welcome to attend these activities.

We are fortunate to be based within the Aboriginal Child and Family Centre, and would like to utilise the community area with the children to engage in spontaneous and planned experiences which could include Munch and Move, engage in Cultural discussions and community engagement. Please see Cullunghutti ELC Educators to sign a one off permission note for your child/ren to engage in these experiences.

PHOTOGRAPHY/PHOTOS IN CENTRE

While you engage in community activities at the centre you may have your photo taken which may be shared on our website and Child Carers online programming that is used by parents/ carers and the wider community. If you do not wish for your photo not to be taken whilst attending these events please let the centre staff know.



SOCIAL MEDIA STATEMENT

Cullunghutti ELC is not responsible for other people's actions and under NO circumstances photos from the website or Child Carers Online Programming are to be shared in any form of social media, for the privacy and safety of all children.

NUTRITION

Cullunghutti ELC follow the Australian Government, National Health and Medical Research Council, Department of Health and Ageing - Australian Dietary Guidelines. More information can be found on www.eatforhealth.gov.au

Cullunghutti Catering provide a qualified cook, who consults with the Service Director to plan nutritional meals. Morning Tea, Lunch and Afternoon Tea are provided.

Our menus promote healthy eating habits with the provision of nutritious food and drink which is culturally and dietary appropriate.

A two week cycle of the menu is displayed in the service.

Any suggestions from families are welcome and encouraged.

BREAST FEEDING

Cullunghutti ELC support and encourages mothers who breastfeed their young child. Please talk to the Director about how we can support you at the service.

GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR

Cullunghutti ELC educators guide children's behaviour recognising the importance of, and respect for, the dignity of the child as a unique individual.

Educators must provide interactions which ensure that children are given guidance towards positive and responsible behaviour and that the dignity and rights of each child for whom the service is being provided for are maintained at all times.

Child management techniques do not include physical, emotional, or verbal punishment. Including for example punishment that humiliates, frightens or threatens the child, isolation of a child for any reason other than illness or accident and the child is not required to sleep or rest against the child's wishes or needs.

Positive behaviour management strategies will build the child's confidence and enhance their self- esteem.

We promote positive techniques of guidance, redirection and reinforcement rather than, competition, comparison, or criticism.

Steps to facilitate good behaviour management include:

- a well-planned environment and a developmentally appropriate program
- adequate employee supervision
- employees who demonstrate and model appropriate behaviour and language
- establish clear and consistent rules

- acknowledge inappropriate behaviour and redirect to another area or experience
- provide children with clear explanations and alternatives
- anticipating difficulties and intervening early

For more information please refer to our Guiding Children's Behaviour policy located in the service policy manual or talk to the Service Director.

YARN UP- PARENT GROUP

All parents/guardians and Elders are eligible to become members of Yarn Up- parent group and have the opportunity to actively participate in their child/children's service. Parent/guardians and Elders become involved by attending the Yarn Ups, which are held at regular intervals organised by the parents.

Yarn Up members work with the Director and employees to provide additional resources that can or will enhance the service.

ENROLMENT PROCESS

Upon enrolment you are required to complete a detailed enrolment form for your child. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that enrolment details are kept up to date. In accordance with the relevant children's services regulation, parent/guardians will need to bring the child's original birth certificate or a certified copy when enrolling a child. The service will sight, photocopy, sign it and then attach a copy to the enrolment form.

During orientation service employees and families will complete an orientation checklist. The information gathered from the orientation and enrolment form will be used to assist settling your child, provide an educational program to suit your child's needs and provide continuity of care between the service and home. Where possible educators will introduce your child to their primary carers upon orientation.

Before children start at the service, families and children are encouraged to visit and become familiar with children, educators and the service.

The service will also extend written or oral invitation to you requesting information about interesting aspects of your family or work, which you would be prepared to share to enrich the experiences of the children in the service.

PRIVACY OF INFORMATION

Under the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000, all personal and private information collected by the service cannot be disclosed to another party without your knowledge unless we are obligated to do so by law, such as Federal Department of Education and NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC).

