



Parent Handbook

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1.0 Philosophy Statement

Mission statement

BVCK's team of passionate and dedicated Education professionals are committed to assisting children become curious, motivated learners, and to be their unique individual selves, through quality care and Educational Programs. We support their interests in a respectful, inclusive environment offering time and space to explore their emerging autonomy, growth mindset and wellbeing.

Philosophy

We are committed to meet all possible needs of the children in our care. We achieve this by providing a caring, safe, supportive, happy, and engaging educational learning environment.

Our innovative and progressive outdoor nature focused Centre encourages all children to actively explore their environment, supporting them to form and develop trusting relationships with other children and Educators. We strongly promote numerous opportunities for play and exploration. We believe play is valuable in every aspect of a child's development and recognise the importance of children being actively involved and engaged in a variety of learning experiences whilst also giving them time and space to follow their own exploration and learning. We believe a child's learning should be supported and encouraged through positive interactions and discussions with the child's family on a regular basis.

Embracing diversity within our community is important and we strive to reflect this in our programming and throughout our Centre. Early Childhood Education is the foundation of a child's future, all children should be treated with equity, and cultural diversity embraced and acknowledged. We recognise the original custodians of the land we work and play on and strive to embed practices that reflect their values.

We focus on embedding exceeding practices to provide an environment that nurtures children's love of learning, curiosity, developmental and emotional well-being, and their connection to nature and land, as we grow the custodians of the future.

2.0 Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge and pay respect to the Peramangk, Ngaduri and Kurna people as the traditional custodians of the Barossa and Adelaide Hills region. We also acknowledge and recognise their continuing connection to the land, water and culture. We pay respect to the Peramangk, Ngaduri and Kurna peoples Elders, past, present and emerging.



3.0 BVCK Access Information

Childcare is available for babies and children from 3 months to 5 years of age for full time, part time and casual care.

As per the Priority of Access Guidelines set by the Australian Government, places will be allocated to families according to the following priorities:

- **Priority 1:**
A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- **Priority 2:**
A child of single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy the work, training, study test.
- **Priority 3:**
Any other child

Within these main Priority categories, priority should also be given to children in

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- Families which include a disabled person
- Families on lower incomes
- Families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Socially isolated families
- Single parent families

-  **If a place is not immediately available to the families, they will be put onto a waiting list.**
Once entered onto the waiting list, it is desirable for the family to contact the centre on a regular basis to confirm their continued wish to remain on the waiting list.
When a place becomes available the Director will contact the family and the enrolment will proceed.

4.0 BVCK Opening Times

Monday to Friday 7am to 6pm

BVCK is open every day except for Public Holidays and the 2-week Christmas/New Year closure period, exact dates of which will be given by mid-November.

Special Services

Access to Additional Needs services (DECS and Inclusive Directions etc.) is available through the Centre in the forms of speech pathology, psychology, behaviour guidance and other services in response to your child's needs.

Fees

Fees are determined by the Committee and submitted to the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services. As we are a community-based, not-for-profit Centre, with no government funding, the fees collected are to cover all operating costs including staff salaries, resource and building maintenance, and utilities.

It is vital that fees are paid regularly and on time, as Late Payment Fees will be added each week when fees are outstanding. Please see the Fee Policy and Fee Agreement included in the enrolment package.

Most families will be eligible for financial assistance (CCS– Childcare Subsidy) from the Federal Government through Centrelink. CCS entitlements reduce weekly childcare fees. All CCS payments are paid directly to the centre and are taken off family's fees.

-  **As of January 2016, to be eligible to receive the Childcare Subsidy, parents will need to be up to date with all immunisation requirements.**
-  **Families will need to provide a copy of their child's immunisation records upon enrolment; you can get a copy from your MYGOV account under the Medicare link.**

Families must provide the centre with the enrolling parents/ Guardians, Customer Reference Number (CRN) and one for each of your children to enable your childcare usage to be linked to your Centrelink account; you must also activate your child's enrolment on the MyGov/ Centrelink website for CCS to be paid.

Phone Centrelink: 136150 for assistance with your entitlements.

5.0 The Great Revival Shop Needs You!



For those of you who don't know what the GRS are about, let me explain....

