



Centre Based Care

Parent Handbook





PURPOSE

Support children and young people to
grow and develop, safely

ASPIRATION

Create exceptional opportunities for every
child and young person to thrive

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Wanslea – A Brief History

Wanslea is a Western Australian not-for-profit organisation that was founded over seventy five years ago by Florence Hummerston, a well known Perth identity committed to serving the community.

In 1941 Florence became the Founding President of the Women's Australian National Service (WANS) War Fund and was also instrumental in the establishment of Wanslea two years later. During the war years, the WANS provided care for children whose mothers were ill and fathers overseas with the war effort. At the end of the war, the WANS continued to offer a service that cared for children in need.

Florence Hummerston was the first woman elected to the Perth City Council, on which she served for 18 years. She was a life member of the Children's Protection Society and was awarded an OBE in 1960 for her work with women and children in Western Australia. Mrs Hummerston died aged 94 in 1984.

Over the years, Wanslea has touched the lives of thousands of West Australians in times of family need, resulting in significant good will and respect for the organisation



Welcome

Finding care for your child and family can be a daunting experience, but we aim to provide a secure and happy environment where your child will develop and grow with us.

We will take the time to get to know you and your child through orientation visits. We highly value our orientation visits and they are essential to making the transition happen smoothly.



Committed to the safety of all children

We place the safety of children and young people at the forefront of our operations and are always seeking to strengthen our child safe culture across programs and services.

Some of the ways we do this include:

- Requiring all paid and unpaid staff to adhere to our Code of Conduct
- Ensuring that all relevant staff have a current Working with Children (WWC) card
- Requiring all staff to undergo police checks and additional screenings based on program requirements
- Continuously identifying areas for improvement in our services and encouraging our staff, foster carers, volunteers, families and children to report any ideas, concerns or feedback
- Having clear policies, procedures and systems to ensure that children are kept safe and that anything that could harm a child is reported and actioned
- Valuing diversity and inclusion, and taking action to encourage participation and prevent discrimination

Parent Participation

We strongly believe in the importance of building partnerships with families. We encourage all family members (including grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings) to participate in all aspects of the children's programs. Please have a chat with any of the staff about ways that you may like to participate in the program.

We encourage you to chat daily with your child's care team about how your child is feeling, whether you have any thoughts about their care, what kind of sleep they may have had the night before, and/or provide any other information that may enhance the quality of care that we can give them during the day.

If you require any other information please ask at reception and we will endeavour to find it for you.

Wanslea Early Learning and Development Centres are engaged in continuous quality improvement through the National Quality Framework and Standard. A regular part of this process involves a review of the Centre's policies and procedures. We welcome any input that you may wish to make to this process.

We may host small community events throughout the year to provide opportunities for families to participate in projects that interest the children. These events will be displayed as they occur throughout the year.

Settling Your Child into the Centre

Starting early childhood education and care can be an emotional experience for both you and your child.

Children can often experience some difficulty settling into a new environment, particularly if they find it hard to separate from family or familiar caregivers.

Here are some suggestions to help support your child:

