



Smart Tots

51 Cambridge Drive
Alexandra Hills
Qld 4161



smart tots
childcare

Parent Handbook

Please Note: A hardcopy of our parent handbook is provided upon enrolment

Review Date: January 2018

Welcome To Smart Tots Childcare

We trust that your time spent at Smart Tots Childcare will be a happy and a fulfilling experience for your family. The purpose of this handbook is to give you an insight into the philosophy, goals and routines within the centre. It will also explain our policies to aid in the smooth transition into the centre.

The Centre Staff are always available to ask any questions or respond to any concerns you may have during the orientation process and beyond. Please feel free to approach the staff at any time. We encourage parent feedback and welcome any suggestions.

Our Centre is committed in providing quality care to children aged 6 weeks to 7 years. Smart Tots Childcare is a Long Day Care Centre operating 52 weeks per year, closed only for gazetted Public Holidays. The hours of operation are – 6:30am to 6:30pm Monday to Friday.

We offer a variety of services for all children:
Full Time Care, Part Time Care, and an approved Kindergarten program.



HOURS OF OPERATION

Mon: 6.30am - 6.30pm

Tue: 6.30am - 6.30pm

Wed: 6.30am - 6.30pm

Thu: 6.30am - 6.30pm

Fri: 6.30am - 6.30pm

Sat: Closed

Sun: Closed

Where every
child
and every
parent
has a voice

Smart Tots Contact Details










Email: info@smarttots.com.au

Web: smarttots.com.au

Tel: (07) 3824 1111

Statement of Philosophy

We Believe:

-  That care, dignity and respect be given to every child, in relation to their uniqueness and individuality; their learning styles; individual growth; their cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
-  To provide an enjoyable and challenging child centered learning environment where children are encouraged to learn through play so that they will enjoy learning throughout life.
-  To create and maintain a safe environment that enhances children's autonomy and self-worth; a safe place where they can achieve a deep sense of well-being.
-  Allowing each child time and space, as well as multiple opportunities to interact and experience a meaningful and secure environment, that encourages growth of new ideas and enhances the child's existing knowledge.
-  That families and Educators are valued and display respect for each other, working in collaborative partnership to provide the best learning experience's for each individual child in an enriched early learning environment; allowing for development to flourish.
-  That Early Childhood development focuses upon the social, emotional, physical, cognitive, language/literacy, numeracy and aesthetic development of the individual child.
-  Children will be given the opportunity to develop at a pace comfortable to themselves and their environment.
-  Our families, Educators, volunteers and the wider community play an essential role in providing equitable care in our Service.
-  Families and Educators input into Services programs, operational procedures and policy decisions are encouraged and respected.



Staff

Our Team

Our staff at Smart Tots are highly-trained, caring professionals, who are passionate about children. They have all worked with children in the past and are committed to providing high quality of care and a fantastic learning experience for every child.

All our educators have a Certificate III or Diploma in Children's services. We also have a bachelor qualified Kindergarten teacher. All our educators are trained in full first aid including Anaphylactic and Asthma, and hold a current blue card

Staff photos with their qualifications are displayed in the foyer and in each room. Staff are required to meet the standards of the centres policies and procedures. From time to time staff members are involved in further training to continue to provide professional care for your children. They all appreciate positive feedback from you and are always willing to discuss any matters concerning you and your child.

Childcare Float Staff

Our float staff share the additional hours required to relieve staff to go to lunch, tea breaks and have program planning.

Their hours are flexible and they also cover absences such as sick leave and annual leave. Other float staff members not listed may work from time to time when needed.

Students

Our centre welcomes students on work experience or placement. Students will work together with staff members to enhance their level of learning. Please feel free to make our students welcome at our centre.



Settling Into Our Centre

Adjusting To Change

The introduction into long day care can be difficult for children and parents. Children's welfare and happiness are the priority for our staff when welcoming new children to the centre and when assisting the family to settle into the centre environment. Our staff are experienced in dealing with the anxiety of separation and will do everything possible to help you and your child feel more comfortable and secure during this transition.

We recognise that every family's needs will vary greatly in the orientation process and we do our best to meet individual needs as best as possible.

