



WELCOME TO Y WHITTLESEA

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS



FAMILY HANDBOOK

The Y Whittlesea acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land, the Wurundjeri-Willam people on whose land we build our community today.



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OUR PHILOSOPHY

Y Whittlesea strive to provide the highest quality programs at the heart and soul of our community.

We pride ourselves on our partnerships, ability to listen to our stakeholders and continuously work towards a can do attitude to provide the best opportunities, programs and life skills to our children.

We aim to provide opportunities for all families to share their individual cultural needs and beliefs within the program. Our Education and Care programs are guided by the National Quality Framework.

We believe that each child is unique, capable and curious, with inbuilt strengths and tremendous potential to be a master of their own learning. Our programs provide children with countless hours of fun. Children's senses are inspired as they explore and engage in motivating surroundings.

We believe children learn through play. We provide children with opportunities to discover, learn and investigate through times of uninterrupted play using natural and open ended materials. Children's play involves taking calculated risks which can be seen as part of children's natural development and this is an important life skill.

We believe in providing countless opportunities for children to demonstrate independence skills. We value its importance and see it as an opportunity for children to gain confidence, build self-esteem and accept responsibility.

We recognise and value the importance and uniqueness of each of our educators. We invest in every educator through our commitment in offering quality training programs, current resources and mentoring and guidance. As a dedicated team, we will work in collaborative ways to share our knowledge and expertise. Our goal is to function as an extended family, providing children with security, comfort and familiar faces.

Overall, we work together to create an environment where children, educators, families and the community have ownership and a sense of belonging.



WHY YOU WILL LOVE THE Y

Y Whittlesea strive to provide the highest quality programs at the heart and soul of our community. We believe that each child is unique, capable and curious, with inbuilt strengths and tremendous potential to be a master of their own learning.



Learning environments

Indoor and outdoor environments to stimulate imagination, learning and play.



Communication

Stay connected and informed on your child's learning via StoryPark and regular email updates



Qualified Educators

Highly experienced and qualified educators from nursery to kindergarten.



Healthy Meals & Snacks

Nutritious meals and snacks provided daily by our in house chef



Education & Care

Guiding children to learn, develop and grow in our programs and services



Incursions & Excursions

Provide children with engaging experiences both on site and in the community



NDIS Registered

Registered National Disability Insurance Scheme provider making our programs inclusive for all



Sustainability

Teaching children about their responsibility to the environment and the world around them.



Resilience Project

Implementing practical wellbeing strategies to build resilience in children.



ACF Accredited

PAccredited with the Australian Childhood Foundation to ensure all children are safe and feel safe.

OUR BOARD COMMITMENT

The Board of Directors of Y Whittlesea is committed to ensuring that all children and young people can feel safe and be safe at the Y, in their families and in their communities. We commit to all children and young people that they will be safe, happy and empowered within our services and programs.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse, with all allegations and safety concerns treated seriously and consistently with our robust processes. We have a legal and moral obligation to contact authorities when we are worried about a child or young person's safety, which we follow rigorously.

Our commitment to keeping children and young people safe is done by ensuring the Board, our staff and volunteers are provided with high levels of training and support to help prevent child abuse and identify risks early, therefore removing and reducing them. This is followed up with auditing and surveys to ensure our standards and commitment are improved and maintained.

We commit to keeping children and young people safe by giving them the tools and confidence to speak up and seek support when needed. Safeguarding children and young people is embedded in our culture and remains at the forefront of everything we do.



*Find out more about
the Y as a
Safeguarding
Children and Young
people organisation*



CODE OF ETHICS

The Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics provides a framework for reflection regarding ethical responsibilities for early childhood professionals. YMCA Whittlesea Educators utilise these guidelines to monitor and set the standard for professional behaviour. A copy of the code of ethics can be accessed at the service or on the Early Childhood Australia website.

For more information visit www.unicef.org

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

The Y supports the Australian Government's position that in our society every child and young person deserves the right to thrive, learn and grow, be respected and valued and enabled to become an effective adult member of the community.

The Y supports the concept that a community in which the safety, stability, health, development and learning of every child and young person is protected and promoted throughout childhood.