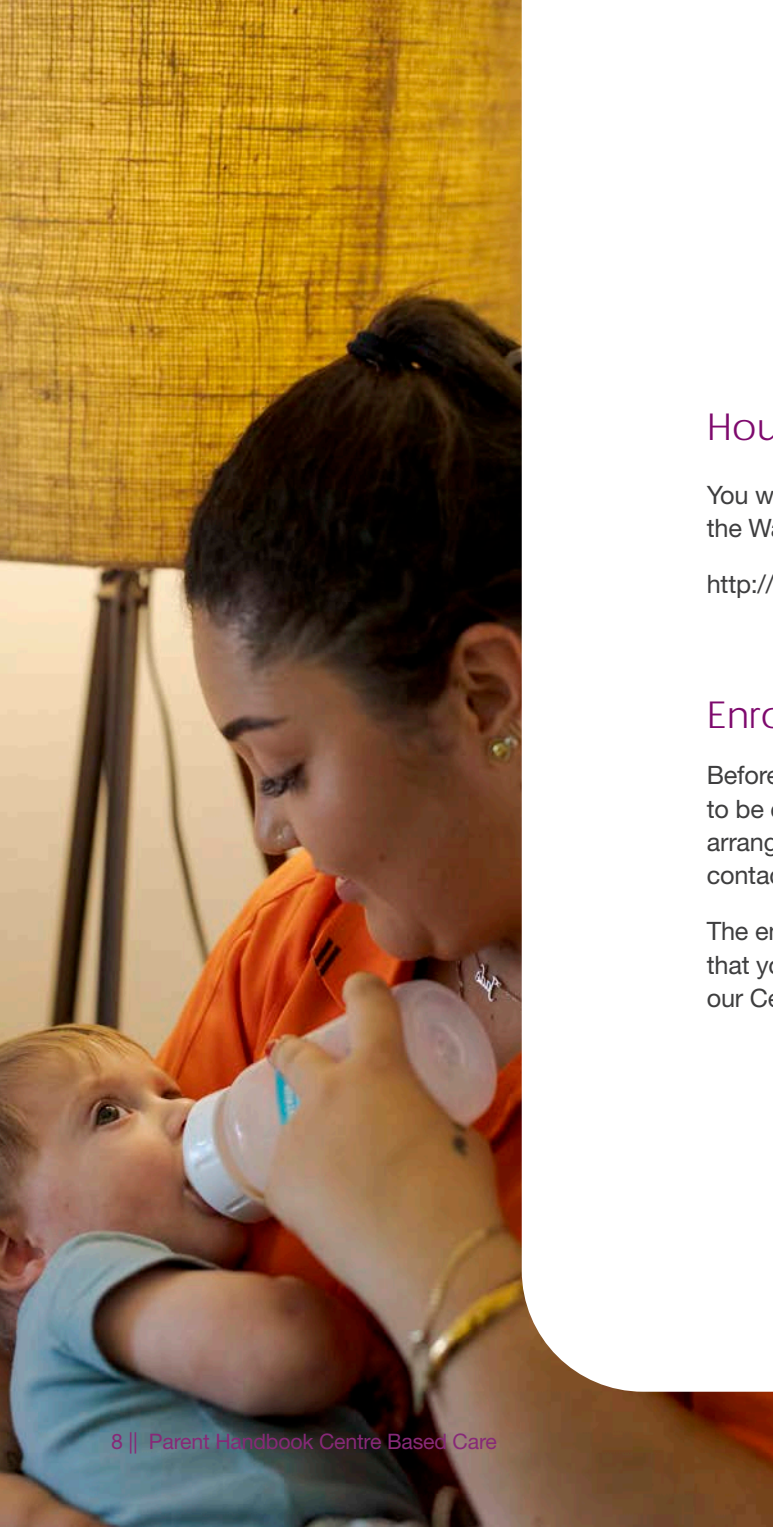
- If possible, start with shorter or fewer days then gradually increase their time spent at the service
- Find a preferred staff member or peer that your child can be left with when you drop them off for the day
- Spend some time settling your child into a favourite activity before you leave

Inform the service about what comforts your child and discuss how you manage activities or times of the day they find unsettling. For example, does your child have a toy or blanket that helps them to settle?

Show your child that you feel secure about leaving them at the service and that you trust the staff. Say 'goodbye' confidently, and reassure them that you will be back later. While it may be tempting to leave while they are engaged happily in play, it can be very distressing for your child to realise you have left without saying goodbye.

You should feel that you can contact the service at any time to check how your child is settling. The staff should provide you with sensitive, honest feedback. <https://www.startingblocks.gov.au/>





Hours of Operation

You will find the hours of operation for our Centre on the Wanslea website at:

<http://www.wanslea.org.au/>

Enrolment

Before commencement of care an enrolment pack needs to be completed. It contains information such as living arrangements, immunisation history and emergency contacts.

The entire document must be confirmed to acknowledge that you abide by the terms, conditions and procedures for our Centre.