One of our major supporters is the Great Revival Shop, they have been our major benefactor for over 30 yrs. GRS are a not-for-profit Op-Shop situated in the Kavel Arcade in Tanunda who make donations of money every two months to not only our not-for-profit centre but also other great community organisations in the Barossa. Without this relationship our Centre would most certainly not have made it through some tough times, their donations have helped us buy play equipment, make building improvements, and assists us in buying general materials for the centre and we are very grateful for their ongoing support.

And so, to reciprocate their support, BVCK provides GRS with a volunteer once a month from one of our lovely families or even grandparents of children who attend our centre. The volunteer is provided with one day of care free of charge, for 1 child to attend the Centre whilst the volunteer helps at the GRS shop from 9.30am to 12.30pm on a Wednesday.

6.0 Session Times & Fee Policy

10-hour session - 7.30am to 5.30pm

Fee of \$152

11-hour Full day Session - 7am to 6pm

Fee of \$154

Outside the 10-hour session time

If your child is dropped off or collected before or after the 10-hour session time, their booking will automatically be moved into the 11-hour session.

Late collection fee after 6pm (Not covered by CCS)

Fee of \$15 for up to 15 minutes late

Fee of \$30 for 16 to 30 minutes late

*Note – Children must be collected by 6pm or a late fee will be charged

Administration Fee

An administration fee of \$75 will be charged to your account per annum in July, this goes towards the cost of administration of your account for the year.

Public holidays

Public holidays are charged at the regular fee rate, families are still eligible to receive any CCS they are entitled to on these days.

Christmas closure

No out-of-pocket charge

Absenteeism

If your child does not attend a booked session, an absent fee will be charged to your account. Two weeks' notice must be given in writing to not be charged for the full fees applicable.

Permanent Booking Holding Fee

All permanent bookings that are cancelled/ advised to be absent with two weeks' notice, will be reduced by **10%** off of the normal rate. If less than two weeks' notice is given, the booking will be considered absenteeism and will be charged at the full rate.

Casual Bookings

24 hours' notice is required to cancel any casual bookings with no charge.

Cancellation of Enrolment

Two weeks' notice must be given in writing to not be charged for the full fees applicable, any fees remaining on the account must be paid in full no later than the following week after care has ended.

6.1 PAYMENT OF FEES

Account Fees are charged on a weekly basis and will be emailed to the address provided. Full payment of fees is required on a weekly basis unless alternative arrangements are made with the Director. If your account is in arrears of 28 days or more, BVCK reserves the right to cancel your booking until the account is paid.

Payments can be made as follows:

- **Direct deposit**

Account Name: Barossa Valley Community Kids

BSB: 035 079

Account Number: 10 6835

If you are unable to meet these requirements, you will need to contact the Director on 08 8563 0030 to discuss your situation, prior to the due date of your account.

Continued non-payment of your account could jeopardise your child's placement at the service.

6.2 NON-PAYMENT OF FEES

Families who have fees outstanding for 28 days will receive an emailed letter requesting immediate payment of the account or cancellation of bookings will occur.

Following further non-payment of fees owed to the service over 28 days, a letter will be sent to the family advising that their children's attendance is cancelled until ALL OUTSTANDING FEES ARE PAID.

If on a second occasion a family allows their account to become overdue over 28 days, without negotiation, the children will be permanently excluded from the service. Accounts will then be passed on to debt collection. Any expenses incurred for debt collection will be passed on to the applicable account.

6.3 Emergency bookings:

In the event of an emergency, the centre Director can decide to take 1 extra booking above the licenced places of 40 children (Emergency Spot), to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child whose family is asking for an emergency booking, this is at the discretion of the Director.

The "Emergency" details may include but are not limited to: Medical Emergency, Accidents, instances where there is no other person to care for the child and the parent is legitimately unable to care for their child, child at risk.

This "Emergency Spot" is unique to BVCK and may vary at other childcare services, ask the centre Director what the policy is regarding the Emergency spot.

7.0 Staffing

The Centre's most valuable resource is the Educators, who have a wide extent of qualifications and experience in working with children. BVCK Educators are responsible for holistically supporting the development of the child within the Early Learning Years Framework, the family, and the community.

The adult/child ratios required by the Department of Licencing and Standards will always be maintained.

Ongoing professional development for Educators is actively encouraged. Consistent staff are retained in the rooms, and whenever possible regular relief staff, to provide continuity and stability for children, the team, and families.

8.0 Centre Management

The Centre is managed by the Director and the Committee. The Committee is made up of parents/family members from the Barossa Valley Community Kids.

