



Family Handbook

treetops
EARLY LEARNING CENTRES





Welcome to Treetops!

Proudly SA owned and operated

Our centres are designed with children's care, education and comfort in mind. There are large, well equipped indoor play areas with well appointed bathroom areas for those children that are toilet trained, with access to these from either indoors or outdoors.

The centre is open 52 weeks of the year (excluding weekends and public holidays) from 6:30am to 6:30pm.

We believe that the most important thing in childcare is offering the highest level of quality care for children. Children must be free to play and learn while feeling safe and secure in their environment. Parents feel comfortable and relaxed at Treetops making the emotional decision of placing your child in care an easy one.

The centres kitchens are designed to provide all meals and snacks that children will require during the day.

We have great staff, state of the art facilities, exceptional educational programs and pride ourselves on offering the best care in SA, we look forward to seeing you and your children soon.

Welcome to Treetops Early Learning Centres, proudly South Australian owned and operated

We look forward to a long association with you and your children at Treetops Early Learning Centre.

Jackie Jackman



Enrolling & starting with us

Thank you for choosing to enrol your child at Treetops Early Learning Centres. Your Director will organise orientation visits so you and your child can become familiar with your centre and Educators. This is a great opportunity for you to ask lots of questions, and to find out where everything is located and for us to learn more about you, your child and your family.

Centre Philosophy

- We believe that every child is a distinct individual, bringing their unique background, interests, and talents to the learning environment.
- Our conviction is that children absorb knowledge most effectively when it is presented through play. In this approach, educators become facilitators of play, guiding experiences that yield optimal developmental outcomes. This method embraces all areas of development while resonating with each child's individual interests and curiosities.
- We strive to foster a nurturing atmosphere that empowers all children to make appropriate choices and engage in decision-making and problem-solving, all within a safe and non-threatening environment.
- Our goal is to create a high-quality, inclusive, and age-appropriate learning space that extends the interests and abilities of every child. This is done with careful consideration of their physical needs, cultural backgrounds, and family dynamics.
- We are dedicated to building children's confidence and self-esteem by encouraging them to articulate their thoughts, feelings, and actions assertively and respectfully. Each child's expressions will be met with understanding and respect, helping them feel valued.
- Our centre is committed to promoting an environment that celebrates equality and diversity, ensuring that all children, families, and educators feel welcomed and treasured as integral members of our community.
- We invite parents to partner with us in striving for the best possible learning and developmental outcomes for their children. We encourage open communication and active participation in our centre's programs, creating a strong and collaborative relationship.
- Committed to sustainability, we are determined to lessen our environmental impact through eco-friendly practices, instilling in our community a sense of responsibility toward the planet.
- We actively promote the professional growth of our educators, encouraging them to deepen their understanding of the Early Childhood industry through continued education and participation in specialised training and workshops provided by the centre.
- We prioritise healthy eating habits by fostering nutritious food choices in early childhood. We believe that instilling these habits in children during their formative years significantly contributes to their physical, emotional, and mental well-being.
- Our outdoor spaces are thoughtfully designed as natural extensions of our indoor learning environments. Inspired by the Reggio Emilia philosophy, we view the environment as a third teacher, rich with endless opportunities for exploration, imagination, and creativity.

Centre Goals

For the children of Treetops Early Learning Centres, we will:

- Provide a flexible play and learning program that will be based on and extend all children's interests, abilities and learning and development.
- Provide an environment that will meet and extend the needs of all children regardless of the child's interests, abilities, culture and background.
- Recognise and respect cultural differences and similarities and program accordingly, using the family as a primary source of information.
- Ensure that each child has opportunities to reach their developmental and learning goals before moving onto their next challenge.
- Provide a school readiness program that promotes the skills necessary for the child to enter school.
- Ensure children develop an awareness of the greater community through incursions and visitors to the centre.
- Ensure children develop an awareness of sustainable practices and recycling.