At Y Whittlesea we:

- Recognise that all children and young people have the right to develop and reach their potential in environments that are caring, nurturing and safe.
- Consider any form of child / young person abuse, inclusive of emotional, physical, sexual abuse or neglect, as intolerable under any circumstances.
- Acknowledge our legal, moral and Mission-driven responsibility to protect children and young people from harm and to ensure that any incidents of suspected child abuse are promptly and appropriately dealt with.
- Understand our legal and moral responsibility for ensuring that appropriate policies and practices are in place to minimise, if not eliminate, the risk of abuse of children and young people who participate in our services and programs.

*We Believe in the
power of inspired
young people*



INTRODUCTION

We are delighted that you have chosen the Y for your child's education and care.

This family handbook serves to provide families with an overview of how our centres are run, guidelines, policies and procedures for each family to be aware of before your child begins. Please ensure you read and understand all sections of this handbook.

If you require further clarification on any of the information contained in this handbook or our policies, or if you require information in languages other than English, please contact your Centre Manager.

At the Y Early Learning Services we believe today is about much more than just childcare and education. It's about enriching children so they can develop to their full potential, preparing them for a future where they confidently step forward into every stage of their young lives, with bright and inquisitive minds.

Since 1893 the Y (formally known as the YMCA) has been committed to instilling positive and healthy attitudes, providing children and young people with a foundation for a healthy and happy life.

Children who do well in their early years, continue to do well throughout their schooling. The Y Whittlesea's Children's Programs exist to help children get off to a great start and develop an enthusiasm for learning.

We are committed to providing inspiring programs for children based on the four pillars of safety, a local and responsive service approach, embracing holistic learning practices and keeping children healthy and active. We strive to instill healthy attitudes about things like nutrition and daily activity.

The Y Whittlesea's Early Learning Programs include long daycare, creche and 3 and 4 year old kindergarten.

COMMITMENT TO PARTNERSHIPS

We invite all families to be active in making decisions about your child's wellbeing, interests and needs. The relationships between families and educators provides important information for us to form the Education and Care program that focuses on your child's strengths and provides a foundation for positive learning outcomes for all children.

*You'll love
the way
they grow*

OUR EARLY LEARNING CENTRES



Mill Park Heights
Child Care Centre & Kindergarten

Mill Park Heights Child Care Centre offers the following services:
Long day care, 3 year old funded kindergarten and 4 year old kindergarten.

Contact details:
31 Morang Drive, Mill Park 3082
p: 9436 7063 **e:** mphccc@ymca.org.au



Galada
Kindergarten

Galada Kindergarten offers 3 and 4 year old sessional kindergarten programs. Funded 3 year old program.

Contact details:
10A Forum Way, Epping North 3076
p: 8457 0840 **e:** whittlesea.kinder@ymca.org.au



Kirrip
Kindergarten

Kirrip Kindergarten offers 3 and 4 year old sessional kindergarten programs. Funded 3 year old program.

Contact details:
135 De Rossi Boulevard, Wollert.
p: 8408 6760 **e:** kirrip.kinder@YWhittlesea.org.au



Eucalyptus
Parade
Kindergarten

Eucalyptus Parade Kindergarten offers 3 and 4 year old sessional kindergarten programs. Funded 3 year old program.

Contact details:
138 Eucalyptus Parade, Donnybrook
p: 8408 6760 **e:** Eucalyptus.kinder@ywhittlesea.org.au



Orchard Road
Community and Early Learning Centre

Orchard Road Community & Early Learning Centre offers the following services: Long day care and sessional 3 and 4 year old kindergarten. 3 year old funded program.

Contact details:
Corner of Orchard Road & Patience Avenue, Doreen 3754
p: 1300 153 332 **e:** orchardroad@ymca.org.au



Diggers Rest
Early Learning Centre

Diggers Rest Early Learning Centre offers the following services: Long day care, 3 year old funded kindergarten and 4 year old kindergarten.

Contact details:
10 Farm Road Diggers Rest 3427
p: 9740 0394 **e:** diggersrest@ymca.org.au

OUR OBJECTIVES

Y Whittlesea aims to work collaboratively with local communities, families and children to provide inclusive, accessible and flexible children's programs. Children and their families will have a place of belonging and feel connected to, and supported by, their centre community.

