

SDN Children's Services

# Family Information Handbook



sdn  
children's services

[www.sdn.org.au](http://www.sdn.org.au)



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## Our vision for the world

We are working towards a better, more equitable world where:

- ▶ the promise and potential of every child is realised
- ▶ families and communities are strong and caring
- ▶ children’s services are valued and well resourced.

## Our purpose

SDN is here for children from birth, and for their families and communities. We’re here for the wellbeing of children, now and for the future.

## Our mission

SDN Children’s Services is a not-for-profit organisation committed to:

- ▶ providing high-quality early childhood education and care from birth
- ▶ strengthening families and communities
- ▶ addressing inequalities faced by children.

## Our values

In carrying out our mission we commit ourselves to being:

- ▶ trustworthy and reliable
- ▶ inclusive and respectful
- ▶ creative and innovative.



# Welcome to your SDN preschool

We hope that this is the start of a long and happy relationship between SDN, your child and you.

This booklet will give you some basic information about SDN Children's Services and about the things that are important as your child and family become part of the SDN community.

The staff at your SDN preschool are all early childhood professionals, and are looking forward to getting to know you and your family. The Preschool Director is the best person to talk to if you have any questions about the information in this booklet or if you have any concerns.

There are other ways you can get information. You might find the SDN website helpful ([www.sdn.org.au](http://www.sdn.org.au)), and all SDN policies are available at the preschool for you to read.

The curriculum at SDN preschools is based on the Australian Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), and we are required to meet the National Quality Standard for Education and Care services (NQS). More information about the EYLF and NQS can be found at [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)

We look forward to a happy and rewarding association with you, and welcome you to come to the preschool at any point to spend time with your child.



## National Quality Framework

The Australian Government's National Quality Framework applies to all SDN Children's Education and Care Centres, including preschools. The National Quality Framework includes:

- ▶ a national legislative framework that consists of the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulations
- ▶ the National Quality Standard
- ▶ an assessment and rating system.

The NQF is administered by:

- ▶ a regulatory authority in each state and territory and
- ▶ a national body, the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

Further information can be found at:

- ▶ [www.dec.nsw.gov.au/home](http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/home)
- ▶ [www.dhcs.act.gov.au](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au)
- ▶ [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)



# All in a day — basic information



## Arrival

Children must be signed into and out of the preschool by an adult over 18 years old. Signing in and out is very important as a security check for attendance and in case of an evacuation.

On arrival please bring your child into the preschool so you can be greeted by a staff member. These exchanges mean we can share information with you, and talk about daily happenings and other news.

Please make sure that your child has put on sunscreen before they arrive. We'll also re-apply sunscreen at regular intervals throughout the day.

## Departure

At the end of the day children can only be taken home by a person who has been nominated on the enrolment form. If an unauthorised person arrives to collect your child they will not be able to take the child out of the preschool. Please tell staff in writing if someone else is collecting your child.



## Excursions

Excursions are used to support children's interest areas and learning through authentic experiences outside of the preschool. Opportunities will be provided for children to actively participate in their community. Please refer to SDN policies for further information regarding ratios and the organisation of excursions.

### Emergency contacts

Please make sure your emergency contacts are reliable, are close by and that their phone numbers are up to date so that they can be contacted quickly in an emergency.





# What your child needs to bring

We recommend a small to medium sized back pack, so that all belongings remain together.



## Please also note that:

- ▶ a sun hat (legionnaire style, bucket or wide-brimmed) is required for outdoor play all year round
- ▶ we suggest elasticised pull on pants to encourage your child's independence, as they're easier to manage than buttons, buckles and belts
- ▶ practical shoes are important for your child's mobility — wearing thongs inhibits running and climbing
- ▶ a few changes of clothes in the case of unpredictable weather changes and/or wet clothing
- ▶ one nutritious snacks (eg fruit, cheese) for morning tea and one for afternoon tea and a nutritious packed lunch and drink (no chips or sweets). Children's lunches will be stored in the fridge.

