

Family Handbook

Growing a lifelong love of learning in every child



Love.
Learn.
Grow.

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This centre is proudly owned and operated by Affinity Education Group.

As a leading provider of early childhood education, we are driven by our professional goals and values and are committed to ensuring we provide the best early childhood experience for you and your children through our **Lifelong Learning Curriculum** at one of our leading early learning centres Milestones, Papilio, Kids Academy and Aussie Kindies.

Affinity's mission is to inspire and nurture individuals to reach their full potential.

We Value

Being Completely Connected

We bring out the best in each other and the families we serve through collaboration and cooperation, communicating openly and sharing knowledge and information.



Having Serious Fun

We all participate in making Affinity a fun place where we share laughter, celebrate achievement and maintain perspective and balance for each other.



Creating Shining Stars

We support and enable each other to grow, learn and develop by giving everyone the autonomy they need and having their back.



Going Above and Beyond

We act with genuine positivity, pride and energy and go out of our way to deliver value that goes above and beyond the ordinary.



Living the Team Spirit

We all contribute to the Affinity culture of winning attitudes, teamwork, cooperation and creating a sense of belonging for everyone.



Delivering Outstanding Professionalism

We are dedicated to providing a safe environment for our team and the children in our care. We act professionally and respect each other for who we are, our individuality, knowledge, skills and experience.



Our Safety Commitment

At Affinity, we believe that child safety is everyone's responsibility. We are committed to upholding the safety, rights and wellbeing of all children and promote a culture of child safety with a zero tolerance approach to child abuse and harm. Affinity ensures the Paramouncy Principle is applied in all aspects of our work. All decisions and actions related to the operation and delivery of education and care services must prioritise children's safety, rights and best interests above all other considerations.



Safety



Quality



Values



Careers



News



Contact Us



Acknowledgement Of Country

Affinity Education Group acknowledges and pays respect to the past, present and future Traditional Custodians and Elders of this nation and the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Affinity has a company-wide commitment to reconciliation in our organisation, led by our

Reconciliation Working Group. This passionate team is committed to creating a safe space for educators to share their knowledge and experiences during their reconciliation journey, as well as grow their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People's cultures, histories, and contemporary realities.



Artwork by Wayde Clarke (Alejandro Lauren)

Our Lifelong Learning Curriculum



The **Lifelong Learning Curriculum** is Australia's most progressive approach to early education for children from birth to age five. It is based on the belief that learning and development occurs most successfully when supported by nurturing and engaged educators, in partnership with families and communities.

This curriculum draws on the best models of early education, contemporary research and evidence informed practices such as Circle of Security, Abecedarian, and Project Based learning.

It aligns to Australia's Early Years Learning Framework and offers a rich combination of play-based and intentional teaching experiences appropriate to each age group. The Lifelong Learning Curriculum is based on what children learn, where they learn and how they learn.

Our goal is to grow and instil a lifelong love of learning in children's first five years so they can realise their full potential.

Our educators are attuned to the needs, personalities and interests of each child and establish trusting and secure relationships to allow children to feel the confidence to connect with others and explore their learning potential.

Our educators carefully document and analyse children's learning and participation, and after reflection and consultation with children and families, use this information to guide curriculum decisions, program provisions and interactions. Educators engage with children in play and conversation, to support learning and acquisition of new skills.

Our educators provide inclusive environments which allow for choice, challenge, group engagement or solitary play and a flexible routine that adapts with the children's natural rhythms, interests and needs.

Depending on their role, all educators hold nationally recognised early childhood qualifications, or are actively studying towards the completion of them. All employees undergo state-based processes to be approved for working with children and most also hold first aid and CPR certificates and asthma and anaphylaxis management training certificates.

National Quality Framework

Our centre practices, policies and procedures align with legislative Requirements as outlined in the National Quality Framework. This means that every effort is made to comply with the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulation, the approved learning frameworks and the National Quality Standards.

Copies of the law, regulations, learning frameworks and quality standards are available at your centre.



Your child's lifelong learning journey starts here!