As we view the child as a competent and involved learner; our programs aim is to:

- inspire children to learn and to interact with others, showing care, empathy and respect;
- promote a sense of belonging to the community and encourage social responsibility and care for the environment;
- foster partnerships with families that embrace diversity and inclusion, to support each child's participation;
- support educators to work collaboratively with their peers and other professionals to provide rich learning environments.

BENEFITS OF PLAY

Young children's play allows them to explore, identify, negotiate, take risks and create meaning. The intellectual and cognitive benefits of playing have been well documented. Children who engage in quality play experiences are more likely to have well-developed memory skills, language development, and are able to regulate their behaviour, leading to enhanced school adjustment and academic learning (Bodrova & Leong, 2005).

Play provides active exploration that assists in building and strengthening brain pathways.

7 EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS OF ATTENDING OUR EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM

1

Providing a meaningful context for children to learn concepts and skills

2

Making learning fun and enjoyable

3

Allowing children to extend what they are learning

4

Encouraging children to explore and discover together and on their own

5

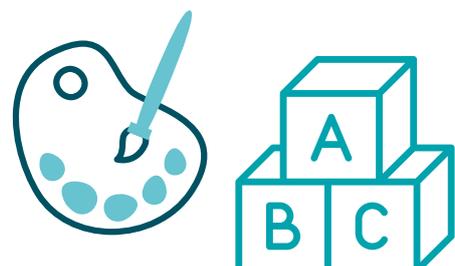
Encouraging children to experiment and take risks

6

Providing opportunities for collaborative learning with adults and peers

7

Allowing for the practice of acquired and new skills.



We believe that each child is unique, capable and curious, with inbuilt strengths and tremendous potential to be a master of their own learning



ENROLMENTS

Long day care

including 3 & 4 year old long daycare kindergarten

Enrolments for long daycare including 3 & 4 year old long daycare kindergarten can be made by contacting the centre directly. Following a centre tour the Director will provide further instructions on how to enrol via Xplor.

Early Learning Centres accept enrolments for children 0-6 years of age.

Where limited vacancies are available the centre will comply with Department of Education, Employment and Work Place Relations - Priority of Access Guidelines.



The Y Whittlesea uses the Kinder Tick because we're an approved provider of a Victorian Government funded kindergarten program. That means our service delivers a play-based learning program, led by a qualified early childhood teacher.

The Kinder Tick shows we meet criteria in the funding guidelines set out by the Victorian Government – which means you can have confidence that your child's learning and development will be supported by qualified early childhood teachers and educators through a responsive, evidence-based learning program.

Sessional Kindergarten

Four year old kindergarten eligibility

In the year prior to attending school, children can access a year of funded kindergarten.

To be eligible, children must be 4 years of age by April 30 in their Kindergarten year.

Children are usually eligible for only one year of a funded Kindergarten program. Updated information regarding a second year of funded 4 year old kindergarten can be located at www.education.vic.gov.au

Following notification from Central Enrolments, the kindergarten will contact families to process group preferences via Xplor.

Funded three year old kindergarten eligibility

Children are eligible to apply for the three year old program provided they turn three years of age before 30th April in the year they will attend kindergarten.

Central Enrolment

The Central Enrolment system is managed by the City of Whittlesea for all 3 & 4 year old sessional kindergarten enrolments.

Information about this process is available from the City of Whittlesea on their website (scan the code below) or by contacting them on 03 9217 2170



OPERATING HOURS

All Early Learning Services operate 50 weeks per year, closing for all gazetted public holidays and approximately for 2 weeks over the December - January period (this will be determined by community need). Fees are not charged over this break period.

3 and 4 year old sessional kindergarten programs will provide a minimum 15 hour program, per child per week. Programs will be offered in line with the school term and closed for all gazetted public holidays. Specific timetables are available at the centre.

CENTRE CLOSURES

In order for educators to keep up to date with relevant and current early childhood practice it will be necessary for them to attend professional development. Where possible interruptions to program delivery will be minimised, however, there may be occasions that require the service to close. We will provide written information regarding any days the centre will be closed.

ORIENTATION

We acknowledge that the transition from home into child care or kindergarten can be unsettling for some children and families. We will work in consultation with you to ensure that orientation supports your children's needs and wellbeing. We recommend that you discuss this process with the educators.