Helpful Hints For Parents

You can help ease your child into care by taking a few steps:

1. Familiarise your child with the new environment by beginning with short stays. This will help familiarise them with the new surroundings, staff and other children.
2. Try to talk at home about child care. Mention the names of the staff and other children. Talk about the things your child will be able to do at child care that are fun and enjoyable.
3. Provide a favourite toy, blanket or comforter to support your child when they are separating from you or settling to sleep. This can help your child feel more secure.
4. When leaving your child it is best to make sure you say goodbye and then leave. If a child is upset, hesitating and not going after you have said your goodbyes only confuses them. Reassure your child that everything is all right and you will return, this can help them to settle.
5. At first some children protest strongly while others may take a day or two to realise that you are leaving them and begin to protest after several days. Children soon learn that you do return and in the mean time they are well cared for.
6. Families are encouraged to contact the centre during the day if they wish to do so.



Daily Routines

Each room at Smart Tots Childcare has flexible routines which cover approximate times for activities such as meals, sleep and playtime. Routines will vary from time to time according to the needs of the group and individual children. For further information about your child's routines please see the team in your child's room.

Program Planning

The Team Leader in each room in association with the other Educators, is responsible for planning an early childhood program based on the Early Years Learning Framework, which reflects child centred anti-bias and multi-cultural experiences; is developmentally appropriate and which emerges from the children's observed interests and family feedback.

At times this will involve taking photos of your child. A wide variety of developmental and interest areas are provided for within the indoor and outdoor play environments. These include cognitive, physical (gross and fine motor), social and emotional development, language and literature, art and craft, music and movement, maths, science and construction.



Signing In and Out

Each day parents are required to sign their child **in** and complete the sign-in form, which requires details of the drop off time. The child must also be signed **out**, giving the actual time collected, and staff must also be informed of the child's departure. These records are used for attendance checks and in case of an emergency. It is a legal requirement that they are completed correctly.

Parent Participation

We encourage all families to join in and contribute to all aspects of the Centre. Parents are welcome to spend time at the centre and share any skills or interest they may have with the children.



What To Bring

Clothing

Please provide a complete change of clothes for your child on each day of attendance. More than one change may be required (including shoes and socks) for children currently toilet training. Children's clothes that become soiled will be returned home in a plastic bag. These clothes will be available in the soiled items facility in each room. Remember to name your child's clothing and that it is important that your child is comfortable and their clothing is weather appropriate. Also remember your children are very busy during their day and tend to get very messy and dirty, please consider this when dressing your child.

Seasonal Changes

All children are required to wear a broad brim hat outdoors. Caps do not provide enough sun protection and are not recommended (Please refer to your Services Sun Protection Policy). Foot wear including thongs and crocs are not suitable for climbing, and are therefore not advisable to be worn. During the winter months, warm coats and beanies may be appropriate as the children still spend time outside. Gumboots can also be worn for outside play during the cooler months.

Drink Bottles

Children need to bring their own named drink bottle to be used at the centre. This is particularly important during the warmer months to ensure children are kept well hydrated whilst outdoors.

Bottles & Dummies

For hygiene purposes, all bottles and dummies must be clearly named. Also remember to provide a named container to store your child's dummy while it is not being used.

Medications & Creams

All medications and creams must be supplied with a pharmacist's label



Food & Meals

Our Policy

At Smart Tots we recognise that nutrition plays a vital role in early childhood development and growth. As a result we place emphasis on healthy eating for children. Our “Healthy Food Policy” is part of our Nutrition Policy. This means that all food provided by Smart Tots Childcare will be wholesome and nourishing.

Meal Times

Meal times are excellent learning opportunities that are used to teach skills like socializing, sharing and hygiene. Children are given support with serving food and feeding themselves and are also taught to exercise their independence at meal times. We never force children to eat, rather they choose to eat when they are hungry and ready, with child-sized portions that they are comfortable with.

Special Needs

If your child has a special diet or develops an allergy after you have enrolled please remember to tell staff.

Fresh Food

Meals are prepared daily, on-site by our centre cook. We follow recommended dietary guidelines to ensure that meals include a variety of foods from the recommended food groups.

Menu

The menu is displayed in your child's room and in the foyer. If you have any questions or queries don't hesitate to ask the cook or another member of staff.