Our qualified educators and teachers are trained in the Lifelong Learning Curriculum for ages 0-5. We nurture a lifelong love of learning through a combination of play-based and intentional teaching experiences which help your child develop:

- » Social Connectivity
- » Emotional Confidence
- » Foundational Learning
- » Physical Health and Wellbeing



0-1
years

Healthy Beginnings



The Lifelong Learning Curriculum offers babies aged birth to 1 year a safe, nurturing environment to begin their early learning journey.

We know your baby's earliest emotional, social and physical experiences will have a direct impact on their future resilience and wellbeing, and we are here to support that journey. Our qualified childcare educators are trained and accredited in the Lifelong Learning Curriculum by Affinity Education Group. This incorporates the **Circle of Security, Attachment Theory, and Key Educator** approach. Our educators are recognised for their loving and caring commitment to each baby's individual needs, and happily adapt to your baby's routine.

What babies learn

During their first year, babies develop trust in people and their environment. Without this secure foundation, learning in other areas cannot flourish. Our **Lifelong Learning Curriculum** supports those first connections, allowing for emotional security, self-identity and self-confidence to emerge.

How babies learn

Through their strong relationships, our trained and accredited educators are able to 'tune in' to the individual preferences and personalities of your baby. They partner closely with families to create a **Circle of Security** so babies will thrive.

Where babies learn

Our Healthy Beginnings nurseries are thoughtfully designed, with spaces for babies to explore and play, safely sleep and enjoy their meals. Look beyond the toys and you'll see the careful planning and understanding of how babies develop and learn in their first year. During 'Healthy Beginnings' your baby will experience:

- » **Lifelong Learning Curriculum**
 - Stretch & Grow Zone
 - Cosy Corner
 - Completely Connected Zone
 - Discovery Zone
- » Personalised care from qualified and credentialed educators
- » Sensory stimulation to spark curiosity
- » Fine motor skill development
- » Singing, art, music and physical development
- » Indoor and outdoor playtimes
- » Flexible feeding and sleep routines
- » Positive socialisation with other babies

Feeding and settling your baby

Affinity Education Group is accredited with the Australian Breastfeeding Association and each nursery or centre offers a dedicated nursing zone for parents to feed and settle their baby. We can also store and use your own breast milk to feed your baby, and will provide a daily record of all feeds, sleeps and moods.



1-3
years

Early Experiences



The Lifelong Learning Curriculum offers toddlers aged 1 to 3 years an exciting environment in which to explore and experiment as their confidence and social skills emerge.

We know your toddler is ready to socialise, make friends, and to be introduced to new challenges in a safe and nurturing environment. Our qualified childcare educators are trained and accredited in the Lifelong Learning Curriculum by Affinity Education Group. This incorporates the **Abecedarian Approach** which is a progressive and personalised way for toddlers to learn to communicate their thoughts, emotions and intentions. Our educators are recognised for the happy and loving environments they create where toddlers laugh, learn and thrive.

What toddlers learn

As toddlers start to communicate their interests, share their ideas and connect with other children, they develop self-identity and awareness of the world around them. They learn the impact their actions and behaviours can have on others, and how to participate in learning opportunities.

How toddlers learn

Toddlers learn best through play, supported by gentle and fun interactions with their educators and with other children. Our educators reflect on each child's unique interests and provide opportunities for children to contribute to their own learning and development.

We consider children's opinions and allow them to be involved in decisions which affect them, therefore building confidence and capability for our little people to play an active role in the community around them.

Where toddlers learn

Our indoor and outdoor learning environments allow toddlers to choose between solitary, small and large group play. Their sense of adventure and wonder is stimulated through learning games as they are encouraged to create and explore, every day!

During Early Experiences your toddler will also learn in our **Lifelong Learning Curriculum zones** including:

- » Discovery Zone
- » Toddler Talk
- » Book Nook
- » Little Artists
- » Imagination Station
- » Completely Connected
- » Move and Groove Zone
- » Construction Zone



3-5
years

School Readiness



The Lifelong Learning Curriculum offers children aged 3 to 5 years the very best start before they begin Primary School.

Our university qualified teachers and experienced educators are passionate about stimulating young minds, building confidence, encouraging resilience and promoting a positive self-image for all children. These elements support children's transition to school, preparing them for a positive start in life. We know that all children are capable of realising their full potential if they are in the right environment. That is why we use **Project based learning, appropriate technology and enrichment programs** to spark the best experiences.