We recognise that:

- Some children will settle well, while other children find it more challenging.
- It is natural for children to feel uneasy about separation.
- Families may wish to stay with their child for the first few sessions, if they prefer.

We will work with you to support a smooth transition for both you and your child.

XPLOR



Xplor is our parent app providing a range of features and benefits at your fingertips:

- Easy sign in and sign out with QR codes
- Child Care Subsidy (CCS) management
- Access financial statements on your device
- Emergency contact and guardian management



Download the app today!



ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF CHILDREN

Arrival

Arrival at the program is an important transition for children. Help them adjust to the differences between home and the program by talking about the day ahead of time. Use the transition time to help Educators meet your child's needs by telling them anything useful or interesting about the previous night/day and by including educators and your children in these conversations.

Departure

Children must be collected by someone who has lawful authority to do so and is nominated on the child's enrolment form. If a different person is collecting your child, authorisation must be provided to the Educator or Centre Manager before the child is released into their care. This person must produce current photo identification. This authorisation must be provided in writing.

Attendance record

The attendance record is a requirement under the Education and Care Services National Regulations. Each child is required to be signed in and out of the early childhood service.

Other people collecting your child

Educators are responsible for the safety of each child, so it is essential to notify staff verbally and via email if someone else will be collecting your child.

These people must also be recorded on the child's enrolment form.

Please be advised:

- No child will be allowed to leave any early learning centre with someone unless staff have been notified of the arrangement
- Educators must be notified in advance of the identity of the person collecting the child
- Any person unknown to staff will be required to show some form of photo identification
- An authorised person collecting your child must be over 18 years of age

It is important to remember that if someone else is collecting your child that you explain the drop off/ pick up requirements to the person that you have authorised.

Late collection

Late collection can be stressful for children and Educators. We ask for your cooperation in ensuring that children are collected on time.

If you are unable to collect your child by the end of the session/closing time please arrange for someone else to do so and notify the service as soon as practicable (refer to the section above 'Departure', should you nominate another person to collect your child). Two Early Childhood Educators must always be with the child until collected.

If the child is not collected by the end of the session/closing time, a late fee may be charged.

The cost of the late fee is \$5.00 per minute, payable from the end of the session/closing time until the child is collected. This fee will be added to your account at a full fee rate.

Failure to collect a child/children

If a child has not been collected at the end of session/closing time, and the parent/guardian has not made contact with the service within the first 10 minutes after session/closing time, Educators will attempt to contact the child's parents/guardians.

If unsuccessful the emergency contacts will be contacted and asked to collect the child. All reasonable attempts will be made to advise the parent/guardian that an emergency contact person has collected the child.

In the event that a parent/guardian or emergency contact has not responded to the service's attempts to arrange for collection of the child, Victoria Police will be contacted for further instruction.

Court orders

On occasions, a child attending the program may be the subject of a Family Court or other Court Order. The order may prescribe who is responsible for the child and who may or may not collect the child from the early childhood service. If a child has a specific custody and access arrangement in place, please inform the Early Childhood Educators. A copy of the current Court Order is required to be given to the service. The copy is attached to the enrolment form and will remain on file.

If the Court Order does not specify any formal contact arrangements, Educators cannot legally deny a parent access to their child. It is the parents/guardians responsibility to provide information/documentation regarding changes to Court Orders.

Child safety

When arriving and departing please ensure the doors are completely closed behind you and never let other children exit the program unless accompanied by an adult/guardian.

ADULT CODE OF CONDUCT

Any person entering a Y Whittlesea Early Learning Centre is required to conduct themselves in a manner that does not pose a risk to the safety of children and/or educators of the service. If educators believe that the person poses a risk to children or others, the person will be required to leave the premises.

Please see our Parent Code of Conduct.

FEES

Payments

Fee payments will be processed via "Direct Debit." Parents /guardians will have the choice to make payments via MasterCard, Visa or Pay Now in Xplor (additional fees apply). The completion of the Direct Debit form is required as part of the enrolment process. Exceptional circumstances will be considered and should be discussed with the program co-ordinator/director on an individual basis.