Morning Tea, Lunch and Afternoon Tea is provided.



Fee Payments

Our Policy

At Smart Tots Childcare, all fees are payable fortnightly in advance. Failure to do so could result in losing your child's position of care. The preferred methods of payment is DebitPro, our Direct Debit facility. Final weekly banking is completed by 10am on Friday mornings and all payments need to be finalised before this time to ensure the accuracy of your weekly account statement.

Fees are payable to **ALL** days booked, including any absences due to illness, holidays or public holidays. (25% fees are applied for all holidays throughout the year providing fees are paid up to date and the discount is applied for via the parent portal).

Schedule Of Fees

See the current fee schedule on the website.



Late Collection Fee

A fee of \$10.00 for the first 5 minutes and \$1.00 per minute will apply after 6:30pm. If you are going to be late for any reason please contact the staff at the centre. Two week's notice is required when your child leaves the centre. All accounts must be finalised by this time to avoid any legal action.

Further information in relation to Fees can be found in our Fee Policy.

Child Care Benefit

Child Care Benefit are available for those who are eligible. To qualify for this benefit, families must lodge an application form with the Family Assistance Office. The centre will not be held responsible for any information that has been given to the FAO by the customer in regards to CCB details*

*Please Note**

IT IS THE PARENTS RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT THEIR CHILD CARE BENEFIT REMAINS CURRENT. IF YOUR NOTICE EXPIRES, FULL FEES MUST BE PAID UNTIL A NEW ASSESSMENT IS ISSUED TO THE SERVICE.



Other Policies

Collection Of Children

No child will be released into the care of any person not known to staff members. If staff do not know the person by appearance, the person collecting the child will be asked to produce photo identification to prove that they are authorised to collect the child on the enrolment form.

Absences

Parents are requested to notify the centre as soon as possible if their child is unable to attend care. Notice is also required in the incidence of infectious or contagious diseases in the family. Families receiving Child Care Benefit are entitled to 42 Allowable Absences in a financial year. Once you have used all 42 absences, Child Care Benefit will no longer apply on the days your child is absent from the centre and you will be responsible for paying the full fee rate. Your absent days will be tallied on your weekly account.

Sun Protection

It is important that we all protect ourselves from the harsh sun. Young children with sensitive skin are at particular risk of sunburn and skin damage. We encourage all families to adopt a sun smart practice whenever possible. To enhance this practice we recommend that Parents put sunscreen on their children prior to them arriving at the centre during the summer months to ensure that the 20 minute time frame recommended by the anti-cancer council is adhered to before any outdoor play. The centre also provides sunscreen. If your child has sensitive skin to sunscreen products you will need to provide your own sunscreen. Staff will reapply sunscreen during the course of the day prior to any outdoor activities.

We ask that you provide a wide brimmed hat for your child, clearly named and to be left at the centre. **HATS MUST BE WORN AT ALL TIMES WHILE OUTDOORS** as part of our Sun Protection Policy. Children without a sun hat will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun. Children are encouraged to wear sun safe clothing that does not expose too much skin to the sun. Such items as crop or singlet tops do not provide enough sun protection and are not recommended.



Medical & Illness

Illness Policy

To minimise the spread of infection in our centre, children suffering from certain infections are excluded from attending. If your child becomes ill whilst in care the guardians will be contacted and asked to collect the child as soon as possible. Parents are encouraged to seek medical advice and contact the centre to inform them of the outcome. Children with a suspected infectious condition must produce a medical certificate before the child returns to care. It is the centres responsibility to inform parents and staff of potential risks or outbreaks of infectious disease. Children will be excluded if they have:

- higher temperature in excess of 38 degrees
- sticky eyes/discharge from the eyes/blood shot eyes
- diarrhoea or vomiting
- contracted an infectious disease of skin infection
- an unidentified rash
- thick, yellow/green discharge from the nose
- clear discharge from a constantly running nose
- or if in the opinion of the staff they are unfit to cope with a stay at the centre

Parents will be expected to inform staff of their child's condition at all times.

Please see the updated illness policy available as a separate download on the website. This new policy includes updated information related to COVID-19.