Priority of Access

The Commonwealth Government requires the Centre to provide access to the service according to priority of access guidelines.

This means that when the Centre is full, those families who do not meet priority of access may be asked to alter their care arrangements to allow a family with higher priority to access the Centre.



Inclusive Program

Our Centre supports and provides for children and families with a diverse range of experiences. We provide a well-developed program that includes the needs of all children and families.

If required, we can organise an inclusion support facilitator or other associated professionals to assist us in tailoring the service to your needs. Where possible, we will organise support prior to your child commencing care. This ensures that their transition into care is supported.



Public Holidays

Most Wanslea Early Learning and Development Centres are closed for public holidays and during the Christmas period. Fees are calculated on full utilisation for all child care places 51 weeks per year. Public holidays and absent days are included in the calculation and must be paid for even if your child is absent.

If you require public holiday care, please discuss this with your Centre Coordinator.





Arrival and Departure of Children

Our primary concern is the welfare and safety of your child. We, therefore, request that you comply with the following requirements:

- It is important that children are handed to a staff member upon arrival. This ensures that they are supported during the goodbye process and that their presence is recorded so that all children are accounted for throughout the day and in case we have an emergency evacuation
- It is a requirement of Family Assistance Law that all children are signed in on arrival and signed out on departure. Staff will show you where and how to sign in each day. If your child is unable to attend, it is essential that you also sign for all the absences. Child Care Subsidy cannot be claimed on unsigned care sessions
- Your child will not be released to anyone other than those authorised on your enrolment form, unless we have confirmation from you first. We will also not release a child to anyone who is under the age of 18
- You will need to notify our Centre (preferably in writing) each time you make alternative arrangements
- In the case of a parent or guardian arriving at the Centre to collect their child in a visibly intoxicated or unfit state to drive, they will be encouraged to contact an alternative adult to drive them and the child home or the Centre will offer to call a taxi at the expense of the parent/guardian
- Please take the time each morning and afternoon to chat to your child's caregiver regarding your child's day





Absences

If your child is absent for any reason, please notify the Centre as soon as possible. Please note that payment of fees is required even when your child is absent from care.

Child Care Subsidy

Child Care Subsidy helps with the cost of approved child care for eligible families. The Australian Government pays it directly to your child care provider to reduce your fees.

For more information and eligibility requirements please visit: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy>

If you do not register for Child Care Subsidy, you will be charged full fees.



Payment of Fees

Fees must be paid weekly or fortnightly. A statement of fees owing will be issued to you fortnightly. Fees must be paid two weeks in advance by direct debit.

All families accessing the service sign up on our direct debit system so that fees are paid promptly. If you don't understand your account or are experiencing difficulties paying, please discuss with the Coordinator.

Parents with fees outstanding for one week will receive written notification giving seven days to pay their account or their child's place in the Centre may be cancelled. If fees are overdue by two weeks, your placement may be cancelled or suspended.

If your child's days increase, we will lift the limit on your direct debit to cover the increase. Occasional care payments must be made on the day of care via EFTPOS.

Change of Details

It is imperative for your child's safety and well being that you keep your child's enrolment form updated.

Medical information and emergency contacts are particularly important, but you also need to keep us up to date with changes of address, email addresses, bank account and credit card details, and Centrelink notifications.

You will be asked to update your child's enrolment form annually, in line with Education and Care Services National Regulations.