What children learn

Children attending School Readiness classes develop a lifelong love of learning and a natural desire to engage with educational opportunities. Their social and emotional skills are so important during these years, and provide a strong foundation for early literacy and numeracy. We enrich standard **Kindergarten** and **Preschool** classes through our **Lifelong Learning Curriculum School Readiness programs** including:

- » **Big Thinkers STEM**
Available for children from ages 3 and up, this intentional teaching program explores science, technology, engineering and mathematical concepts in the world around us, in fun and engaging ways, led by qualified teachers and educators.
- » **Aussie Wildlife Champions**
A program developing understanding and a love of wildlife and the principals of conservation, along with the awareness of the impact and difference that children can make on the world they are growing up in.
- » **Reading Eggs**
An award-winning literacy program that helps children learn to read through phonics, sight words,

vocabulary, and early comprehension. Engaging songs, rewards, and interactive activities keep children motivated as they build the reading foundations they'll carry into primary school.

- » **Mathseeds**
Builds foundational numeracy skills through interactive lessons, games, and challenges. Children develop early maths understanding at their own pace, covering counting, patterns, shapes, measurement, and problem-solving, all in a format that feels more like play than learning.
- » **Wandana Aboriginal Education**
Everything delivered through our First Nations Education program is guided by Wandana Aboriginal Education, ensuring the knowledge, stories, and traditions shared with children are culturally accurate, appropriate, and handled with genuine respect for First Nations communities. This partnership is central to how we approach reconciliation in early childhood, creating learning environments where every child grows in cultural understanding and belonging.

How children learn

Children learn best when they believe that they can. Through a rich combination of play-based and intentional teaching, our programs allow them freedom to explore their interests and ideas, and to contribute to learning and discovery within their classroom of friends, their confidence will grow every day.

Where children learn

Our classrooms and learning environments include **Lifelong Learning Curriculum zones** to encourage children to try new things every day. With both indoor and outdoor learning taking place, children can feel refreshed and comfortable as they develop their understanding of the world around them – and of their own potential.

Our Community

Family Participation and Communication

We recognise that families are the first and most important influence in a child's life.

Our educators are here to complement that relationship and aim to stay completely connected with families to share in decisions that affect the child and to incorporate your expectations into our learning goals.

Any successful partnership is based on open communication. At any time, you are able, and encouraged, to contribute to the program or learning environment, share ideas or concerns or join in the serious fun that we have daily.

Verbal face-to-face communication is important to us and helps to establish our relationship. Communication will also take the form of emails, newsletters, displays and notices in the centre and digital forms such as Facebook, SMS and Storypark.

Storypark

Storypark is an app that houses your child's learning and development profile as well as a space to communicate with your centre and fellow centre families. It is a completely safe and private platform, only accessible by you, your child's educators and those whom you authorise. Educators use this tool to share your child's achievements and milestones, funny events and photos of their day.

The Storypark app is an ideal way of staying connected with families. You can even contribute to the content on the Storypark app, share family interests or weekend events and post photos of your own. Invite other family members, or other professionals that work with your child such as allied health or medical specialists, to join and contribute too.



We use
for Families
Storypark
to involve you in your
child's learning



Starting Early Education and Care



Starting at an early childhood centre may be an exciting time for children and families, although it may also be an emotional or anxious time.

Prior to your child's first day, an orientation is encouraged to familiarise both you and your child with the centre and the educators through our free stay and play sessions. The orientation will be tailored to you and your child's needs. It might be a quick drop in the day before or it might be a series of short visits leading up to the first day. It may also involve shorter days once the child has started to ease them into the routine.

Please ask your Centre Manager about how they can accommodate your needs over the orientation period.

First day

During enrolment or orientation, your Centre Manager will explain what services the centre provides and what you will need to provide for your child.

What to bring

The list on the right provides a general overview of what you may be required to bring each day.

All Children

- » Water bottle
- » Wide brimmed hat
- » Morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea, late snack*
- » A complete change of seasonal appropriate clothes (a few sets if learning to use the toilet)
- » A sheet set*
- » A photo of the family
- » A special comforter (blanket or teddy for example, that the child may be attached to)



Nursery & Toddler

- » Nappies*
- » Alternative Formula sufficient for your baby's needs (if your baby is unable to drink the formula we provide as standard)*
- » A dummy, if necessary, with a cap or container for storage

* Not provided at all centres. Check with your Centre Manager for availability.