Please note that employees are required to report suspected risk of significant harm. The Children Legislation Amendment (Wood Inquiry Recommendations) Act 2009, expands the information sharing provisions of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998, to allow a freer exchange of information between 'prescribed bodies' (Government agencies and non government agencies) relating to a child or young person's safety, welfare or wellbeing. For more information please go to www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au



IMMUNISATION



The amendment to the Public Health Act 2010 requires that all services obtain documented evidence of each child's immunisation status to complete enrolment.

Upon enrolment Cullunghutti ELC requires parents/guardians to provide a copy of one or more of the following documents.

1. A current Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) Immunisation History statement which shows that your child is up to date with their scheduled immunisations.
2. A current Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) Immunisation Form on which the immunisation provider has certified that your child is on a recognised catch-up schedule.
3. A current Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) Immunisation Exemption-Medical Contraindication Form which has been certified by an immunisation provider for a child who cannot receive one or more vaccine (s).
4. A current Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) Immunisation Exemption-Conscientious Objection Form which has been certified by an immunisation provider and a parent/guardian.

Parents/guardians may obtain a copy of their child's Immunisation History Statement at anytime:

- By Phone 1800 653 809
- By email acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au
- Online at www.medicareaustralia.gov.au
- Online on your mygov account
- In person at Centrelink/Medicare office

PRIORITY OF ACCESS

The priority of access guidelines are set down by the Federal Government for approved early childhood education and care. When allocating places from the waiting list, we are required to adhere to the guidelines as follows:

- Priority One- a child at risk or serious abuse or neglect
- Priority Two- a child of a parent (or both parents if you have a partner) who satisfies the Governments work, training, and study test
- Priority Three- Any other child

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

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- Families which include a disabled person
- Families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Socially isolated families
- Single parents

In accordance with the legislation where there are no vacancies, a child who is a Priority 3 may be required to alter their days or to leave the education and care service in order to

provide a place for a child with a higher priority of access as detailed above. The service will give the parent/guardian at least 14 days' notice of the requirement for the child to vacate the position.

ARRIVALS

It is extremely important that you or an authorised person records your child's arrival and departure from the service in the appropriate attendance sign in/out register.

This is a requirement of the Department of Education in regards to adhering to Child Care Benefit guidelines.

Parents and families are invited to attend the service at any time. Family members are encouraged to stay with their child at the service for as long as it takes for both the family and the child to settle in to the service, especially on their first day. Work with educators at the service to plan strategies to assist you and your child in managing separation.

Spend unhurried time with your child at the service, then say goodbye calmly, confidently; reassuring your child that you will collect them later. Not saying goodbye can cause children to be anxious, and distrustful. Leave when you say you are going to leave. Continuing to stay 'one more minute' can increase you and your child's anxiety.

You are most welcome to visit and/or contact the service at any time throughout the day to check on your child's progress.

DEPARTURE

When you arrive back at the service to pick up your child please feel free to stay and discuss your child's day with an educator. Together with your child please say farewell to educators and sign your child out in the appropriate sign in/out register.

Please note, employees cannot release children into the care of any person who does not appear on the enrolment form under "**authorisation to collect**" authority. If the authorised person collecting the child is not recognised by educators, proof of identification such as a drivers licence will be requested to ensure they are the nominated person on the enrolment form.

Parents/guardians may notify the service of any variation in collection procedures. Optimally this should be done in advance.

In the event that a parent/guardian is unable to collect their child, they must give authority over the phone and the following information is to be obtained:

- Name and description of person (s)
- Time of collecting the child address to which the child will go
- Employees will check this information against the person collecting the child, license or ID documentation

Children are not to be released into the care of person (s) under eighteen years of age (unless they are the child's parent).

We do not have authority to hold a child at the service without a Court Order in instances where both parents are nominated and there is a request to do so. However, in this instance the Director is to be informed and every effort is made to contact the requesting parent.

Educators do not have authority to prevent a parent/guardian from taking the child from the service in the instance that they perceive the parent/guardian to be under the influence of an intoxicating substance, or in an unfit mental state. In this situation the parent/guardian is to be encouraged to contact another authorised person for collection. If they ignore this request and insist on taking the child, educators are to inform the police of the

circumstances, the name, descriptions of individuals involved and car registration numbers where appropriate. The educators should also follow the child protection policy.

