



WELCOME TO OUR CENTRE

“Children Always Come First”

Philosophy

At Maryland Care and Early Education Centre we endeavor to provide the highest quality care and education for all children. We recognise, that as early childhood professionals we have an important role to play in each child's development and learning.

Connection

We believe children come first, building secure learning relationships with each individual child that furthers their learning, development, and wellbeing.

We acknowledge the importance of relationships with families, working together to support learning, development, and wellbeing. We encourage families to be involved in the service in a way that they feel comfortable and secure.

We value the importance of being part of the wider community liaising with other professionals, utilising resources and exploring the local neighbourhood.

We recognise, acknowledge, and celebrate diversity whilst, respecting values, beliefs providing a cultural safe environment for our families and educators.

“Both my kids attend, and they love it here, great staff, quality teaching and a trusting community going above and beyond for the kids and families” -Bernadette

Unique

MCEEC is a small boutique service where children engage in mixed age play allowing for peer teaching and learning. We believe there is no such thing as bad weather, promoting children to play in the heat, cold and rain allowing them to explore a range of different elements in their environment as well as learning to regulate their own body temperature.

We empower children to engage in risky play experiences, allowing them to explore their own limits, boundaries, and resilience.

We promote place-based pedagogy by taking children on adventures to the reserve that enables them to connect to Country and explore our natural surroundings whilst gathering on Awabakal Land.

We believe all children are unique individuals who are respected and deemed competent learners.

“There is always fun stuff and hard stuff to play” - Zara aged 5 years

Imagine

We believe children learn best through play-based learning which allows them to create, discover, improvise and imagine. We provide open-ended materials that allow children to use their imagination and exploration without any specific goals and endless possibilities.

Advocacy

At MCEEC we value educators and teachers as early childhood professionals and acknowledge each individuals' skills, knowledge and experience. We promote an environment that encourages professional inquiry and learning.

We educate our families and community on the importance of our role as early childhood professionals and turn them in the right direction when they are seeking further support and information.

We advocate for the rights of every child to ensure they are safe, healthy and treated equitably. Our educators and teachers are a diverse group of experienced and motivated staff. Its inspiring to be part of a team like this, where each member has their own specific attributes and bring unique skills to the service. Our staff build such strong rappsots with the children, which means they get to know each child's interests, strengthens and needs very well. As a parent of children who have attended Maryland Care and Early Education, and as a staff member, I'm proud to be associated with the service.

- Brendan, Early Childhood Educator of 20 years

Strive

As a service Maryland Care and Early Education Centre strive for excellence to be leaders in our sector. We are forever evolving and critically reflecting on how we can improve our practices, quality of care and educational program. We set high expectations to achieve the best outcomes to stand out from the rest.

Created in conjunction with children, families and staff from MCEEC 2023

About Us

Maryland Care & Early Education Centre is a community-based, non-profit organisation, established since 1986; the building is owned by Newcastle City Council and managed by a committee of dedicated parents, families and community members. We are a 52 permanent place Long Day Care Centre operating 49 weeks a year, 5 days per week.

At Maryland Care & Early Education Centre we provide the highest quality care and education for all children. We recognise the importance of providing a safe, secure and supportive environment that values trust, respect and familiarity. As a non-profit community centre our philosophy is "Children always come first" where the emphasis is on giving back to the children and not on making a profit. We are dedicated to providing the best quality care and education available through the use of modern and up to date equipment and facilities along with employing exceptionally dedicated, passionate and highly qualified staff.

Our teachers and educators design programs to reflect your child's individual needs and interests based on the approved Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). Our programs are designed to encourage children in all areas of development including social, emotional, language, physical (fine and gross), intellectual, creative and self-help.

Each child is allocated a focus educator that is responsible for documenting their development and learning journey throughout the year. Other information emailed out to support developmental progress includes special moments such as birthdays and cultural celebrations, incursions/excursions and milestones they have achieved during their time at Maryland Care & Early Education Centre.

Families are welcome at the centre at any time and we aim to work in partnership with all families in order to provide the best possible environment for children to grow and learn.

Location: 34-36 Boundary Road, Maryland NSW 2287

Telephone: (02) 49 517 783

Email: office@marylandchildcare.org.au

Hours of Operation: Monday- Friday, 7:00am - 6:00pm

Rooms and current fees:

Amaroo Room for	6 weeks-2 years old	\$126 per day
Buddina Room for	2-3 years old	\$126 per day
Cooinda Room for	3-5 years old	\$124 per day

Fees and Holidays:

Before enrolling you will need to obtain a customer reference number (CRN) for both yourself and the child who will be attending our service.

Upon enrolment, families are required to pay a security deposit (two weeks of fees) and one week of fees in advance. Your account **MUST** be in advance at all times. An invoice will be sent via email fortnightly. Failure to keep fees in advance may result in termination of childcare placement.

It is preferable that fees be paid through our idebit system. For those families eligible your Childcare Subsidy (CCS) is paid directly to the centre.

Full fees will apply until the centre receives notification that you are eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy (CCS).

Fees must be paid for everyday your child is enrolled at the centre, regardless of attendance. This includes days where your child is absent due to ill health a holiday taken or home day. Each child is entitled to 42 allowable absences per year while claiming CCS. An allowable absence is defined as a sick day, holiday or occasional absence. Once the 42 days have been taken full fees will apply. If your child is absent due to illness and has a medical certificate, these absences will not count towards the allowable absences

Should you wish to terminate your child's placement at the centre, you are required to give two weeks written notice to the Director and ensure that your account is paid in full before leaving.

Fees are not charged for the three weeks over the Christmas/New Year period while the centre is closed.