Settling in

Separation can be difficult for some children and families. Speak with your Centre Manager or child's educator if you, or your child, experience anxiety or distress, and our educators can support you. Tips to help your child settle include:

- » Take advantage of our free stay and play sessions at our centre prior to your child's first day. Meet our educators and get a feel for the room.
- » Stay with your child and play for a little while on their first day, or first few days, to help engage them in play.
- » Bring a comforter or favourite cuddle toy, or a family photo to help your child feel safe.
- » **Always say goodbye**, rather than sneaking away. This helps to develop trust.
- » Follow a regular routine each time you arrive at our centre. Your child will become familiar with the routine.
- » Maintain relationships with our educators. If your child sees you connecting with their educator, they will also feel more connected.
- » Feel free to call our centre at any time to find out how your child is settling.

What to wear

Your children's day may involve physical activity, exploration, a little mess at times and lots of serious fun. Please dress your child in unrestrictive sun safe clothing.

If your child insists on wearing a special outfit, please be prepared for the fact it may get messy during the day. A spare change of clothes should always be packed.

We recommend children wear comfortable, closed-in, non-slip shoes that can be easily removed to assist in physical activity and also independence.

Please ensure all items are clearly labelled to minimise the risk of misplacement.

Items to leave at home

Except for a special comforter teddy or blanket, or similar, we recommend keeping other toys at home. There will be opportunities in the program, such as 'show and share', to bring in and share other special things.

Prohibited and inappropriate items must not be brought into the service, as they may present a risk to children's safety and wellbeing.

Prohibited items may include, but are not limited to:

- » Toy (or real) knives, guns, swords, spears or other weapons;
- » Items containing button batteries;
- » Fragile, expensive or special items;
- » Electronic devices;
- » Thumb tacks or pins;
- » Cigarettes, vapes, lighters or matches;
- » Plastic bags;
- » Alcohol;
- » Medications (unless required and managed in line with POL2-P1 Administration of Medication Procedure); and
- » Inappropriate dress-ups (e.g. frightening characters or those that promote aggressive or unsafe behaviour).

Lost property

Our educators will do their best to keep track of all children's belongings. Please ensure you clearly label every item (including shoes!) with your child's name and your mobile number. Where items become misplaced, please check with the educators or updates on the Storypark app.



Family Responsibilities

By enrolling at our centre, you agree to abide by our policies and procedures, including the Family Code of Conduct, as outlined in this handbook and in the Affinity Policy Manual. The Policy Manual is available at your centre and can also be accessed via the QR code provided.

Arrival and departure

It is a legislative requirement that you record your child's attendance by signing in on arrival and out at departure times using our digital kiosks. On arrival each day, you can place your child's belongings into a locker and any food or drink into the available fridge. Escort your child to where the children are grouped, and our educators will greet you and your child, assisting with the morning transition into our centre.

Please ensure you leave your child with an educator and never drop them off in a room unattended or in the foyer of the centre.

If you arrive and outdoor play is underway, please ensure your child is wearing a hat. Sunscreen is available for you to apply to your child before you escort them outdoors to play.

When departing with your child, ensure you follow the departure procedure, inclusive of collecting your belongings and please inform an educator of your departure.

Our centre is a smoke-free area. Smoking is not permitted in or around a 10-metre radius of the premises including carpark and perimeter fencing..

Authorised persons to collect

To ensure the safety of your child, authorised persons will be required to enter their own details in our digital kiosks at drop off and collection times. It is vitally important that you advise our centre of people who are authorised to collect your child from our centre,

and that you keep these details up to date. Your child will only be allowed to leave our centre with authorised persons as identified by you on the enrolment form or by prior notice from you.

Our educators will check the authorised persons details and any person not known by our educators arriving to collect children will be asked to produce photo identification. If an unexpected person arrives at our centre to collect your child, you will be immediately notified to confirm if you have authorised this.

Persons collecting your child must be over 18 unless they are the parent. Children are not allowed to be released to older siblings, unless they are over 18 years old and documented as authorised persons.