Further, every effort is to be made to reassure the child and omit them from any controversial discussions. If the child remain at the service without notification and the service has been officially closed for thirty minutes and educators are unable to contact any authorised persons to collect the child, they must notify the relevant authorities.

The late shift educators are to follow the service closure procedure and sign bottom of the sign in/out sheet, that the service has been checked prior to leaving the building.

LATE COLLECTION FEE

It is important that you collect your child/ren prior to closing time. If you are delayed due to an emergency please contact the service so that educators can allay your child's concerns and organise their own commitments. Please note a delay due to normal peak hour traffic does not constitute to an emergency.

A late fee will be imposed if the child remains at the service beyond the closing time. The Board determines the late fee annually and a notice of current late fee will be displayed at the service.

A separate invoice will be issued for any late fees incurred. This amount **MUST** be paid in full within one week of receipt of invoice.



FEES

PAYMENT OF FEES

Prior to your child commencing at the service you will be required to pay:

- One weeks fee in advance
- Attendance fees for the first week

It is Cullunghutti policy that fees must be kept 1 week in advance.

All fees **MUST be up to date at the end of each financial year and prior to Christmas closure. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of your child/ren's position.**

Fees can be paid by:

- Centrepay
- Eftpos
- Internet banking

The Director will explain each procedure to you.

Employees are not permitted to accept cash at any time.

LATE PAYMENT OR FAILURE TO PAY FEES

The service is dependent on fees in order to provide service to your child and is unable to sustain bad debts.

Failure to pay fees by the due date will result in cancellation of your child's place. Action will be taken by Cullunghutti ELC to recover any outstanding bad debts using the credit provider service- Parent account information form.

If you are experiencing difficulty paying your fees, please discuss this with the Director as procedures are in place to assist parents/guardians who encounter exceptional hardship.

CREDIT PROVIDER SERVICE

When enrolling at Cullunghutti ELC families must read and sign the Parent Account Information form. This form allows Cullunghutti ELC to give default information to a credit reporting agency. **The signed parent account information form will be kept securely on file at the service and will only be enforced if the family leaves the service with monies owing.** Prior to this Cullunghutti ELC will follow the fees procedure and contact will be made with the family in attempt to recoup the monies owed before the credit reporting agency is involved.

For more information please refer to the Fee Policy or speak with the service Director.

WITHDRAWING OR CHANGING DAYS

Two weeks written notice is required for any cancellation or change to day/s that your child attends Cullunghutti ELC.

Children must attend the service during the two weeks' notice period to be eligible for Child Care Benefit (CCB) as per the Department of Education guidelines. If a child does not attend in this period full fees will be payable.

Cullunghutti ELC is committed to providing quality service and your constructive feedback is valued. When exiting the service you will be requested to complete an exit survey, the information will assist us to review, make improvements and plan for the future.

ABSENCE

If your child is absent due to illness or family holiday's, fees are still payable for that period. Make up days are not available in lieu of absences.

ABSENCES FROM THE SERVICE

It is essential that you inform the service about your child's absence and the reason for the absence. This can be done before, during and after your child's absence from the service.

The Department of Education and the Family Assistance Office (FAO) require the service to keep a record of all absences. CCB is paid for up to 42 absence days for each child per financial year across all approved long day care services, family day care and specialised out of School hours care services.

- Each child receives a new set of 42 absence days at the beginning of each financial year.

- Absence days can be taken for any reason (provided the day being claimed as an absence is a day on which care would have otherwise been provided).
- Absence days cannot be claimed prior to a child commencing care or after a child has left care.
- Public holidays will be counted as an absence day.

The service will keep families regularly informed about the number of absence days each of their children has from care. Families will also have access to their child's absence count on their *View Child Care Attendance* online statement available through the FAO website.

ADDITIONAL ABSENCE DAYS

Once all of the first 42 absence days have been used CCB will also be payable for absences taken for these reasons:

- Illness (with medical certificate)
- An outbreak of infectious disease, when the child is not immunised
- Any other absences due to sickness of the child, a parent or sibling, supported by medical certificates.
- A parent being on a rotating shift or rostered day off.
- A temporary closure of a school or pupil free day.
- Shared custody arrangements due to a court order, consent order or parenting order.
- Exceptional circumstances.