For the parents and caregivers of Treetops Early Learning Centres, we will:

- Ensure that we provide high quality care and education to all children.
- Ensure that the health, safety and well-being of all children at the centre is at the highest priority at all times.
- Listen to parents' advice, concerns, and queries and provide appropriate responses.
- Share their child's day with them through various methods of communication including, conversation with educators and the online platform.
- Ensure the environment is welcoming and encourage their contribution and participation in the program and daily activities of the centre.

As educators we will:

- Aim to work as a team that recognises each other's strengths and weaknesses and offers support and encouragement to each individual staff member as well as the team.
- Accept that as well as similarities within a team there are also differences and we will respect these without judgment.
- We will honour and respect the Kaurana lands and their people, giving thanks for sharing the land that we stand on today.
- Aim to offer a high quality care and education program ensuring that all team members have an opportunity to contribute.
- Provide ongoing support for the parents whose children attend the centre.
- Ensure that the environment is always presented in a clean, safe manner that will provide children with invitations to play in purposeful learning environments.

What to bring

The centre supplies all nappies, foodstuffs, and in the case of older children, drinks being water and/or milk.

Spare changes of clothing along with any comforters e.g. dummy, 'ruggy' or that special comfort toy are also advisable. All items should be packed in a suitable bag e.g. child's back pack and labelled with your child's name.

Hats and sunscreen are necessary for outdoor play and are supplied by the Centre.





Signing in and out

Each child must be signed in and out of the centre every day they attend. This is a legal requirement and is in the interest of your child's safety. These records are used in case of emergencies and for the calculation of the Child Care Subsidy (CCS). If a child is away, ill or on holidays the corresponding days must be advised to the centre directly.

Using Xplor Home to sign your child in and out: The dashboard shows any bookings for the day for your children. If there are no bookings on that day, the child's profile will display with description text there are no bookings.

Collection of your child

To ensure the safety of all children, no child will be released into the care of any persons not registered as authorised by the parent/guardian in the enrolment. If educators do not know the person collecting your child by appearance, the person must be able to produce some form of photo identification to prove that they are authorised to collect the child as per the authorised information.

In the event that a child has not been collected after closing time then the parents/guardians will be contacted on the emergency telephone numbers provided. If the child has still not been collected 30 minutes after closing time then staff will follow the Department of Communities Abandoned Child Procedures including contacting the Child Protection and Crisis Centre 24 hour service.

Where there is a court order or parenting plan in place with specific access instructions relating to parent/guardian, these instructions must be followed. Families must provide the Centre Director with the most up to date information, court orders and parenting plans to ensure correct procedures are followed.

Child Care Subsidy

To aid in the payment of child care fees, the Commonwealth Government (Centrelink – Family Assistance Office) has provided assistance to parents, called Child Care Subsidy (CCS). This assistance contributed by the Australian Government is designed to assist families towards the cost of childcare. Families using approved childcare are able to receive CCS towards the cost of their fees (if they are eligible and have been assessed via the Family Assistance Office). It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to register for CCS. You can access information and forms through www.humanservices.gov.au, your MyGov app or by calling 13 61 50 to speak with a Customer Service Officer.





Flexible Sessions

We know that there is no one size fits all option for our families when it comes to early childhood education and care. That is why we are giving families the freedom to choose which hours best suit their needs.

Full day, 10-hour and 9-hour options are available to all families under the one associated flat fee, enabling you to make the most out of the Child Care Subsidy.

Designed to reduce out of pocket costs and increase access to subsidised hours, the new flexible model is part of our commitment to providing greater access to quality early childhood education and care.



Booking Guidelines

PERMANENT (REGULAR) BOOKINGS

Bookings will follow the Enrolment (Complying Written Agreement) completed by the parent/ legal guardian. 4 weeks' notice is required for families wishing to change or cancel their child's permanent booking or enrolment. (subject to availability) or cease using the service.

Notification in writing must be provided to the Centre Director.