Where custody orders are in place that affect the child, you must provide current court papers to have this enforced at our centre. In the case of a non-custodial parent arriving to collect your child, our Centre Manager will contact the police and then notify you of the incident. Our educators will follow the court instructions to the best of their ability. However, our centre will not be held liable in the event of a non-custodial person gaining access to a child.

Late collection

We appreciate your assistance in complying with our centre's opening and closing times. We are not licensed to operate outside of these hours. We ask that you arrive at the centre with enough time, prior to closing time, to collect your child and their belongings and exchange information, to allow the educators to close the centre as per our licensed operating times.

As a courtesy, it is expected that if you are late in collecting your child, after closing time, you will phone the centre to advise of this. This allows educators to alleviate any anxiety in your child and allows educators to make their own plans.

If your child is not collected by closing time, a late fee will be applied to your account, even if the centre was notified of the lateness. If your child is not collected by closing time, and our centre has not been notified by you, our educators will phone you. If you are uncontactable at this time, our educators will call authorised persons as detailed on the enrolment form. If after 30 minutes, your child is still not collected, our educators will notify the police.

Health and Safety



Our Safety Commitment

At Affinity Education, we believe that child safety is everyone's responsibility. We are committed to upholding the safety, rights and wellbeing of all children and promote a culture of child safety with a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and harm.



Read more on our website via the QR code below:



Infant feeding

We're proudly accredited by the Australian Breastfeeding Association and offer an inviting space for mothers to drop in and breastfeed at any time during the day. Alternatively, families can bring clearly labelled bottles of expressed breastmilk for their children.

Families can provide formula for their children in a few ways:

- » Premeasured, dry formula powder in a sealed and labelled container, along with a bottle of premeasured, cooled boiled water. Our educators will mix and prepare the bottles at the required time.
- » Premade bottles of formula are to be prepared no more than 24 hours ahead of time.
- » A tin of formula and empty bottles that our educators can prepare as required, where space and facilities allow. This must be negotiated with the Centre Manager prior to your child attending.

Quiet time and sleep

Your child will be offered the opportunity to rest and sleep throughout the day. Individual routines will be accommodated where possible, and your child's daily rest and sleep activity will be communicated with you. Our centre believes that children sleep when they need it, so your child will not be forced to sleep, or woken from sleep.

Safe sleeping practices will be followed for all babies in cots. Individual calming and soothing techniques can be discussed with your child's educator.

Emergencies

It is important that you provide our centre with the contact details of at least two people who may be contacted to collect your child in the event of an emergency or illness, in the event that you are uncontactable. These people can be the same as the authorised persons.

Our educators have been trained in emergency evacuation procedures. From time to time, evacuation drills will be practised to familiarise the children with emergency practices. In the event of a real emergency evacuation, you will be notified as soon as possible.

Incidents

In the event your child is involved in a minor incident, educators will comfort them, administer first aid as appropriate, and complete an incident form. You will be notified of the incident and asked to read and sign the incident form on collection of your child. If the incident involves injury to your child's head or face or if your child is unable to be consoled, you will be notified immediately.

In the event an incident of a more serious nature occurs, which is beyond minor first aid, educators will call an ambulance and then notify you. Educators will complete an incident report which you will be asked to read and sign upon your arrival at the centre.

Where the attending medical officers deem it necessary, they will transport your child to a hospital for treatment. If you, or another authorised person, has not arrived at the centre by this time, your child's educator or Centre Manager will travel in the ambulance with your child and remain with them at the hospital. Families will be liable for any ambulance or medical costs incurred.

Any serious incident must be reported by our centre to our Regulatory Authority. If you seek medical attention following an incident at our centre, please notify the Centre Manager, as we are obliged to report this occurrence within a 24-hour period.

Illness and exclusion

As an important step in the control of infection, we ask that if your child is unwell, that you keep them at home and inform the centre of their condition. Upon arrival you must disclose if your child has been given any medication, pain relief or has any illness or injury as this will ensure we can provide appropriate care.

If your child becomes ill while at our centre, you will be contacted and requested to collect them. If you are uncontactable, an authorised person will be contacted. This is to ensure your child receives the care they need and to minimise the risk of infection to others.

Children who have had a contagious illness, or suspected contagious condition, will require to be excluded from the centre based on the exclusion period in Staying Healthy Guidelines.