The Committee receives reports from the Director, Assistant Director, Finance Committee, and staff. The Committee makes decisions about financial management, accreditation, OHS&W, development of outdoor learning areas, maintenance of the building and grounds and fundraising. It also has an important role in having input towards developing and reviewing the Centre philosophy and policies.

To join the Committee please see the Director or any member of the current Committee and they will be happy to give you more information.

9.0 Enrolling and Settling In

We encourage all families wishing to enrol their child to arrange for an induction or 'show through' with the Director, who will show you around the centre and explain all functions, routines, and policies. You will have the time to ask any questions and offered the opportunity to have two 'stay and plays' where you are invited to spend time with your child in the Centre and meet the staff before your child starts care. It will help your child and staff if you share your child's special routines, comforters, preferences etc. when enrolling.

You must inform the Director when enrolling about any allergies, medical needs, etc. and the appropriate management strategies.

- **Children cannot start attending until we have received enrolment details, immunisation records and if required medical management plans and medication.**
- **By signing the enrolment form (agreement) you are agreeing to abide by BVCK policies & procedures (available in foyer)**

It is often an emotional time for children and parents to adjust to a new environment and your child may feel uncertain and very tired for the first few days or weeks, this is normal.

It may help your child to settle in if you can do a quick drop off; once their bag is unpacked, let your child know you will pick them up later, give them a cuddle, say your goodbyes, and exit the room.

Once you decide to go, please don't hesitate, as stopping and returning to them can encourage children to believe the more they cry, then mummy/ daddy will stay, and will make the process harder for you all, however, be assured your child will be comforted by one of our Educators until they are happy to begin their day at BVCK.

We ask that parents/ guardians please refrain from congregating in the rooms/ outside areas at drop off/ Pick up, as it makes it hard for Educators and the children to settle into their morning routines, if you are needing to chat to other parents, please do so out of the rooms or in the outside entry area.

9.1 Arrival and Departure

On arrival:

We ask you to bring your child to a staff member so that they can be greeted. Please say "Goodbye" to your child even if this is difficult for you. It is important that your child knows that you are leaving and that you will return. We are here to help you should you need help at separation time.

Please:

- Sign your child in on the Tablet provided in the foyer and on the attendance sheets in each room. (This is a requirement of the Department of Family and Community Services and failure to sign in and out will result in the withdrawal of **Child Care Subsidy**)
- Help your child to place their belongings in the appropriate areas.

- Hand any medication with pharmaceutical instructions to a staff member and sign the necessary forms.
 - Make sure that all doors and gates are closed securely when entering or leaving.
- *Do not linger in open doorways*

On departure:

- We ask you to sign your child out; (this is a requirement of the Department of Family and Community Services and failure to sign in and out will result in the withdrawal of **Child Care Subsidy**)
- Help your child collect their day's work and their belongings and any medication.
- Take your child to farewell a staff member.
- If you are unable to collect your child by the close of your session **PLEASE telephone the Centre**, and arrange for someone else to collect your child, as a late collection fee will apply.

9.2 Security and Collection of Children

The safety of children in our Centre is of paramount importance to parents, children, and staff. Only parents and authorised persons nominated on the enrolment form may collect your child unless you have advised the staff beforehand.

CHILDREN WILL NOT BE RELEASED TO UNAUTHORISED PEOPLE.

If Educators are uncertain about a person collecting a child, parents will be phoned to check authority and identification such as a driver's licence will be requested.

If at any time a Family Court order is made; the Director must be advised immediately and be provided with a copy of any such order. No information will be given to persons over the telephone if staff cannot establish their identity.

10.0 What Do You Need to Bring?

PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT ALL ITEMS THAT COME TO CHILDCARE HAVE YOUR CHILDS' NAME ON THEM.

- Backpack/bag big enough to hold everything (only one bag per child, please)
- Lunchbox that the child can open and close themselves and big enough to hold everything. Insulated bags are not necessary as we keep all lunchboxes in the fridge.
- A complete change of clothes (named) – even socks if wearing them.
- Drink bottle
- Hat (BVCK will supply).
- Enough nappies to last the time here, 1 per every 2 hours or part there of plus extra allowing for incidents.
- Medication if relevant – please speak to an Educator if child has medication. This must be stored in the rooms medication area & a medical management plan must accompany any medication. All medication must be labeled with the child's name and directions from the doctor.