Immunisation

Our centre accepts both immunised and non-immunised children. Although, in accordance with our "Exclusion Policy" any child that has not been fully immunised may be excluded from care, in the event of a breakout of a vaccine preventable disease. It is the responsibility of parents to forward to the centre updated immunisation details as they are scheduled.

Medication

If your child requires medication whilst in care, a medication form must be filled in by a parent. **NO** medication will be administered to a child unless prescribed by a medical practitioner. If the medication is an over the counter drug, it must be accompanied with a letter/label from the Pharmacist/Medical Practitioner stating the child's name, the dose required and the period for which the dose has to be administered. All medication brought into the centre must be handed to staff who will then place it into a lockable container out of the reach of children. Under no circumstances is any type of medication to be left in a child's bag.



Accident & Injury

Safe Environment

Our centre is committed to providing an environment that promotes safety and allows for maximum supervision, thus eliminating any accidents to children and staff. In the case of an accident involving your child during care, staff will immediately administer First Aid. Any minor accidents or injury that occurs to a child during care will be documented on a Medical Wellbeing Report. Staff will inform parents of any accident/injury by phone or at collection time and parents will be required to sign the form to acknowledge that they have been informed of an accident or injury to their child. In the event of a child's injury involving a bump to the head, the parent will be contacted by phone to allow the parent to assess the situation in consultation with staff. In the case of a serious accident, staff will attempt to contact the parents immediately. If emergency treatment is required an ambulance will be called without delay. It is therefore important that the contact number you provide on the enrolment form is correct and updated when necessary.

Emergency Evacuation

Emergency Evacuation plans and procedures are displayed throughout the centre. Regular fire drills are conducted by staff to familiarise the children with evacuation procedures. Each child will be accounted for by means of the daily attendance sheet and evacuated to a safe place. It is therefore extremely important that the sign in sheet is completed correctly each day.



Behaviour Management

Rest Time

Rest time is an essential part of a child's day. Children are encouraged to sleep or rest during their time in care. The times may vary according to the age and needs of the children. Children who don't sleep will be encouraged to read quietly and will then be allowed to participate in quiet play.

Behaviour Guidance

Our centre implements a Behaviour Guidance and Appropriate Language Policy, which extends across the whole centre giving consistency of expectation in all rooms. This policy encourages children to respect themselves and others. Therefore staff will emphasise positive behaviour management and incorporate positive reinforcement techniques to guide the children. The centre's aim is to foster behaviour based on control of self and an understanding and appreciation of other people's needs, rights and feelings. This can only be achieved if the children are aware of the limits within the centre and by being consistently reinforced by each staff member.

Parent Grievances

The relationship between staff and families is of great importance. In order to enhance and preserve this relationship any grievances/complaints, concerns or differences of opinion need to be dealt with. This will allow for quick resolution and minimal disruption to the day to day running of the centre. Any grievances or complaints should initially be discussed with the person involved if this is appropriate or possible, or with the Director. If necessary our Operations Manager or alternatively the Office for Early Childhood Education and Care Department of Education, Training and Employment.



General Information

Notice Boards / Newsletters

We have a number of notice/information boards in our centre. A variety of information will be displayed in regards to upcoming activities and general parent information. Such information may also be made available in various languages. Centre events, updates, general information etc will also be sent to you via email or the parent portal as regular communications. So please take the time to read any relevant information.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special times for children and the centre enjoys sharing the occasion. You may like to provide a cake on your child's birthday to share with the other children in the group. However the cake must be bought from a shop with all the ingredients listed, an expiry date and must not contain nuts or cream. To prevent the spread of germs when the child blows out the candles, parents should either:

- a) provide a separate cupcake (with a candle if they wish) for the birthday child, or;
- b) a large cake that can be cut and shared.

We usually celebrate birthdays at Morning or Afternoon Tea and parents are welcome to come along and share in the fun.

Toys

Children may bring comfort toys to the centre particularly for sleep or rest time. The centre however is not responsible for the loss or damage incurred to any toys. Please do not send expensive or loved items that will be missed, as it is sometimes difficult to keep track of toys and loss may cause distress to the child. Please ensure these toys are clearly named.

Policy Manual

The Service Policies are reviewed each month by our staff and the families. Your input and feedback into our Policies is valued. The Policies Manual is available for you at any time and is located in the foyer. If you have any queries please talk to the Director.