Living Arrangements

We are supportive of all children and their families. Where a child attending the Centre is not living with both parents, and where disputes arise in relation to responsibility for the child, the following will apply:

- Parental responsibility remains with both parents jointly and individually except where it is altered by an order of the Family Court of Australia. In the absence of such an order, the child will be released to the parent who is the person authorised on the enrolment form to collect the child
- Where a non-enrolling parent cites an Order of the Family Court giving themselves lawful access to the child, the order needs to be produced for the Coordinator to see. The enrolling parent will be telephoned to check the existence of the order and to inform them
- The child will only be released into the care of the enrolling parent, or other persons specifically authorised by the enrolling parent, except when the Department for Child Protection and Family Support or the Police specifically direct otherwise under the provisions of the Children and Community Services Act

Family Access

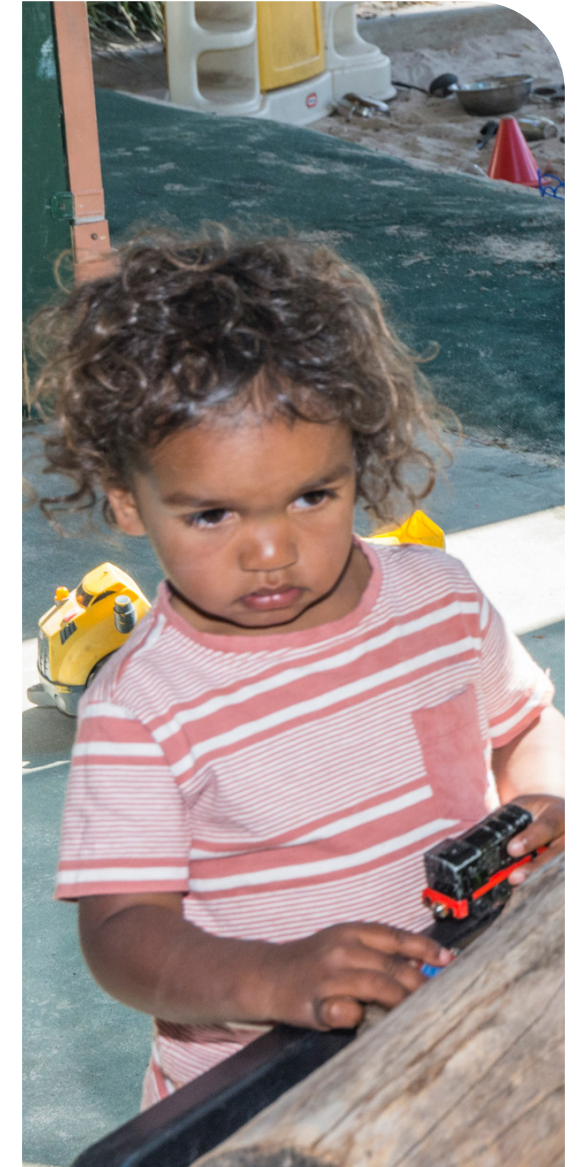
Parents are encouraged to visit the Centre whilst their child is in care. However, please give consideration to the time of day so that other children are not disturbed, for example, during rest times.

Grievance Procedures

We are here to act on your behalf in the care of your child. If you would like us to do things differently, please speak to the room leader.

If you have any further concerns or feedback, discuss these with the Coordinator. Any ongoing complaints need to be referred to the Operations Manager.

Communication and feedback are vital and the contact between your family and our Centre is essential.





Our Curriculum

The Early Years Learning Framework is a national curriculum that describes the principles, practices and outcomes essential to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school.

The Framework has a strong emphasis on play based learning, as play is the best vehicle for young children's learning, providing the most appropriate stimulus for brain development.

The Framework also recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development.

All staff at our Centres are educated and experienced in the Early Years Learning Framework and the principles and outcomes of the Framework.

With the high standard and commitment of our staff, we are able to provide a play-based educational program for each child in our care.

We believe that children learn through interacting with others and their surrounding environment.



Our educators develop a child-led program that includes your child's interests and abilities.

We also like to look at ways to incorporate each child's home culture, so, if you have any ideas you would like to share, please speak to the room leader.

Once your child has finished orientation and has settled in, the room leader will discuss the curriculum in more detail with you. Each week, a program will be displayed at the Centre or shared with you via online programming software.





The Daily Routine

Although the routines of each room and age group will vary, the same aspects are contained in each room. We endeavour to provide a home-like environment where children feel comfortable and secure at all times. Throughout the day the children will be encountering a number of different activities that form part of the experience. The routine offers flexibility to fit in with your child's home routine.