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY (CCS)

The Child Care Subsidy (CCS) makes early learning more affordable for families (This doesn't include Sessional Kindergarten)

Child Care Subsidy Eligibility

Some basic requirements must be satisfied for an individual to be eligible to receive Ccs for a child. These include:

- the age of the child (must be 13 or under and not attending secondary school)
- the child meeting immunisation requirements
- the individual, or their partner, meets the residency requirements.

In addition, to be eligible for Child Care Subsidy the individual must be liable to pay for care provided, the care must be delivered in Australia by an approved child care provider, and not be part of a compulsory education program.

How does it work?

There are three factors that will determine a family's level of Child Care Subsidy. These are:

- **Combined Family Income**
- **'Work- related Activity Test** – the activity level of both parents including paid work, volunteering, study.
- **Service Type** – type of child care service

Hours of fortnightly activity	Hours of subsidised care
Between 8 - 16	36 hours
16 to 48	72 hours
More than 48	100 hours

The Child Care Subsidy will be paid directly to providers to be passed on to families as a fee reduction. Families will make a co-contribution to their child care fees and pay to the provider the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount.

Kindergarten fee subsidy (3 & 4 year old sessional kindergarten)

The kindergarten fee subsidy allows children to access up to 15 hours of kindergarten delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher in the year before school for free or at low cost.

Your child is eligible in any of the following circumstances:

- if your child identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- if your child is identified on their birth certificate as being a multiple birth child (triplets or more).
- or if your child holds or has a parent or guardian who holds, one of the following:
 - > a Commonwealth Health Care Card
 - > a Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card
 - > a Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or White Card
 - > Refugee or Asylum Seeker visa (200-204 or 866)
 - > an ImmiCard

The Centre Manager must be provided with a current copy of any of these cards for the fee reduction to be allocated.

FLEXIBLE HOURS

Available at our long daycare services

We know that there isn't a one size fits all option for our families when it comes to early learning operating hours. That is why we are giving families the freedom to choose the hours that best suit your needs.

More than just sessional care, you can now choose from our 9 hour, 10 hour and full day session to make the most of your child care subsidy.



Benefits of flexibility

This is designed to reduce out of pocket costs and increase access to subsidised hours. The new flexible model is part of our commitment to providing greater access to quality early learning and care.



Choose your drop off/ pick up time



No late fees or charges

How to take up flexible hours

Depending on what service you attend your options will differ. Contact your Center Manager to discuss which option will best suit you to maximise your CCS.

*Please excuse the mess....
the children are making memories*



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Our programs support children's learning within indoor and outdoor environments through imaginative, messy and risky play that incorporates music, art and STEM.

We maintain a wide range of fun, stimulating and developmentally appropriate learning experiences that reflect real world and home settings, and encourages a sense of belonging and community amongst the children and their families.

National quality standards

The aim of the National Quality Standards (NQS) is to raise quality and drive continuous improvement in all education and care services.

The seven quality areas in the National Quality Standards are:

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities and
7. Leadership and service management

The NQS are linked to national learning frameworks which recognise that children learn from birth and outline practices to support and promote children's learning.

Relationships with children

Educators support children to become active contributors to their world. Children's thoughts and feelings are recognised and acknowledged to support a strong sense of wellbeing. Relationships with children are based on respect, trust, and care.

Inclusion Family Support Officer

Some children enrolled may require additional support to maximise their participation and access to the program. The nominated supervisor of the program will consult with families, and where a child fulfils the criteria, will submit an application to the appropriate inclusion support programme for additional support.



Y Care



Y Scientist



Y Performer



Y Swimmer



Y Gardner



Y Writer



Y Ranger



Y Rock Star



Y Support



Y Chef



Y Linguist



Y Community



Y Big School



Y Athlete



Y Tradie

Personal belongings

Children's interests help provide the foundation for the educational program. We acknowledge that sometimes, children like to bring favourite toys or special things of interest from home. Children will be encouraged to respect and share these items with the other children.

Educators will take every reasonable precaution to ensure that these items are not lost or broken, however this cannot be guaranteed.

Please ensure all items brought into early learning sites are clearly labeled with the child's name.

Photographs/DVDs

Y Whittlesea acknowledges that the use of digital cameras and photos are an important part of documenting children's learning and collaborating with parents.

On enrolment, parents will be asked for their consent for photographs to be taken of their child. If consent is not given, all educators will be advised of this.