If your child is absent you will be required to confirm their absence/s on the digital kiosk on the next day of attendance at the centre. Regular fees will be charged for absent days.

Medication

Medication may be administered on the advice of a medical professional. Any medication that you request to be administered to your child, either prescribed or over the counter, must be specifically for your child. Only medication with a clearly legible dispensing label will be administered and must contain the following details:

- » your child's name
- » the name of the medication
- » the dosage and dosage instructions
- » the doctor or pharmacist's name
- » the date issued (Cannot be within 24 hours of bringing your child to daycare)
- » expiry date (Within expiry date)
- » for any new medication, your child should stay at home for the first 24 hours to ensure no adverse reactions

A medication authorisation form must be completed and signed by you, or the person delivering your child to the centre including the previous time and date of dose and then signed on collection of your child. The information you provide on the medication authorisation form must match that of the dispensing label.

Please hand the medication over to an educator on arrival each morning for correct and safe storage. Medication is not to be left in your child's bag.

Emergency paracetamol

An important inclusion in our enrolment form is your authorisation to the administration of a single dose of children's liquid paracetamol where your child develops a temperature.

In the event your child develops an elevated temperature, 38°C or higher, throughout the course of the day, our educators will take measures to try to reduce the temperature. However, if these measures are unsuccessful at bringing down the temperature, you will be notified and requested to collect your child. At this time, our educators will seek your verbal permission with a witness to administer one dose of children's liquid paracetamol following the directions on the label prior to you collecting your child.



Medical conditions including asthma and anaphylaxis

If your child has an ongoing medical or health condition it is your responsibility to disclose this on enrolment, or as soon as the condition becomes diagnosed. Our Centre Manager will issue you with a copy of our medical conditions procedure (and asthma, anaphylaxis/allergy or diabetes procedures if applicable) and assist you to complete a medical management, risk minimisation and communication plan in conjunction with your child's doctor which is communicated to all educators who care for your child.

You will be notified of any symptoms or change in your child's health. Educators will follow your child's medical management plan to treat symptoms in your child, including calling an ambulance as required. Where the onset of symptoms is sudden, or where time is critical, an ambulance will be called prior to you being contacted. If attending medical officers advise hospital treatment, our Centre Manager or your child's educator will travel in the ambulance with your child and remain with them in hospital, if you or another authorised person are not present. Families will be liable for any medical or ambulance costs incurred.

Sun protection

Our centre promotes sun safe behaviours and follows guidelines as recommended by SunSmart in each state and territory. Throughout the day, our educators will re-apply children's sunscreen, or encourage older children to re-apply, at least 20 minutes prior to sun exposure and every two hours while they remain outdoors. Sunscreen is available at the centre for use and application upon arrival.

Hygiene practices

Our centre follows thorough cleaning procedures on a daily basis. Handwashing is one of the most effective methods in minimising the spread of infection. Educators, children, families and visitors are encouraged to wash their hands throughout the day, and at arrival and departure times. Sanitising gel is available in the foyer for your use.



Safety starts with me, you, us.



Our Safety Commitment

Fees

Method of payment

We work with families to set up regular direct debit payments which consider your full fee payments for the entire year. Simply complete the direct debit form through the Storypark Manage Family Portal. Remember, if you're entitled to the Child Care Subsidy (CCS), a percentage of your fees will be paid direct to our centre, so you only need to pay the balance, each billing cycle.

Fee responsibilities

To commence your child's enrolment, please pay your first week, plus one week in advance. Fees are charged for every booked day, whether your child is in attendance or not.

If at any time you experience significant financial hardship, or have trouble maintaining your fees, please speak to your Centre Manager, and notify Centrelink.

If your direct debit fees are dishonoured regularly, your child's care may be postponed or suspended. If extraordinary circumstances cause you to fall behind, Affinity Education Group, using its absolute discretion, may offer a payment plan to bring your account back to credit.

The Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

The Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is available for eligible families. This is a single payment system made directly to childcare services, which supplements the fees paid by families.

The percentage of CCS you will receive is calculated according to your estimated annual family income, level of approved activity and type of childcare. To receive the CCS, you must create or update your family account with Centrelink (Services Australia) online prior to your child's first day of care. If you do not do this, you will pay full fees for your child's care.

