

Welcome to our centre

At Mentone Park Childcare and Pre School, each child is given lots of opportunity and support to play, laugh, share, hug, love, create, roll, run, jump, crawl, walk, sleep, rest, experiment, imagine, dance, listen, sing and discover – as children need to do! Best of all, they experience these wonders with no more than 34 children.

Mentone Park Childcare and Pre School provides:

- Individual care for children from 6 months to school age
- Regulation child/staff ratios
- Meeting all National Quality Standard Areas
- Qualified Early Childhood Educators
- Opportunities for children to develop according to individual needs
- A happy and relaxed environment
- Incorporated Kindergarten Program within the long day care setting, implemented by a Bachelor of Early Childhood Teacher
- Recognised music program ‘LITTLE FEET’
- An embedded ‘Beach Kinder’ Program
- A ‘Bush Kinder’ Program
- A language program (ELLA) for the children in their year before school – learning Italian
- An online communication system – “Storypark” for communication between educators and families

For more information telephone
Approved Provider: Summer Zhu on
(03)9584 2768 or email
admin@mentoneparkchildcare.com.au
Approved Provider No: PR-40033110

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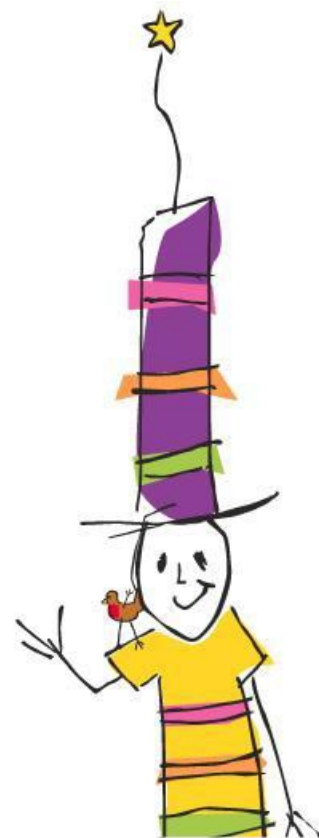


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Introduction

Four decades of experience supporting local families

Mentone Park Child Care and Pre School is a private centre and a family business. Our Centre was first established by Colena Grimshaw in 1972. It was one of the first childcare centres in the local community. Colena Grimshaw, a nurse and mother of seven children, recognised the need for quality childcare. Colena was a great believer of supporting families and single parents who relied on childcare for respite care, study or work.

Colena and her staff cared for children from the age of six months to school age. Staff at our Centre all lived in Acacia Avenue or within very close walking distance. The educators were all mothers and had qualifications in caring for children or had the special qualities needed for childcare. Colena sold the business after ten years of operation in 1982. The Centre was returned to the Grimshaw family in 1998. Colena's eldest daughter, Tonia, owned and operated the centre for 26 years. The centre's new owner and Approved Provider, Summer Zhu, took over in June, 2024.

National Quality Framework

The National Quality Framework covers most education and care services. The National Quality Framework aims to provide clearer and comprehensive information for families so they can choose the best services for their child. The National Quality Framework focuses on seven quality areas:

Educational program and practice	The educational program is stimulating, engaging and enhances children's learning and development.
Children's health and safety	Every child's health and wellbeing is safeguarded and promoted.
Physical environment	The physical environment is safe, suitable and provides a rich and diverse range of experiences, which promote children's learning and development.
Staffing arrangements	Staffing arrangements create a safe and predictable environment for children and support warm, respectful relationships.
Relationships with children	Relationships that are responsive, respectful and promote a sense of security and belonging among children.
Collaborative partnership with families and communities	Collaborative relationships with families are fundamental to achieve quality outcomes for children. Community partnerships that focus on active communication, consultation and collaboration also contribute to children's learning and wellbeing.
Governance and Leadership	Effective leadership contributes to sustained quality relationship and environments that facilitate children's learning and development. Well-documented policies and practices that are developed and regularly evaluated contribute to ethical management of the service.

Educators at Mentone Park Child Care and Preschool are continually working on our Quality Improvement Plan as part of the assessment process in meeting accordance with the National

Quality Framework and Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011. We have been rated as meeting all the National Quality Standards in January, 2024. The QIP is available in the office for parents to view at any time and contribute to. The National Law and Regulations are available to view in the main foyer. Our policies are kept in the office for viewing at any time.

Mentone Park Childcare & Preschool Centre Philosophy

We recognise and respect the Boonwurrung People, of the Kulin Nation, as the traditional custodians of the land on which we learn and play. We value their knowledge and culture, which we embed in our practices and in our environment.

Our educators are dedicated to providing play-based programs, with a balance of child-initiated and educator-initiated experiences and interactions. The National Quality Framework, and the Early Years Learning & Development Framework guide our planning, and are embedded within our programs. We are influenced by Montessori as we encourage children to be independent, make decisions and take on roles of responsibility. We are influenced by Vygotsky as we identify and celebrate what the child can already do, and target our support and guidance at what they are ready to do next. We are also influenced by Reggio Emilia, as we believe children should have endless ways and opportunities to express themselves, and as we ensure there are a range of natural resources to explore and engage with.