The Centre Director must also be notified in writing or via the Xplor app, if their child will be absent from the centre for any reason. E.g. sickness, holiday etc. All bookings must be paid for, whether the child attends or not. Families must have at least one regular booking on the same day on a weekly basis.

CASUAL BOOKINGS

All casual bookings are subject to availability of places. Bookings must be requested by the Xplor app or emailed through to the Centre Director. Casual bookings can be cancelled with no charge if more than 24 hours written notice is given.

Treetops Early Learning Centres defines a casual booking as a one off booking that is for emergencies, and once off care which may include multiple children from the same family.

Casual bookings are charged at the full day 12 hour rate only. Shorter session times are not available.

ABSENCES

Absences are charged at the same rate and Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is paid for 42 allowable absences, across all services per financial year (which includes public holidays, illness etc). Absences above this number must be accompanied by the appropriate documentation, such as a medical certificate, for the CCS to be paid.

Families are not entitled to receive CCS when their child begins or ceases on an absence. This means a child must be in care on the first day of booked care and the last day of booked care (including the notice period) otherwise full fee for the days the child is not in care will be required for the parent/guardian.

MAKE UP/ REPLACEMENT AND SWAP DAYS

Treetops Early Learning Centres do not make exemptions for changes to permanent bookings by swapping days. If you need an additional day to your regular booking you can request a casual day via the Xplor app.

As per the Payment of Fees Policy all fees must be paid on a fortnightly basis including any absent days.

Substitute days are not provided if your child misses their permanent day(s) for any reason.

HOLIDAYS

Public Holidays are charged in full if they fall on a day when your child is booked to attend.

Holidays are taken into consideration and the allowances are as follows:

- 50% fees for up to 30 days per financial year with enrolments that are two or more permanent bookings per week.

To receive the holiday discount, you must:

1. apply in writing to your Centre Director at least two (2) weeks prior.
2. take the holiday absence is a two week (14 day) block.

If your taking holidays less than the required two weeks you will be charged at the normal rate.

PAYMENT OF FEES

The outstanding fees are debited from your nominated account every second Monday in arrears (please check with your Centre Director when your first debit will be). Fees are charged for all days your child is booked into the Centre, including Public Holidays, sick/absent days and annual holidays.

Payment may be made by Direct Debit or Credit Card (surcharge applies to credit card transactions). Statements are available at anytime through Xplor.

LATE FEES

After Hours Collection: Late fees will be charged when children remain at the centre after 6:30pm. Any part of the first 15 minutes will incur a fee of \$50 per child and then a rate of \$2.00 per minute; per child.

Treetops ELC have a 15-minute grace periods on each side of all sessions. If you have not picked up within the session times you will automatically be charged \$10 per child per 15 minutes. If you would like to review your current session times please talk to your Director.

We also remind you that signing your child in and out is a compulsory and essential for our compliance records. As a result, if you do not sign your child/ren in or out Treetops Early Learning Centres will be charging you a full day 12 hour session.



Open Door Policy

You're welcome to drop in and see your child or speak with an educator. You don't need to call and tell us you are coming, you are welcome at any time. We'd love for you to come in and join in our programs - your participation is valued.

Child Care Policies and Procedures

Our centre has a number of policies and procedures pertaining to the care of your child. Our policies are located in the centre foyer and are available to review at any time. For more information on our centre policies please speak with your Centre Director.

ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

Our educators take a proactive approach to safety and conduct thorough risk assessments of all play areas so that each child can feel safe and free to explore their environment.

A Senior First Aid qualified staff member is present at all times as well as nominated asthma and anaphylaxis supervisors. Should an accident or sudden illness occur, educators will immediately commence first aid and you will be contacted to collect your child.