To view our Photography Policy please [click here](#).

Excursions and special events

To enrich and complement the Educational Program, from time to time excursions and special events may be arranged. They provide an opportunity for children to experience and explore their world and the diverse elements of the environment. Parent participation and involvement is always encouraged and welcomed.

Risk assessments are conducted to determine the appropriate safety measures required for the event; this includes child staff ratios, mode of transport, potential hazards, medications etc. These assessments are made available for consideration prior to the event.



Celebrations

Children are given the opportunity to become connected with, and to contribute to, their world by exploring the diversity of culture, heritage, community and tradition. In order for this to occur please let the early childhood service know if there are any celebrations or festivals that your family participates in. Educators will endeavour to include these in the educational program.

STAFFING

Employment of educators

Y Whittlesea employs Educators in line with the legislative requirements. We will consider the qualifications, skills, knowledge and personal attributes of each candidate in order to build a positive culture and professional learning community. We are an equal opportunity employer and value the diverse, cultural and linguistic backgrounds of our educators.

Our Educators are committed to upholding and researching current practice and use a variety of methods/techniques to facilitate children's learning. They understand that each child has the capacity to be a confident and capable learner when supported to explore and discover the world around them. A variety of child initiated and intentional teaching methods are utilised to support children.

As educators we understand the importance of healthy living, providing children with opportunities to experience a range of healthy foods and to learn about food choices from both educators and their peers.

At Y Whittlesea we are committed to our educators. We understand that we play a key role in the learning continuum for the education and care sector. We ensure the professional development experiences offered to our educators support current practices and are encouraged to go on to further education and qualifications.





Children who are allowed time to think for themselves, learn to have faith in their own problem solving abilities

HEALTH & WELLBEING

Medication

If your child requires medication throughout the day, please ensure this is handed to a staff member on arrival (and not left in the child's bag).

Medication will be administered if:

- it has been prescribed for the child by a registered medical practitioner.
- it is in the original bottle or packaging with the original label that bears the name of the child to whom the medication is to be administered.
- it is in date (not passed expiry/best before date).
- a parent/guardian (as listed on the child's enrolment form) has provided written permission for staff to administer the medication
- it has been entered in the medication register or detailed in the child's medical management plan.
- the first dose has been administered by the parent/guardian at least 24 hours prior to attendance at the service in case of an adverse reaction
- two Early Childhood Educators are present to administer and supervise the correct dosage of medication.

Non Prescribed Medication- such as sunscreen, nappy rash cream etc must have a pharmacy label on the item.

Reminder: Medication is not to be left in children's bags.

If a child has a temperature and requires Panadol or Nurofen, they will be deemed to be too unwell to attend the program.

Medical conditions

If a child with a chronic illness or medical condition, for example but not limited to asthma, diabetes, epilepsy or anaphylaxis is enrolled, details of the medical condition must be recorded on the child's enrolment record. An individual risk minimisation plan will be developed in consultation with the family and a medical management plan prepared by your child's physician must be formalised prior to the child commencing at the service.

Should educators require any specialised training to assist them in the daily care of the child, this must be arranged prior to the child commencing at the service.

Any medication or equipment identified on the medical management plan must be provided to the early childhood service. If this is not provided or has expired then the child will not be able to attend the service until this is made available, so as to ensure the health and wellbeing of the child.

It is imperative that medical management plans are kept up to date. Medical management plans should be reviewed by the parent/guardian in collaboration with the child's physician annually and if changes are made to the plan then this must be confirmed in consultation with the child's physician and communicated to the service as soon as practicable.

To view our Medication Policy click here



The greatest gifts you can give your children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence



Illness and infectious diseases including COVID

In the interests of the health, safety and wellbeing of all children and Educators, children who display signs of illness must be kept at home. If your child becomes ill while attending one of our children's programs you will be contacted and asked to collect your child or arrange to have your child collected as soon as practicable.

Please let the service know if your child is not attending because they have been diagnosed with an infectious illness. Educators are required to notify all parents when a child attending the service has contracted an infectious disease. This will be communicated via a notice displayed prominently in the entrance to the service. Fact sheets relating to the illness/infectious disease will be made available on request.