Absence days taken for the above reasons after the first 42 absence days have been used, are called 'additional absence days'. There is no limit on the number of these days for which CCB may be paid, as long as:

- They are taken for the reasons specified above, and
- Supporting documentation (where required) is provided, and
- They are days on which care would otherwise have been approved.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Fees are not payable for public holidays if your child normally attends that day.

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION

Each family is allocated a family information file. Please check this regularly for fee receipts, newsletters, and other important information.

CHILD CARE BENEFIT (CCB)

Child Care Benefit (CCB) is a subsidy provided by the federal Government. Parent/Guardians may apply for CCB through their local Family Assistance Office (FAO) Telephone 136150. This should be completed prior to your child starting at the service. CCB is based on family income. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to apply for this subsidy, to ensure they have a current assessment notice and to comply with FAO requirements.

Failure to lodge an application will result in full fees being charged.

After lodging the application for CCB with the FAO, you will be required to provide the service with your Customer Reference Number (CRN) number and your child's CRN number as soon as possible.

In order to receive CCB parent/guardians must **sign their child/children in and out in the attendance book each day**. This is also a requirement of the regulations. (See appendix 4)

24-HOUR LIMIT

CCB payments for parents, who are not working, training, studying or looking for work, are available for up to 24 hours per week. The FAO administers a 'work test' to determine if a family meets these requirements. Exemptions are available for further information contact the FAO on phone: 136150.

ATTENDING MORE THAN ONE SERVICE

When your child attends more than one service, you can nominate how you want your CCB eligible hours divided between the services. You must complete a 'Nomination of eligible hours' form for each service you attend. It is the family's responsibility to ensure that the total number of nominated hours across all services used does not exceed the CCB eligible hours or the full fee will be charged.

IMMUNISATION

CCB will not be available to you if your child is not up to date with immunisation requirements unless a valid exemption (as per the FAO guidelines) has been submitted.

JOBS, EDUCATION AND TRAINING/ CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE (JETCCA)

These are payments to help you with the cost of approved child care if you are on a eligible income support payment. It can help meet the cost of care by paying most of the 'GAP' fee- that is, the difference between the full fee you are charged and the CCB you receive- while you participate in work, study, or training activities. This assistance is available to you if you use approved child care to undertake work, study, training, or job search, to help you enter or re-enter the workforce.

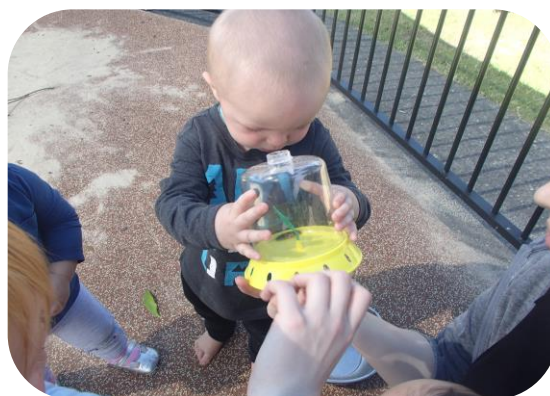
If you receive this fee assistance you still need to pay a contribution to your child care service for care you use. If you use more hours than you are entitled to, you will have to pay the full cost for these additional hours.

For more information refer to www.mychild.gov.au/sites/mychild/childcare-information/pages/jobs

GRANDPARENTS CHILD CARE BENEFIT (GCCB)

Grandparents Child Care Benefit (GCCB) covers the full cost of approved child care for up to 50 hours for each child per week if you or your partner are a grandparent with primary care of your grandchild and you receive an eligible income support payment.

Please see the Director if you have any questions.



CHILD CARE REBATE (CCR)

The Child Care Rebate (CCR) is a payment from the Australian Government that helps working families with the cost of education and care. The Government will provide families using approved education and care for work, training or study related reasons with 50% of their out-of-pocket education and care costs, up to the annual cap. Currently the annual cap is \$7,500 per child per year.

There are four ways to receive CCR:

1. Direct to the approved education and care service paid fortnightly
2. Direct to the families' bank account paid fortnightly
3. Quarterly payment to the families' bank account
4. Annual payment to the families' bank account

When families choose a payment option, this option will be applied for the entire financial year.