In emergency situations you will be advised of the plan of action regarding further medical treatment. During an emergency, if you or your authorised nominee cannot be contacted, the Centre Director will provide the ambulance officers with information regarding your child and a team member known to the child will accompany them to the hospital and stay until you arrive. Full documentation of the incident will be made available.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE

Children and educators are actively encouraged to practice good personal hygiene to minimise the instances of illness. We also believe that if your child is ill, the best place for them is to be at home where they can recover faster.

If your child presents at the centre with signs of illness, the Centre Manager or Responsible Person in Charge may advise that they are not well enough to participate in the day's activities. You will be asked to make alternative arrangements until they are well or the exclusion period has ended (you may be asked to provide a medical clearance letter before your child can return). Additionally, if your child requires medication such as Panadol prior to attending the centre, it is an indication that they may not be fit for childcare on that day. We ask parents to carefully assess their child's health before coming to the centre, ensuring a safe and healthy environment for all.

Although this can be inconvenient for parents, it is in the interests of all children and families at the centre to minimise the risk of infection. Should your child become ill during the day, documentation and first aid will commence, and you may be contacted to collect your child from the centre and seek further medical advice. It is important that you read the centre's medication policy carefully to know when educators can administer medications. A list of common infectious illnesses, their exclusion periods and policies and procedures related to illness and minimising the spread of infectious diseases are available on the next page.

Our Educators cannot diagnose medical conditions, therefore as a high temperature can be a sign of illness any child with a temperature over 37.8 will be excluded from the centre.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

Emergency evacuations as well as lockdown procedures are regularly practiced and the centre has individual plans for local emergencies. Fire extinguishers are strategically located throughout the centre.

As part of our fire safety measures all children in attendance are noted from the electronic sign in device in the event of a drill or Please ensure you sign your child 'IN' and 'OUT' of the centre each day.

IMMUNISATION

As part of your enrolment process you will be asked to provide details of your child's immunisation status upon enrolment. A current approved immunisation record needs to be supplied:

- at the time of the child's enrolment;
- after the child turns 7 months of age but before the child turns 9 months of age;
- after the child turns 13 months of age but before the child turns 15 months of age;
- after the child turns 19 months of age but before the child turns 21 months of age;
- after the child turns 4 years and 2 months of age but before the child turns 4 years and 8 months of age.

Records must be provided at these times to show the child is up to date with all immunisations.

MEDICATION

If your child requires medication while in care, a medication record must be filled in and signed by a parent. The medication must be in original packaging and accompanied by a prescription label/doctor's letter which states who the medication is for and the dosage.

Medication must be handed to a staff member and will be stored in a locked cupboard. Under no circumstances is any type of medication to be left in children's bags. Please refer to the Medication Policy for further information. Paracetamol based medications will not be administered to children with a temperature, fever or pain, as this often masks the symptoms of illness.

REST AND SLEEP

Rest and sleep routine varies according to individual needs. We aim to make rest time a relaxed, pleasant time for all children. We provide beds for children and play soft music in the background. Your child may wish to bring a security or comfort item to have at rest time. Please feel free to discuss your child's rest or sleep needs with our educators. Quiet activities are available for those children who do not sleep.

Educators regularly undertake safe sleep training as per the regulations and will provide families information on safe sleep practices where necessary.

Sun Protection

We aim to promote an awareness of the dangers of exposure to the sun, use of appropriate skin protection (clothing and sunscreen) and actively encourage a role model life style practices that will offer protection from the sun.

All children, staff and visitors to the centre are provided with hats and encouraged to wear broad brimmed or legionnaire style hats when involved in outdoor activities.

In line with the Department for Education and Cancer Council SA guidelines, a combination of sun protection measures will be used from 1 August to 30 April, and whenever the UV is 3 and above at other times. Staff are encouraged to access the daily sun protection times via the SunSmart app, my uv or the BOM websites to assist with implementing this policy.

Staff will apply SPF 30+ broadspectrum sunscreen supplied by the centre to all children at least 20 minutes before children go into the outdoor area and reapplied at least 2 hourly.

Treetops Early Learning Centre is an awarded a "Sun Smart" Centre.