## Celebrations

You might want to celebrate your child's birthday or a special occasion at the preschool. Please discuss these events with your child's educator or Preschool Director. We look forward to sharing special occasions with friends, however preschool staff must carefully monitor foods and treats that come into the preschool to ensure the safety of all children and staff.





# Preschool information



## Communication

Daily communication is encouraged through discussion with educators about your child's day. We will also communicate with you through:

- ▶ newsletters
- ▶ daily records. This is where you will find photos and details about the day's program
- ▶ parents meetings
- ▶ documentation of children's learning and development.

## Meetings

Meetings will be offered throughout the year. This is so families and staff can meet, and to provide a forum to discuss the educational components of our programs.



## Late collection

All children must be collected no later than the preschool's specified closing time. We do however appreciate that on occasion families may run late. Please contact the preschool immediately should this be the case. A late fee will apply for repeat occurrences. This is applied at the Director's discretion.

## Complaints management

SDN is committed to the fair and effective resolution of customer complaints. Please refer to relevant SDN policies. All SDN policies are available for families to view at their SDN centre or preschool.

We encourage constructive feedback from families. If you have a concern regarding anything at the preschool or your child, please do not hesitate to discuss it with the Director.



## Newsletters

A regular newsletter is distributed to families at our preschools. News and articles from families are welcome.



# Health

SDN Children's Services' preschools adhere to SDN's policies relating to immunisation and exclusion. We encourage families to familiarise themselves with these documents. There are illnesses that require exclusion and/or a doctor's certificate for your child to return to the preschool. Your Director can be contacted for more information.

## Immunisation

In accordance with the National Immunisation Program Schedule valid from 1 July 2007, all children from the age of six weeks onwards should be immunised. If your child is not immunised they can be enrolled, but they will be excluded from the preschool for the duration of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease. If your child is not immunised, documentation from your doctor regarding conscientious objection is required for our records. Please bring your child's immunisation history statement to the preschool after each vaccination to ensure our records remain up-to-date.

## Sick children

To provide a healthy environment for all children and staff, and to reduce the risk of cross infection, please do not bring your child to the preschool when they are sick. Sick children require the care and comfort of home.

## Administering medication and management of fever

Staff follow SDN policy when a child has a high temperature or when medication is required. Please read the policies that guide staff practices if your child is unwell at the preschool.

## Medication

- ▶ a medication permission form must be completed for any medication to be administered by staff
- ▶ all medicine must be in its original packaging/container with the attached pharmacy dispensing label or registered medical practitioner's written instructions in English, clearly showing the child's name, dosage and frequency to be administered.
- ▶ medication must not be left in your child's bag or locker, but must be given directly to a staff member
- ▶ non-prescribed medicine will only be given if accompanied by a letter from your child's doctor giving the details as mentioned above
- ▶ should any details on the original Medication Permission form change, a new form is to be completed
- ▶ children with a medical condition must have a Medical Management plan in place
- ▶ children who require antibiotics must not return to the preschool for at least 24 hours after the first dose.

## Non-smoking environment

All SDN centres and preschools are non-smoking environments. Smoking is not permitted in or on the premises or in view of the children.



A copy of the current National Immunisation Program Schedule is available at the preschool.

## Treatment of fever

The normal temperature of a child is up to 38°C. If your child has a temperature over 38°C and is generally unwell, you or your emergency contact will be called to collect your child. While waiting for you to arrive, your child will be comforted and offered plenty of fluids. Paracetamol will not be administered as a standard first aid strategy or as a standard response to a fever.



# Fees and charging



## Bond payment

Families are required to pay a bond equivalent to two weeks' full fees on confirmation of enrolment. The bond is payable before a child starts care. SDN reserves the right to offer the place to another family if the bond payment has not been received before the start of care.

In no circumstances is the bond able to be used to offset overdue fees for a child continuing in care.