Please Note- for families who have CCR paid weekly, either directly to their bank account, or through the education and care service provider as a fee reduction and are receiving a higher than zero rate of CCB, the FAO will withhold 15% of the payment to ensure that they do not accumulate a debt or overpayment of CCB or CCR within a financial year. The balance to these funds withheld will be reconciled at the end of the financial year. Any outstanding amounts will be paid as a direct payment to your bank account. Families should inform the FAO about how they would like to receive their CCR payments.

CCR is **NOT income tested**, so families may be eligible to receive it even if they don't get the CCB from their fees.

For further information on the CCR can be found on the mychild site www.education.gov.au

FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

Feedback may take the form of compliments, suggestions, enquiries, concerns or complaints.

We accept that the investigation of complaints is important as it assists the organisation to continually assess and improve our services. We strive to resolve all customer concerns and complaints in a timely manner.

Complaints can be made about anything you are not happy with, including services you did not receive, services that were not helpful, safety issues, or about the behaviour of our staff or managers. Complaints do not have to be made in writing. They can be made in person, on the phone, by email, fax or in a letter.

In many circumstances concerns or complaints can be dealt with on an informal level through discussions at a service level with the Director and employees. Sometimes this may not be suitable and you may wish to approach one of the managers within Cullunghutti.

You can also lodge a complaint to the funding body or the NSW Ombudsman.

CONTACTS

- The Service Director- 44224800
- Cullunghutti Aboriginal Child and Family Centre- General Manager- 02 44286900
- Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate
Department of Education and Communities Ph – 1800 619 113
- NSW Ombudsman Ph – 1800 451 524

A full copy of Complaints Policy is in the service policy folder.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

INCIDENT/INJURY/TRAUMA/ILLNESS

Qualified primary contact educators are required to hold a first aid certificate.

Parent/guardians are notified of any incident/injury/trauma/illness occurring during the day. Incident/injury/trauma/illness records are maintained at the service. In order to ensure that the parents/guardians are aware of any such occurrence, you will be requested to sight and sign this record.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Policies and procedures are in place to deal with emergency situations.

If emergency medical treatment is required appropriate action is taken depending on the child's condition. Action will be taken to contact parents/guardians and inform them of their child's condition.

Asthma and anaphylaxis medication is available at the service to be administered to a child in the event of an emergency. (For more information please refer to the policy folder)

EVACUATION PROCEDURE

Regular evacuation and fire drill exercises are required by the Regulations. In order to ensure that all children and employees are familiar with the procedure, emergency evacuations are carried out for a full week, four times a year. Every endeavour is made to make the emergency drill exercise an enjoyable learning experience rather than a stressful experience for the children. Emergency evacuation plans and procedures are displayed throughout the service.

HYGIENE

Employees are required to comply with good hygiene and infection control procedures. Universal precautions are practiced.

SUN SAFE

Cullunghutti ELC has sun safe policies which are endorsed by the Cancer Council. We are a SUN SMART service and the NO HAT, PLAY IN THE SHADE rule applies. All children and employees must wear an appropriate hat for outside activities. Children and employees are required to wear clothing which provides sun protection such as tops and dresses with sleeves and knee length shorts or skirts for summer.

The service supplies SPF 50+ sunscreen, parents/guardians are requested to apply sunscreen upon arrival to the service and employees will reapply as required throughout the day. Cullunghutti ELC provide each child with a broad brimmed hat to wear while attending the service.

ASTHMA

If your child suffers from asthma an asthma policy is in place, contact the service Director for details. Educators hold a current First Aid Certificate and have training on emergency management of asthma.

MEDICATION

Medications must not be left in a child's bag.

Prescribed medications will only be administered to the child for whom it has been prescribed, from a container bearing a pharmacy label showing the child's name, and a current use by date, in accordance with any doctor's instructions relating to the administration.

Medication prescribed by a qualified naturopath is acceptable and must also be in a container with a label showing the child's name, and a current use by date, in accordance with the health professional's instructions relating to the administration.

Parent/guardians or Authorised persons must complete the medication authority form.