“I love picking my son up at the end of the day to hear the new things he has discovered. He is such a happy, confident and curious little boy. He is always eager to learn and the educators do an amazing job supporting this learning and development!

I struggle to keep up with him most days but you all do this daily with all our children with such grace and enthusiasm! You are helping to develop our future leaders! Thank you!”

Food and Nutrition

Mealtimes at our centre are designed to be calm and enjoyable, creating a relaxed atmosphere where children can develop independence by making choices and feeding themselves when appropriate. We encourage staff to sit with the children during meals, join in their conversations, and make these times social and interactive experiences.

For our infants, foods are carefully prepared to meet their unique needs, ensuring they receive the appropriate nutrition. Additionally, we provide a dedicated space for breastfeeding mothers, supporting their choice to breastfeed and offering a comfortable environment.

We are committed to meeting all children's dietary requirements, whether due to health conditions or cultural preferences. However, in situations where particular needs cannot be met by the centre, we will work closely with parents to provide adequate food.

If a child decides not to partake in the main meal, they will still be provided with a selection of items from a follow-up platter, ensuring all children have access to nutritious food options.

To ensure the safety of all children, the centre does not serve any nut-based products. In line with the "Food Safety Program," we cannot accept food items brought from home to be shared among the children. This policy helps us maintain high standards of food safety and dietary management within our centre.





Dental Care

Treetops Early Learning Centres prioritise the dental health of all our children. Due to the practical challenges of using and storing children's toothbrushes onsite, we have established a comprehensive dental hygiene policy to encourage good oral health practices throughout the day.

To support this, we minimise sugary foods and drinks which help reduce the risk of cavities and promote healthier eating habits. We also ensure that fresh water is always available for children to drink, encouraging them to choose water as their primary beverage.

Additionally, dental care is integrated into our educational program. We include activities and lessons that emphasise the importance of maintaining good oral hygiene, making sure children understand the benefits of brushing their teeth and taking regular care of their gums and teeth.

To further support our commitment to dental health, we offer six-monthly dental check-up visits for all enrolled children at no additional cost. These check-ups are conducted by qualified dental professionals who visit our centre, ensuring that each child receives regular dental assessments and guidance on maintaining healthy teeth and gums.

Preschool Program

Treetops Early Learning Centres aim to simplify the process of finding a Kindergarten, understanding how overwhelming it can be for families. Our program aligns with the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and adheres to the same curriculum requirements and quality standards as a stand-alone Department for Education kindergarten.

This includes having a qualified Early Childhood Teacher to plan and deliver each kindergarten session, fostering a high-quality learning environment.

By staying with us for Kindergarten, your child will have fewer transitions before starting school, helping them feel more secure and happy. This continuity supports their learning and wellbeing. Our flexible Kindergarten program is designed to fit your family's needs, giving your child a great start to their education in a familiar, caring environment.

If you'd like more information, please contact your Director.





Behaviour Guidance

Guiding children's behaviour is an integral part of our everyday program at the centre. Our goal is to help children interact positively and respectfully with their peers, adults, and the environment, fostering their social and emotional development.

Our Educators continuously monitor and adjust the environment, daily routines, and programs we offer. We ensure that these elements provide a secure, engaging, and supportive atmosphere conducive to positive behaviour. We encourage children to use the "Protective Behaviours Program" (Stop - I don't like it), which teaches them to assertively communicate their boundaries. This program helps children develop vital skills to handle conflicts and protect themselves in various situations safely and confidently.

Understanding the consequences of their actions is another crucial part of our behaviour guidance approach. We help children realise how their behaviour impacts themselves and others, promoting accountability and empathy. Positive behaviours are reinforced through praise and encouragement, while inappropriate behaviours are addressed with logical and natural consequences, helping children learn from their experiences.

We are committed to working with families to provide consistent, nurturing behaviour guidance that supports each child's individual needs and promotes their overall well-being and development.