The Department of Health has published the 'Minimum Period of Exclusion from Primary School and Children's Services Centres for Infectious Diseases Cases and Contacts'.

This table is available from the following link and is displayed on the notice board at the service and is used to determine exclusion periods (if required).

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/school-exclusion/school-exclusion-table>

Early Childhood Educators will follow the advice of the relevant government body should specific measures be required following a notification of an infectious disease.

Immunisation

'No Jab, No Play' is the name of legislation that requires all children to be fully vaccinated unless they have a medical exemption to be enrolled in childcare or kindergarten in Victoria.

Evidence of up to date immunisation must be provided prior to your child commencing at our service and families are responsible to update the service on current immunisation records from Medicare.

An Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register can be used as evidence of up to date vaccination. An Immunisation Status Certificate from a medical doctor or a local council immunisation service may also be used.

Other immunisation records, such as 'homeopathic immunisation' or a statutory declaration from you are not acceptable. Immunisation History Statements are available on request at any time by contacting Medicare.



Accidents, Injuries, Illness and Trauma

Children may be involved in accidents or incidents while engaged in the program. Should your child become ill or be involved in an accident, incident or trauma during the program an incident report will be recorded.

Parents/guardians will be notified of any accident, incident, illness or trauma as soon as practicable and will be asked to sign the incident report on arrival.

Any accident, incident, injury or trauma that requires the child to seek medical attention, or requires the attendance of emergency services, will be reported to the Department of Education & Training- Quality Assessment & Regulation Division.

Safety & Emergency Procedures

Each early childhood service has an Emergency Management Plan which contains emergency evacuation procedures. These evacuation procedures are displayed and practiced monthly. A variety of scenarios will be practiced throughout the year and educators will endeavour to inform you when a drill is planned.

Smoke Free Zone

In support of healthy work environments for staff and children, all venues occupied by Y Whittlesea are smoke free environments. Legislation regarding the proximity of smoking areas in relation to children now apply.

Sun Smart

Y Whittlesea supports the Sun Smart recommendations and adheres to a Sun Smart Policy that ensures all children and educators are protected from skin damage caused by harmful UV rays. It is implemented throughout the year, with particular emphasis between September and April. During this period a combination of sun protection measures are to be used for all outdoor activities.

Please provide a sun smart hat (legionnaire's or wide-brimmed hat) and apply sunscreen to your child prior to attendance at the program. Please advise an educator on arrival if your child does not have a hat for the day. SPF 30+ sunscreen will be available at the service for educators and children for subsequent applications. If your child is sensitive to sunscreen, please provide your own Pharmacy labelled sunscreen and discuss this with your child's educators.

Child Protection

Y Whittlesea follows the Department of Human Services (DHS) and Department of Education and Training Child Protection Protocol, Protecting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People, 2010. Educators will act on the advice and direction from the DHS regarding any Child Protection issues or orders.

All Educators employed by Y Whittlesea are required to undertake annual Safeguarding Children and Young People training as they have a duty of care to act immediately to protect and preserve the safety and wellbeing of the children in their care.

At the Y we believe in the power of inspired young people. For young people to be inspired, we know they need to feel safe and be safe. That is why the Y is independently reviewed by the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) to ensure our services are safe for all children and young people.

Children are born with all the curiosity they will ever need. It will last a lifetime if they are fed upon a daily diet of ideas

Charlotte Mason



Meals and Snacks

Y Whittlesea advocates healthy eating habits that promote good nutrition and physical activity. Children need well balanced and nutritional foods in order to sustain the continued growth and development of their bodies and minds. If you are required to provide a snack/lunch for your child, keep in mind current healthy eating choices as well as being aware and sensitive to other children's allergies or dietary requirements.

If you are unsure about particular foods please speak to your child's educator. Children attending long day care will have their meals provided by the service. Special care and consideration is given to the planning of the menu.

Your thoughts, feedback and input into the menu are always welcome and will be accommodated where possible.

If your child has particular dietary needs, please inform the Educators of their requirements. It is important that the Educators are informed in writing and up to date of any allergy or food requirements for your child.

Many children attending our programs have specific food restrictions due to medical conditions, cultural or religious beliefs. Please discuss this with the Educators prior to the event as some restrictions may apply.