All medication is to be handed to an employee, who will check the medication details and counter sign the medication authority form prior to the parent/authorised person leaving the service.

Children with a medical condition which requires ongoing medication are required to complete a Long Term Medication Authority Form and have a letter from the doctor outlining the specific requirements.

HEAD LICE

The service will contact the family if they find live head lice insects and request that the child is collected and that effective treatment is commenced prior to the child returning to the service. (Please Note this exclusion is above the recommendations of NSW Health)

Exclusion is NOT necessary if effective treatment is commenced prior to the child returning to care (i.e the child does not need to be sent home immediately if dead lice are detected)

Please Note: an effective treatment is when a treatment is used and all lice are dead. If the child re-attends the service with live lice they will be excluded again until the live lice have been removed.

EXCLUSION DUE TO ILLNESS

No child will be accepted or remain in care if they are unwell, showing signs of an infectious or contagious illness or require special supervision due to the illness.

If a child becomes ill, the Director or other authorised employees will contact the parent/guardian to collect the child. It is difficult in a group situation to care for a sick child and give them the attention they need, therefore, it is important that you endeavour to collect your child as soon as possible.

If your child is exhibiting any of the symptoms below*, we request that you do not bring your child to the service. This is to ensure that all children are being cared for in safe and healthy environment.

*In order to protect your child and other children, the following information will assist you to decide when your child is too sick to attend the service.

KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME IF HE/SHE HAS *ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS*:

1. A high temperature or fever in the morning
2. Vomiting – within 24 hours prior to the child attending
3. Rashes – any skin irritation you cannot identify and has not been diagnosed by a doctor
4. Severe cold – sneezing or runny nose
5. Diarrhoea – watery/greenish bowel movements. Exclude for 24 hours after the last unusual bowel movement
6. Not been well – the child feels unwell without any obvious symptoms such as unusually tired, pale, irritable or lethargic
7. Had a Doctor diagnose an ear, eye or throat infection and has prescribed the child antibiotics. The child should be excluded until they have been on the medication for at least 24 hours.
8. Any infectious disease such as those listed on the attached document, Infectious Diseases.

IMPORTANT

The above list and following chart are recommended minimum periods of exclusion based on risk of infection, but a child or employee may need to stay home longer than the exclusion period to recover from an illness. Also, on occasion the Public Health Unit may advise to increase these minimum periods of exclusion if there is an outbreak at the service or within the community.

On occasions you must obtain a doctor's clearance to give to the service prior to the return of your child. Please see the following chart for when this is required

Children with a diagnosed contagious disease must remain at home and a medical clearance is required upon the child's return to the service. The service may also be required to contact the Public Health Unit and will follow their recommendations.

SAFE FOOD HANDLING AND STORAGE

Employees at the service have training about safe food handling and storage and adhere to these guidelines when preparing meals for children.

Further information about these guidelines can be found on www.foodstandards.gov.au or www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/.

For more information about our menus, policies and Safe Food Handling please speak to the Director.



SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

If your child has special dietary requirements, or has any allergies please inform the Director on enrolment. You will be required to complete the special diet requirement form and if required a medical management plan or anaphylaxis medical management plan.

If the service has children with severe allergies to products they may exclude these products from the service. For example a child may have a nut allergy that results in Anaphylaxis. The service would then be a nut free zone and Peanut Butter and other nut based products would not be provided or allowed. The Educators will advise you of any known allergies at the service.

CHILD PROTECTION

Cullunghutti ELC recognises that the primary role of service employees is as an advocate for children to ensure their physical and emotional wellbeing. The service will ensure the safety of children and ensure their protection from abuse while in care. In accordance with the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW), all Cullunghutti employees are mandatory reporters and are legally required to make a report directly to Community Services if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of significant harm.

A full copy of the Child Protection Policy is in the service policy folder.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACECQA- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority

CACFC- Cullunghutti Aboriginal Child and Family Centre

CELC- Cullunghutti Early Learning Centre

CCB- Child Care Benefit

CCR- Child Care Rebate

COAG- Council of Australian Government

CRN- Customer Reference Number

ECECS- Early Childhood Education and Care Services

FAO- Family Assistance Office

GCCB- Grandparents Child Care Benefit

NQF- National Quality Framework