Our Policies:

Our Centre policies and procedures can be found in the front foyer and accessible via our website. We recommend that you take the time to read these. If you'd like a copy of any particular policies, please see office staff to arrange this.

What we provide:

- Nutritionally balanced meals throughout the day (morning tea, lunch, seconds, afternoon tea and a late snack)
- Milk (dairy, soy and rice). Water is accessible at ALL times
- Nappies and wipes
- Sunscreen and insect repellent
- Sudo cream
- Panadol (In the case of an unexpected high temperature)
- Splash suits for wet weather play

Staff:

All our teachers and educators are highly trained and skilled in children's early learning and education, demonstrating exceptional dedication and passion towards providing high quality care. Our teachers and educators have diverse interests and come with a variety of teaching experiences in the early childhood sector. Qualifications of our staff within the centre include:

- Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood)
- Advanced Diploma of Children Services
- Diploma of Children Services
- Certificate III of Children Services
- Trainee
- Inclusion support
- All key educators possess a Senior First Aid qualification, Asthma & Anaphylaxis training and updated child protection training.

Centre communication:

It is important that you read all notices and signs when entering the centre. These are located on the front door, sign in desk and white board. Our foyer contains a variety of information including: Provider details, ratings and assessment details, centre policies, our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), staff qualifications, centre philosophy, community notices, committee meeting minutes, parent library and other information relevant to the centre. Please ensure you check the notice boards regularly to stay up to date with centre information.

Each family will receive an information pocket where notices, fundraisers and information about upcoming events and special requests are placed. It is extremely important that you check this each time you visit the Centre as it is a vital part in our communication with families. Information is also emailed out to you via your nominated email address. Individual rooms welcome your feedback on our daily programs, your child's interests and thoughts on the experiences we have provided. Families are encouraged to talk with their child's educators at the beginning and end of each day.

Change of Details:

Please notify the Centre of any changes to your or your child's contact details. It is important to maintain up-to-date contact details at all times. This can be emailed through directly to office@marylandchildcare.org.au

Collection of Children:

Only persons nominated on your child's enrolment and emergency contact form will be eligible to collect. If you are unable to collect your child from the centre yourself, you will need to ring and let staff know the changes for that day. Photo identification will be required by any person collecting a child who is not known by staff and all nominated contacts MUST be 18 years old or above.

Late Fee:

Maryland Care & Early Education Centre closes at 6.00pm. Arrangements therefore must be made to collect all children before this time. Where a family fails to collect their child by closing time, a late fee of \$40 will automatically be charged plus an additional \$1 per minute thereafter. This will appear on your next invoice.

Parent Concerns:

We are here for you, your child and your family. We encourage families with any concerns to bring them to the attention of the Director immediately so they can be dealt with promptly. We aim to address any concerns immediately; the emphasis being placed on resolving the issue in a professional manner. A 'Complaints and Feedback' policy has been included in this handbook for further information. Positive feedback and complaint forms can be found in the foyer and returned on completion to the fees box. A suggestion box is also located in the foyer and we welcome your input on any aspects of our service that can be amended or improved.

Centre safety:

The following precautions must be followed to ensure the Service is a safe place for your children.

- Gates, latches and doors must be kept shut at all times and only opened by adults.
- Only adults are to enter the security code at the front door.
- Children's medication must be given to a member of staff on arrival and paperwork completed.
- Maryland Care & Early Education Centre is a SMOKE FREE & ALCOHOL FREE zone.
- We ask that adults conduct themselves as respectable role models and do not swear on the Service grounds.
- 'STAFF ONLY' car parks are exactly that. Please refrain from parking in these designated spaces.
- Be aware of what's happening around you especially when reversing in the car park, small children can be unpredictable.

Sun Safety:

We are a "sun safe" centre. Please apply sunscreen to your child before arriving at the Centre as it needs to be applied at least 20 minutes before exposure to the sun for the best protection. Sunscreen is re-applied during the day by staff according to the daily recommendations from the cancer council sun safe app. Sunscreen is supplied at the service for your convenience. Should you wish your child to use an alternative sunscreen we ask that you send the specific sunscreen to leave at the service accompanied by a letter giving educators permission to apply said sunscreen.

Your child's first day:

We understand that leaving your child for the first time can be difficult on both you and your child. As a centre we encourage families to call throughout the day to check on their child's progress and their settling in. Please allow time at morning drop off to communicate with your child's educators about your child's needs and interests or any worries that you may have about your child settling in. It's our aim to make sure your child feels safe, secure and supported within our play-based environment and that they receive the care and attention they deserve throughout their time at Maryland Care & Early Education.

Personal Toys:

Centre policy states that toys from home are not to be brought to the centre. They can be lost, broken or taken home by mistake so it saves a lot of heartache if these items are left at home. Soft comfort toys for rest time are acceptable but are required to stay in your child's locker until rest time.

Lost Property:

Please label all items of clothing including socks, shoes, underwear and sheets to assist Centre staff to locate the owner.

Birthday/Celebrations:

Birthdays and cultural celebrations are very important in a child's life, and we like to make them as enjoyable as possible. We are happy to celebrate your child's birthday here at the centre and this can be done in 2 different ways

Option 1: Bring in a store bought cake that lists all the ingredients on the packaging.

Option 2: Order an ice cream cake from the centre for \$10. Complete an order form (located in the foyer) and return to kitchen or office 2 weeks prior

Thank you for taking the time to read this information, as it has been prepared especially with you in mind. We hope that the information contained is informative and educational

We look forward to getting to know you and your child/ren. If you have any further questions, please feel free to come in to discuss these with the Director.