- Please always send your child in sun smart clothing (sleeves that properly cover the shoulders) in the warmer months September to March, and jumpers/ jacket/ raincoats and gumboots for winter.
- Please always send appropriate shoes (**No Thongs** to be worn please)

11. Medication

 **Children and adults who are unwell should not attend the Centre.**

We realise from time to time that it will be necessary to give your child medication.

- Medicine must be brought in the original package with a chemist label on it.
- Medication Form to be completed by the parent/ Guardian and signed.
- Ensure that the child's name and correct dosage is clearly marked on the label.
- Give medicine to staff to put in appropriate storage area in rooms.

11.1 Illness & Immunisation

We realise from time to time your child may become unwell whilst attending the Centre, we will inform you or your emergency contact, and we will monitor your child until they are collected.

- If a child is sick and unable to attend Childcare, please telephone or email the Centre and inform us about your child's illness.
- In the event a child's temperature reaches 38 degrees or below 35 degrees (and had not increased after being inside/ warming them up), then staff will contact the parent/guardian to arrange for the child to be collected.
- If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted or if they are more than 20 minutes away from the centre and the child's condition deteriorates further, or their temperature spikes to 40 degrees or drops below 32 degrees, then staff will not hesitate to call an ambulance.
- Parents are asked to give consent for staff to call an ambulance for their child in the event of an emergency upon enrolment within the enrolment forms.
- Parents are encouraged to immunise their child against all diseases appropriate to their age. A record of the child's current immunisation status must be kept at the Centre in the child's file. (if your child is not immunised you will not be eligible for CCS)
- All parents will be notified of any outbreaks of infectious diseases in accordance with the SA Health Exclusion & Staying Healthy in Childcare Guidelines and may choose to keep their child away if they are not immunised.

11.2 Infections and Disease

To minimise the risk of transmission of infectious disease children diagnosed with infectious disease will be excluded from the centre using the guidelines in 'Staying Healthy' or until medical clearance has been provided to the Centre.

To prevent the spread of infectious disease, we encourage families to fully immunise their children in accordance with the Department of Health and Ageing's National Immunisation Program Schedule. Non-immunised children may be excluded in certain circumstances to protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of every person at BVCK.

12. Programming -What Will Your Child Do at The Centre?

At BVCK, we value and respect children's emerging capabilities, their experiences, points of view and concerns. Our educators listen to children and use a variety of documentation to record children's significant experiences and their responses to the early learning environment in which they are involved.

Our programs are informed by conversations among educators, children, their families, and the broader community, which supports teaching, play and collaborative interactions.

The Australian Early Years Learning Framework informs and underpins the educational program and practice in our Early Learning Centre and the Australian Early Years Learning Frameworks Principles, Practices and Learning Outcomes assists our educator's approach to children's learning, including intentional teaching, decision making and an ongoing cycle of observation.

13. Excursions

Excursions and neighbourhood walks are an important way to extend children's experiences and their connection to the community. They provide variety, fun and interesting opportunities for learning and are planned as part of the developmental program.

There are prescribed guidelines for excursions to ensure supervision for young children.

You will be asked to sign a general consent form upon enrolment for us to take your child on spontaneous local walks. If you do not want your child to participate on these walks, you must indicate this on the enrolment form.

You will be given details of any other excursions, and your written consent must be given for each excursion considered outside of the local walks.

14. Celebrations (including Birthdays)

Celebrations are an important part of our communities' families, and therefore children's lives. They promote a sense of belonging and positive self-esteem and can be celebrated in a variety of ways.

Food is often a focus of cultural and family celebrations and has enormous learning potential, we ask that if you decide to bring a cake in for your child's birthday that you let the staff know of the ingredients so we can distribute accordingly to support allergies and cultural values.

15. Nutrition and Dental Care

We believe that good nutrition is vital for the wellbeing of children, they will be offered food according to their individual needs and timetable.

The Centre Supports a Healthy Eating programme, we ask that you pack healthy and nutritious food in your child's lunch boxes (no junk food please)

Due to the risk to children with allergies to nuts & nut products, our centre is **“NUT FREE”** and **“No whole Eggs”**. No nuts, Nutella or products containing nuts are to be brought to the centre. We provide refrigeration for lunchboxes; Puratap water is available throughout the day for all children.

SA Dental Service is available for all children up to the age of 18. Some fees may apply.