Meal Times

If your child has any food allergies or special requirements please bring in any medical advice from your doctor or specialist outlining their allergies and their treatment plan.

Our cook and staff have completed Food Safe training in the preparation of food and of hygiene for young children.

For morning and afternoon tea and the late snack we serve nutritious, well balanced snacks which include fresh milk or water and fresh fruit. Our wholesome and delicious lunches are also served with water or milk and are accompanied by vegetables or salad.

We try to vary the menu to incorporate a wide variety of cultures. The weekly menu is displayed at the Centre or shared with you electronically. If you have any ideas or recipes to share, please put them in the Suggestions Box or have a chat with the cook.

For regional centres, food is provided by the family each day. This will be discussed during the enrolment and orientation process at the centre.

Babies' Bottles

It is important that your child has familiar things with them whilst they are away from home. Also, to reduce cross infection, it is important for your child to have their own bottles.

Please provide your child's empty bottles with a lid and clearly labelled. Cow's milk or soy milk will be provided to your child at the Centre. If your child is drinking formula, please provide this in its original sealed container.

The educators will prepare your child's bottle according to instructions.

All children in the older age groups are required to provide their own drink bottle. Your child's room leader will inform you of the room's requirements.





Rest Time

Please discuss your child's current sleep pattern and routines with the staff in your child's room.

It is important for us to know about any changes to your child's sleep routine at home so that we can adapt and meet your family's needs here at the Centre.

We understand that some children need to sleep during the day whilst others can function well with a short, quiet relaxation time.

Nappies and Toilet Training

Please supply your child with enough nappies for each day. If your child is toilet training please let us know. We would love to work in partnership with you in meeting your child's toilet training needs. Please let us know about your child's progress at home.

To keep your child as comfortable as possible it is a good idea to pack numerous pairs of underpants and clothing for any accidents that may happen during the day.



What Should My Child Bring?

Please make sure that any items your child brings to the Centre are clearly labelled with your child's name. The Centre will not take responsibility for any misplaced clothing, shoes, bags or other items.

When dressing your child for child care, please consider their comfort, safety and ability to play happily and productively without restriction. Children use many messy materials, such as paint and glue, during activities. Although we use washable products and aprons, stains remain a possibility.

When outside, especially in the summer months, all children must wear a hat. Our Centre is SunSmart and we follow a strict policy so we can ensure that all children and staff are protected to a high standard.

Excursions

From time to time children may be taken on excursions out of the Centre as part of the programmed activities. Excursions enrich children's experience by providing them with hands-on opportunities to explore the community in which they live.

Notification of the excursion will be given well in advance and you will need to complete an authorisation form before your child can participate. Some excursions may incur an additional cost, but they are not compulsory. Parents are invited to come along too!



Positive Guidance

Wanslea's focus is on the importance of respect and dignity for your child, acknowledging and accepting your child's feelings and encouraging these feelings to be expressed. We recognise and understand that your child's behaviour may be affected by a range of factors and we work closely with you to support your child's individual needs.

Our educators use a variety of positive guidance strategies to support appropriate behaviour and build positive relationships.