To receive your entitled CCS, you must sign your child in and out of the centre each day at our digital kiosks

and confirm any absent days upon return. Children are entitled to 42 absent days per financial year.

The Family Assistance Office outlines exceptions to the 42 allowable absences in a financial year, if your child requires more absent days.

Any fees applied to your account due to late collection of your child are not subject to CCS.

CCS and immunisation

In order to receive CCS your child must be up to date with their immunisations according to the National Immunisation Schedule Program. Simply complete the History Status form through the Storypark Manage Family Portal. For any subsequent vaccinations your child receives, please inform your Centre Manager.

Absences

Absences at the start or end of an enrolment

There are some circumstances where families can get CCS if an absence occurs in the first or last 7 days attending our service:

- » before a child's first attendance at your service (inclusive of their first day), or
- » after their last physical attendance at your service (inclusive of their last day).

These circumstances are:

- » the service has changed ownership
- » the child's usual service is closed, and the child attends a different service under the same provider
- » a family tragedy has occurred
- » the enrolment ceased incorrectly

Allowable absences

Families can get CCS when their child is absent from a session of care, they would normally attend for up to 42 days per child, per financial year.

Families can use their absence days for any reason. They don't need to provide evidence.

In shared care arrangements, the allowable absences count is allocated to the child, not to each individual parent.

If a child is enrolled in more than one session of care on the same day (such as before and after school care) and is absent for one of those sessions, it is counted as one absence day.

Changes to bookings and cancellation

For any changes in bookings, a minimum of two weeks' written notice is required, or else regular fees will be applied.

If you wish to cancel your child's booking or change from a permanent booking to a casual booking, four weeks' notice is required. Please speak with your Centre Manager to initiate this.

If you do not give notice of your child's cancellation, four weeks' full fees will be applied.

IMPORTANT - LAST DAY OF CARE

Affinity Education Group strictly adheres to the Australian Government's Centrelink regulations regarding 'Cessation of Care'.

Your child must be signed in and signed out on their final booked day of care.

If this does not occur, your Child Care Subsidy entitlements will not apply and you will be charged full fees on your account. (Unless the circumstance of the absence is listed under allowable absences on page 18 of the family handbook)

The Child Care Subsidy cannot be applied after your child's final booked day if you have not signed your child in and out. The CCS policy states that if a child is unable to attend their final day due to illness and cannot be physically present, a medical certificate must be provided in order to claim CCS for that last day.

Please, speak with your Centre Manager and plan to sign in and out BEFORE your child's final day, to avoid incurring any debt.

Refunds

If you are eligible for a refund, you will be provided with an online 'Refund eForm' by your Centre Manager. Approved refunds will be paid within two weeks.

Holiday Discounts and Public Holidays

Fees are charged for all statutory public holidays which fall when your child has a permanent booking unless your Centre Manager advises otherwise.

Affinity Education Group offers families with a permanent booking a 35% holiday discount, available in day blocks (including public holidays) for up to 2 weeks equivalent of your permanent booking pattern.

To use your holiday discount, families must apply in writing using the approved form supplied by their Centre Manager a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the date. Please note, your family account must be paid up to date in order to qualify for the holiday discount.

Unplanned Centre Closures

Where a centre is closed due to events outside our control, including for storms, flood, fire, cyclone and the like, fees may continue to be charged for up to two days following such closure.



Governance

Privacy

Our centres are committed to complying with the Australian Government Privacy Laws for the fair handling of personal information. Our centres respect families' right to privacy of their personal information and our staff will follow strict procedures to protect information collected, stored and used as part of the business operation. Our full policy can be found on our website.

Child protection

Our educators have a duty of care, a legal and ethical obligation, to act in the best interest of children and to protect them from risk of harm or neglect. If our Centre Manager or educators come to suspect a child may be at risk of harm or neglect, they will follow strict legislative procedures to support the child and to report their concern to the relevant regulatory authority responsible for child safety.

Termination of enrolment

Termination of enrolment may be enforced under the following conditions:

- » inappropriate, abusive or threatening behaviour from a parent, family member, or their associate, towards children, educators, families or other visitors at the centre
- » ongoing physically or verbally aggressive behaviour by a child where other children and educators are at risk
- » continual lateness or non-payment of fees
- » for any other reason in our absolute discretion

Any such termination of enrolment may be effective immediately without notice. The centre is not required to give reasons. A refund of fees will be forwarded to the parents where the account is in credit.