16. Emergency and Accident Procedures

Our Centre has a detailed Policy, which sets out procedures in the event of an accident or emergency, all our policies can be located for viewing in the main entry foyer.

Evacuation procedures are displayed at all entry / exits throughout the Centre.

Fire drills are practised on a regular basis and are embedded within our program so children learn how to exit the centre safely to designated safe zone.

It is important that telephone numbers of parents and emergency contacts are kept up to date. Please inform the Centre to any changes.

17. Communication

The noticeboards in the Entry Foyer will be used for general information. Regular newsletters, accounts and other information will be distributed to all families via email and will also be available upon request.

17.1 Parent Portal App

The Parent Portal is owned and operated by the software company we use called Economic Outlook, we are using the Portal as a form of communication to inform families of what learning and experiences their children have been engaged in whilst in our care, if you do not wish for your children's photos to be displayed on the app, please email the Director.

You can access the link to the Parent portal on the Tax invoices that are sent each week or alternatively please follow the link below:

<https://barossacreche.spike.economicoutlook.net/clients/>

- You can sign in using your email address and pin code, if you don't know your pin code the password can be changed at the sign in prompt.

- Only parents of the centre, and those who sign up to the app can access the “Activities Communications”, and only if their child has been tagged in that Communication entry.

FAQ's

Why can't parent's log into the Parent App?

There are several reasons why a parent is not able to log into the Parent App:

- The log in information for the parent app was imported 6 months ago. If the parent has changed their pin number since then, they will have to select 'Forgot Password' and reset their password (this will not change their pin number).
- The parent is not using the email address that is recorded in Spike.
- Changing the password for the Parent App does not change the person's pin for the electronic attendance system.

17.2 Communicating concerns.

If you have any concerns or grievances with or about any aspect of the Centre or you would like to talk about your child's participation or development, you are encouraged to make a time for a chat with the Director or other senior staff.

17.3 Family Suggestions

We also like to hear about things that we do well or your suggestions about how we could do better, by placing comments, and suggestions in suggestions box located in the foyer.

18. Confidentiality

We treat all information regarding children and their families with the utmost confidentiality. Personal information of staff and families is not given out to anyone without prior consent. (Please refer to our Confidentiality and Record Keeping Policy).

19. Sun Smart

As part of our Sun Smart Policy, children and staff are required to wear a broad brimmed or bucket hat, sunscreen and appropriate Sun smart clothing whilst outside throughout the year.

- Please see the Director or Room leader for a copy of our Sun smart policy

Children who forget their hats will be given a spare or will only play in shaded areas whilst outside.

20. Mandatory Reporting

Our Centre is committed to the prevention of child abuse and neglect. You are encouraged to come and talk to the Director about any concerns you may have as the needs and care of young children is paramount. A confidential report may be made to the Child Abuse Hotline on 13 14 78.

All staff at the Centre are mandated notifiers and are obliged by law to report any suspicions of child abuse and or neglect.

Our staff and Committee members undergo Working with Children Checks every 5 years and are to provide them upon employment.

21. Policies

All our policies are available in the Reception/Foyer Area for parents and visitors to read. They are reviewed annually and are updated regularly to meet current legislations and guidelines. Our policies and procedures are endorsed by the Centre Director & Committee.

They include:

Parent Handbook

Philosophy statement

Policies and Procedures

1. Collection of children
2. Access to centre
3. Child safe environments
4. Behaviour guidance
5. Environmental sustainability
6. Storage, use and handling of hazardous substances.
7. Building and equipment maintenance
8. Workplace health and safety
9. Nutrition and food safety
10. Equal opportunity
11. Illness and medication
12. Children's health safety and wellbeing
13. SunSmart
14. Excursions, incursions and regular outings
15. Fees and bookings
16. Educational programming
17. Parental involvement and special items from home
18. Confidentiality and record keeping
19. Role of Committee and financial management
20. Professional development, appraisal process and self-assessment process
21. Power failure/ water shut off
22. Philosophy and policy development
23. Fire and emergency procedures
24. Transitioning children

- 25. Enrolling your child
- 26. Relationships with children
- 27. Inclusion and multiculturalism
- 28. Telephones, mobiles and social media
- 29. Volunteers & outside services
- 30. Waterplay and safety
- 31. Leave policy
- 32. Long service leave policy

Ratified by Committee _____ Director's signature _____