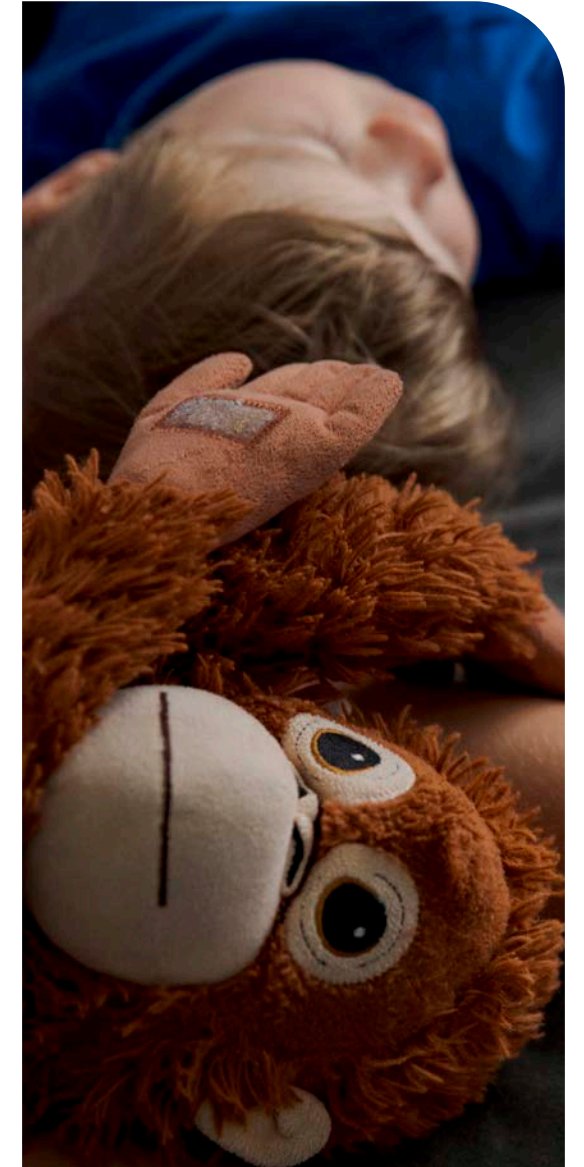
Hygiene

We keep ourselves well informed of the current practices, information and public health issues relating to the area of hygiene in group care. We provide information that is displayed throughout the Centre to assist you in contributing to the safe and hygienic environment we maintain for you and your child.

Immunisation

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012 require the current immunisation status for your child to be kept on our record. You will be asked to provide us with your child's immunisation history statement and, subsequently, provide us with the updated versions as applicable.

Your child cannot be accepted into the Centre until approved documentation has been provided that confirms that your child is fully immunised for their age or has a medical reason not to be immunised.





Children Who Are Unwell

We regret that we are not able to care for children when they are unwell. To assist us in maintaining a healthy and safe environment for all children attending the Centre we implement this approach:

- If a child displays symptoms of feeling unwell we will initially monitor them
- If they become uncomfortable or unable to participate in the program we will contact you or your child's emergency contacts
- While we are waiting for the child to be collected we will make them comfortable while recording their progress on a record of illness form

Unfortunately, we are not able to provide care for children with runny noses, coughs, potentially viral or bacterial rashes, vomiting, diarrhoea or other contagious illnesses.

We may ask for a doctor's certificate to let us know that your child is well enough to attend child care. We may also need a doctor's certificate if you need us to give your child over the counter medication.

Medication

We only administer medication prescribed or authorised by a doctor. However, it needs to be clearly labelled with the child's name, the dose required and the date and times to be administered. You will be asked to complete and sign an authority form for the medication.

Please make sure that staff are made aware of medications, and give any medications directly to a staff member to be stored properly.

Sun Protection

We follow the latest guidelines as set out by the Cancer Council of Western Australia. It is important that your child brings a hat with them each day that they attend the Centre. In the interest of your child's health we ask that your child keeps a hat (clearly named) at the Centre. We assist the children in applying sun screen 20 minutes prior to going outside.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

A copy of the emergency evacuation procedures and an evacuation map are displayed at all entry and exit areas in the Centre. We encourage you to familiarise yourself with this. We practise emergency drills regularly.

Accidents

We go to great effort to prevent accidents, however, sometimes accidents still occur. At enrolment you are asked to sign an authority that allows us to seek medical assistance in the event that your child has an accident. If this is the case we will contact you immediately and either call an ambulance or take your child to an appropriate health facility. For minor injuries our first aiders will apply first aid treatment.

If the injury is outside the usual minor incidents, we will call you to update you on your child's health and well being. No matter what kind of accident your child has, we will ask you to sign an accident form. This process ensures that you are always informed of any injury that your child may sustain during the day.

SCARBOROUGH

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www.wanslea.org.au

Wanslea acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures; and to elders both past and present.