Our educators are knowledgeable, professional, and offer unique skills to an inclusive team environment. We understand that the role we play is crucial in the lives of the children, and strive to be positive role models at all times. We value respectful relationships, investing time in getting to know the children as individuals, and acknowledging that children who build trusting relationships have a secure base for exploration and learning. We value the long-lasting relationships we build with families, and appreciate their commitment to our service. We educate the children on the importance of being inclusive and accepting of similarities and differences.

Our educators understand that transitions can provide both opportunities and challenges for the children, and aim to assist them to understand the routines and practices of the settings to which they are moving, and to feel comfortable with the process of change. We transition the children from Babies and Toddlers Room to Kindergarten gradually and with care, ensuring the child is socially and emotionally ready, not just ready by age. We also acknowledge that going to school is a big transition in the children's lives and we aim to ensure they go into the next stage of their life with confidence, resilience and a positive attitude towards learning.

Our educators value and take pride in the environment both inside and out, providing flexible spaces that are responsive to the interests, abilities and learning styles of each child. We invite the children to join us in caring for our environment, this includes caring for the garden and planting seasonal vegetables and herbs. Sustainable practices are embedded and we continuously reflect on how we, as a team of early childhood educators, can reduce our environmental footprint. We take pride in the space we have created for children to play, explore, and develop a love for learning, and are committed to providing a warm, caring, positive environment for children and their families at all times.

Enrolling your child

Before children begin attending our Centre, a parent must complete an enrolment form. Filling in this form can be a part of your child's first and most important visit to our Centre. Your child can observe the other children at play, their interaction with educators and participate in our Centre's daily routine.

Please ensure that all information requested on the enrolment form is filled in accurately and that you sign the completed form. A Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Statement will also be attached to the enrolment form.

Orientation

The orientation process at our Centre is designed to help both child and parents to feel relaxed and happy before permanent care commences. There is no charge for orientation and it is usually for a few hours. Times are arranged to suit each individual to help them settle in to a full day of care.

Changes to enrolment information

If there are any changes to the information given to us on the original enrolment form, please notify us immediately. This is particularly important in respect of emergency contact persons, change of address, and email address.

Variety of care offered

At the time of enrolment, bookings can be made on a part-time or full-time basis. If there is no immediate vacancy to meet your needs, your child's name can be placed on our waiting list. The Director will contact parents when a suitable vacancy becomes available. Casual bookings for children enrolled at our Centre are also accepted where there is a vacancy. We do not allow swapping of days, however you may take an extra day if one is available.

We ask that all children under 3 years of age, attend a minimum two days a week. This makes for a more settled child and for educators to form a quality bond with your child. The rooms also become more settled if the children are more familiar with the personalities and individuals needs in their room on a day-to-day basis.

3-5 year old children may attend one day per week, however if a child is needing funded Kindergarten, they will be given priority, this may mean that you could be asked to change your day or lose the one day of care.

Educators

The educators at Mentone Park Child Care Centre are part of a caring, efficient, vibrant and innovative team. All educators are responsible for each child's welfare throughout the day's program. Cross caring is a natural occurrence at our Centre. This means that your child becomes familiar and comfortable with all the educators at our Centre.

Educator ratios are in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.

The educators are led by our Educational Leader, Amisha Chopra.

All educators are encouraged to attend Professional Development programs on many aspects of Early Childhood Development and team building strategies. Educator meetings are held within the rooms regularly to ensure our service is running at its optimum. Staff meetings are

held after hours, throughout the term. Occasionally, staff will need to travel after working hours to attend professional development. In these instances, the centre may need to close at 5.30pm. Families will be given prior notice when this will occur.

Educator to child ratios – National Quality Standard

The educator ratio for children under three years of age is one educator to four children, one Diploma qualified educator for every 12 children.

The educator ratio for children over three years of age (up to and including preschool age) is one educator for eleven children, one Diploma qualified educator for every 30 children.

The Centre has Kindergarten Teachers implementing our 3–5 year-old Kinder Program which is in keeping with Current Legislation (Jan 2018)

Arrival and departure

Children's Attendances must be recorded electronically using the Ipad which is located in the entry foyer. Please ensure your child is signed in on arrival and signed out on departure. We also require you to notify us of your child's estimated time of departure and the person who will be collecting your child. This information is to be written on the daily pick up register sheet next to the Ipad. The electronic sign in is a legal requirement and a safety issue in the event of an emergency evacuation situation.

Please note that, on first meeting with all educators, you may be required to show some identification to pick up your child. This is in ensuring your child's safety as part of our Centre's process.