## Fees payment

Fees are payable by direct debit from bank or credit card accounts or by Centrepay deduction. For the safety of staff and children in preschools, and to avoid loss, SDN does not accept cash payments.



Fees are payable for all booked days of care. This may include absences for any reason including family leave, public holidays and illness. Please check with your Director.

Fees accounts must be paid up to date. Continuation of a child's place at any SDN centre or preschool will be contingent on the family's account being up to date.

## Financial hardship

Where there is financial hardship, a payment plan may be negotiated and will need to be in place before fees are in arrears to avoid the child's place being withdrawn. Agreement to a payment plan is at SDN's discretion and must be supported by a direct debit or Centrepay authority to pay the agreed amount.



## Casual days

Children attending casual days will be charged at their eligible rate. Casual days must be paid for at the end of the week for that days attended within that week.

## Withdrawal

Four weeks' written notice must be given for withdrawal or two weeks fees' must be paid. Withdrawal is defined as the cancelling of any or all of the child's enrolled days at the preschool.



# Your SDN preschool team

The staff at your SDN preschool have a diverse range of qualifications, knowledge, skills and experience. University qualified early childhood teachers lead the team, and are committed to creating a rich learning experience for your child. There are also nominated supervisor, certified supervisor and educational leader positions as part of the team at your preschool. To find out who these are please talk to your Director.



## Children's learning and development

SDN believes that experiences in the first five years of life are critical for laying the foundations for lifelong learning.

Children's learning and development is supported and extended through high quality educational programs. These programs involve both intentionally planned and spontaneous interactions and experiences. A key component of a high quality educational program is using observations to help better understand and respond to your child's needs and interests.

SDN creates calm and safe indoor and outdoor environments which spark children's curiosity.



## Your child's safety and wellbeing

SDN is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children. All of our staff working in NSW require a Working With Children Check and clearance from the Office of the Children's Guardian.

Our ACT staff require clearance for Working With Vulnerable People. If we receive allegations that a person working for SDN is causing harm to children we will investigate immediately and, if in NSW, will also report the allegations to the NSW Ombudsman.

In NSW, SDN is required to report allegations of risk of significant harm to children to the NSW Department of Family and Community Services. In the ACT SDN is required to report to ACT Care and Protection Services any instances where we believe on reasonable grounds that a child has or is experiencing sexual abuse or non-accidental physical injury.





# About SDN Children's Services

SDN Children's Services is a not-for profit organisation that has been providing quality early childhood education and care since 1905. We are proud of our long history in the provision of children's services and teacher education.



## Who are we?

SDN Children's Services is a not-for-profit organisation that has been delivering quality early childhood education and child care, disability services, and family support services since 1905.

We are proud of our long history of working with children and their families, working with communities, and supporting the development of practitioners and children's services. With more than 700 staff across 30 sites in Sydney, regional NSW and the ACT, we are one of Australia's most respected children's services organisation.

## What we do

SDN provides the following services:

- ▶ high quality and inclusive early childhood education and child care
- ▶ early childhood intervention for children with disabilities
- ▶ family support services
- ▶ resource and mentoring for practitioners and other agencies
- ▶ Aboriginal training and employment support.

# What we believe — our philosophy



We believe that every person and every living thing has inherent worth, and is owed respect and care.

We believe that we live in an inter-dependent world, where we all belong and are enriched by each other's contributions.

We have always believed, since our beginnings in 1905, that the world can be a better and more equitable place, and that we can help to make it so.

We believe that potentials and possibilities are realised when everyone offers and experiences care, connection and challenge.





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**Privacy:** SDN Children's Services is committed to protecting the privacy of its children and families. The specific legal obligations we have when collecting and handling your personal information are outlined in the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* (NSW), and in particular in the Australian Privacy Principles and Health Privacy Principles found in those Acts. For more information please refer to the SDN Privacy Policy available at your preschool. This content is correct at the time of publishing but may change.