Grievances

Our Centre Manager and educators hope to create a trusting relationship with you in which we all feel comfortable sharing questions or concerns.

Misunderstandings can occur when issues are not communicated effectively. If you have a grievance, we recommend addressing your child's educator first, or your Centre Manager, depending on the nature of the grievance. If a mutually acceptable outcome has not been reached, your grievance can be escalated to our management.



Our People



Role of a Centre Manager

We love our Centre Managers! On top of managing daily business operations and ensuring our centres meet and exceed National Quality Standards, our Centre Managers are valued and respected members of our team, and more often than not, they also become part of each family's village over the years children attend our centres.

Our Centre Managers have unique roles in our early education communities. From warmly welcoming and supporting families at their centre, to mentoring and assisting their team through their professional growth.

They proudly display our Affinity Values in order to guide and support the educators and families of their centre. Above all, they inspire and motivate their team each day.

Role of an Assistant Centre Manager

Working in partnership with our Centre Managers and Centre Support Office teams, Assistant Centre Managers are valuable members of the Affinity team.

All our incredible Centre Managers need a go-to person to support them in maintaining the success of their centres. The valuable work of our Assistant Centre Managers is critical in leading and motivating educators to build a positive and enjoyable work environment. In addition to assisting with the day-to-day operations of the centre, our Assistant Centre Managers also build long-lasting relationships with the local community and families.

Role of a Trainee Educator

All fees and study time - PAID! Our trainee educators play a vital role in helping children develop a lifelong love of learning from the very start of their career journey!

Our centre trainees might be a high school student dreaming of an exciting career, a professional looking for a change, a family-driven parent wanting a flexible career, or simply someone truly passionate about nurturing the smallest members of our community.

At Affinity Education, all our trainees are accredited through our Affinity Learning Academy where they can pursue a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care while supported by our Affinity Education Team and fellow centre team.

Role of an Educator

Facilitating fun and engaging learning programs, our Educators are the heart of our centre communities. They are warm, welcoming, and instill a lifelong love of learning in every child.

Our Educators know the value of high-quality early learning in a child's first five years. We make it our daily endeavour to ensure each child in their care is empowered to reach their full potential.

Supported by the Affinity Education Team, who offer training and mentoring in the Lifelong Learning Curriculum, our Educators become confident experts in early childhood education.

All Educators working in our centres either hold or are working towards early childhood qualifications. With flexible on-the-job training opportunities that allow them to earn while continuing to learn, the Affinity Learning Academy makes it easy for our people to become Educators - or to progress to the next step in their career.

Role of a Teacher

Our Early Childhood Teachers delivering Kindergarten and Preschool programs for 3-5 year old children are highly respected professionals with access to career support, training, collaboration and further opportunities.

Working as an Early Childhood Teacher with Affinity Education means holding a highly respected and integral position, offering the chance to enjoy flexibility, creativity and serious fun, every single day.

Our teachers are motivators, leaders and have a love of not only teaching the next generation of little learners but passing their knowledge on to the next generation of Early Childhood Teachers.



Role of a Cook

We take pride in ensuring our children enjoy healthy and nutritious meals that are aligned with their needs. This would not be possible without our creative and innovative Cooks who are committed to making healthy habits fun!

From cooking classes with the children to the delicious and creative dishes they prepare, our Centre Cooks are some of the most popular people in our centres.

Each day our Centre Cooks prepare a wide variety of nutritious meals and purees for the children and babies in our centres, taking the time to involve the children in meal preparation and healthy food education. Creativity is essential when satisfying a number of young food critics every day, as is care, to ensure children's daily nutritional needs, and any individual cultural or dietary requirements are being met. Please take a minute to say hello to your centre's cook!



Do you love what our team do for children every day?

Would you consider a career in early education and care? Are you returning to work after maternity leave and interested in a career change?

Speak to your Centre Manager about getting in touch with our People and Culture team – your dream job might be right here!

+ Visit our Careers Page at careers.affinityeducation.com.au



Love.
Learn.
Grow.



Follow us on Social Media @TheAffinityWay

 1800 CHILD CARE