Clothing

Y Whittlesea recommends the following clothing be worn or provided:

- Appropriate clothing that will allow the child to feel comfortable, relaxed and uninhibited while engaged in play
- Easy access clothing that allows children to increase their independence and competence in personal hygiene, care and safety
- Layers of clothing so children can adjust to changes in temperature and their activity levels
- Footwear that enables the child to participate in physical activity
- A sun hat (i.e. legionnaire's or wide-brimmed hat with protection for neck and ears) needs to be supplied all year
- A warm hat, gumboots, coat or jacket to be provided in cold weather as outdoor play is a regular part of the program
- A complete change of clothes

Please ensure all items of clothing are clearly labelled with your child's full name.



PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Communication

Effective communication and partnerships with families regarding the education and care their

child receives is supported by ongoing two-way communication. Families can provide invaluable information about their child's interests, strengths and abilities as well as feedback that assists Educators to develop program plans that are practical and focused on meeting the individual needs and interests of all children and their families.

Parents/guardians can expect:

- warm, welcoming and friendly educators
- open, honest & respectful communication
- confidentiality in discussing matters with Educators.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to:

- speak with Early Childhood Educators at the beginning and end of the day/session, to exchange information concerning your child
- advise Early Childhood Educators of any changes in your family situation that may affect your child
- provide feedback relating to the education program provided to your child
- support the children's program by sharing
- your interests and ideas, for example, music, cooking, craft work, gardening, dancing, storytelling, carpentry
- share cultural information
- initiate and/or support fundraising events
- provide feedback on policies, National Quality Standards; surveys and other requests from time to time
- discuss thoughts or concerns regarding the program with the Centre Manager or General Manager of Children's Services.



Storypark is the communication platform we use to strengthen family communication and engagement. Educators are able to record and share learnings as they happen.

This easy to use communication tools has a dedicated Family App to enable effective two-way communication and sharing of essential updates, messages, photos and children's routines and learning.

Fundraising

Throughout the year there will be fundraising opportunities for families to take part in. All families are encouraged to participate where possible in supporting the fundraising activities however these are not compulsory.

Fundraising events and social activities provide opportunities to develop friendships and networks between families, as well as improving outcomes for children and those in need in our local community.

Feedback

Y Whittlesea values your feedback about our programs. Feedback is seen as a compliment, a suggestion, or a complaint.

COMPLIMENTS

Admiration, praise, or happiness in relation to the program or in the way educators undertake their work. Please share your thoughts with us on what is being done well.

SUGGESTIONS

Do you have any ideas on how our programs could be improved, or how things could be done differently?

COMPLAINTS

Dissatisfaction with the service provided or how work is carried out.

What to expect when you make a complaint:

- To be treated with fairness, respect and dignity.
- To have your complaint treated with sensitivity and confidentially.
- To have a response to your complaint within a reasonable time frame.

To provide any form of feedback:

- discuss your feedback/matter with the relevant Educator at the program
- discuss your feedback/matter with program co-ordinator/director
- discuss the feedback/matter with the General Manager of Children's Services. Contact: 03 9407 6200.

Complaints alleging that the health, safety or wellbeing of a child is being compromised or that the law has been breached will be reported to the Department of Education and Training (DET) Quality Assessment and Regulations Division in the relevant region.



GENERAL

Our Commitment to Privacy

Y Whittlesea is committed to maintaining the privacy of all individuals according to the legal requirements relating to how we collect, hold, use, disclose, correct, transfer and dispose of information. Principally, we manage personal and sometimes sensitive information in accordance with the 13 Australian Privacy Principles identified in Schedule 1 of the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth); the Adoption Act 1984 (Vic); and the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic).

Disabled & Permit Parking

Disabled and Permit Parking bays are clearly marked at all locations. These bays are reserved for those with the prescribed permits. People found accessing these spaces without the correct permit may be subject to local laws infringement notices.

Parking

Parking is available at all locations however due to other patron access, places may be limited at certain times of the day. We ask parents/guardians to be aware of parking requirements at each location.



We believe in providing countless opportunities for children to demonstrate independence skills. We value its importance and see it as an opportunity for children to gain confidence, build on self-esteem and accept responsibility



 childrensprogramms.whittlesea.ymca.org.au

 (03) 9407 6200

 **Y Whittlesea Support Office**

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