At morning drop off, please ring the door bell to alert staff of your arrival. Enter the foyer and an educator will meet you and will assist your child to hang their bag and wash hands. Please apply sunscreen to your child before arriving at day care during the months of December, January and February. Educators will apply /assist to apply sunscreen at other times when the UV is 3 or above. (Please refer to our Sunsmart Policy)

If someone other than a parent, guardian or other authorised person named on your child's enrolment form is going to collect your child from our Centre, we require a letter of authorisation from a parent or guardian. We also require Photo ID such as a driver's licence or Passport from an authorised person before your child can be removed from our Centre.

The Responsible Person and educators must be given prior notification where collection arrangements differ from the normal routine.

When the person collecting a child differs from the name written on the pick up register, the parent must notify the centre. If no prior notification has been given, the person in charge will ring the parent for confirmation of collection of child by that person.

Please remember that our Centre closes at 6.00pm and educators expect children to be collected no later than 6.00pm. A late fee will be charged if your child is collected after 6.00pm. Parents must notify us if they are going to be late. If you are running late, please arrange for your emergency contact person to collect your child for you before 6.00pm. Make sure you telephone us to inform staff of the name of the person who will be collecting your child and the time you expect that person to arrive at our Centre. If contact has not been made, Educators will enforce our Late Pick up Policy.

Home routines

Please inform our educators of your home routine so that we can follow your chosen routine as closely as possible. Educators will ask you for information concerning your child's home routine.

Settling your child

It takes some children longer than others to adapt to an unfamiliar environment. Do not be too concerned if your child is initially apprehensive about attending our Centre. This is natural. Discuss any concerns with the Director and educators as they are trained to deal with such matters.

The following steps are useful for settling new children:

- Visit our Centre at least once before your child's first day. Feel free to move about our Centre and let your child familiarise themselves in the security of your presence.
- Once you have said goodbye to your child, it is wise to leave immediately.
- Reassure your child that you will be back.
- Do not try to slip out while your child is distracted.

Please do not leave your child without acknowledging an educator.

It may take 6-8 weeks for some children to settle. Others may settle immediately. No two children are the same. New children will first of all become familiar with one educator during the settling in period before spending more time with the other educators. Families will be kept informed of how their child is settling in via text message, photos and verbal communication throughout their first few weeks of care.

What to bring each day

Please provide your child with a small backpack, clearly labelled with your child's name, which should contain a range of items depending on your child's age as listed below. Nappies and Nappy wipes are supplied by our Centre.

Babies will need:

- One nappy. Your baby will be changed into their own home nappy before you collect them.
- Two changes of clothes according to season. Please include socks and clearly label all clothing with your child's name.
- A small-labelled container to store your child's dummy in if your child uses one.
- Sleep comforter or sleeping bag if required
- Formula and bottles. Formula will be made up per bottle as needed. Please supply the centre with an unopened tin of formula.
- Nappy rash cream if required. The centre provides Sudocream.
- Water bottle/sipper cup.
- Sun smart hat (warmer months)
- Beany and jacket (cooler months)

1- and 2-year olds will need:

- A baby bottle if required. Our Centre provides full cream milk.

- Two changes of clothes according to season. Label all clothing with your child's name.
- A spare pair of shoes
- For children in nappies, please supply a home nappy. This will be labelled with your child's name
- Six pairs of underpants for children who are toilet learning. A couple of pairs of underpants for children that are already confident in toileting. We ask that you do not send your child in overalls for their ease and confidence when going to the toilet.
- Water bottle
- Sun Smart hat
- Beany and jacket (cooler months)

3- to 5-year olds will need:

- A change of clothes according to season. Please label all clothing with your child's name.
- One change of underpants
- A spare pair of shoes.
- A personal drink bottle that fits into the outdoor pigeon holes (please check with an educator)
- Sun Smart hat (warmer months)
- Beanie and jacket (cooler months)

Meals

Our Centre is 'Food Safe Handling' certified

Each day we provide breakfast, morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and a late snack. Our cook implements a menu, which caters for the likes and nutritional needs of all children. Special dietary requirements are catered for. If your child does not eat the main meal, the second course will be offered. Below is the daily eating routine for children at our Centre.

Breakfast: From 7.30am – 8.30am. If your child arrives without breakfast after this time, pre-cooked toast and a milk drink can be offered to your child if required. Breakfast consists of toast, cereal and milk/milo or water.

Morning tea: From 9.30am. Morning tea includes fresh fruit and water.

Lunch: Babies and Toddlers from 11.15am. Kinder children from 12.30pm.

Lunch consists of two courses. The children are also offered milk or water with lunch.

Afternoon tea: From 2.00pm consisting of cheese and a selection of seasonal fruits, dried fruits and crackers.

Late snack: From 5.00pm. This is a light snack of dry biscuits, fruit and water.

Food and nutrition

Our Nutrition and Food Safety Policy is available in the Policy Manual. Here is what you can expect from us to support your child's nutritional needs:

- Children will have the choice of milk at breakfast and lunch.
- All dairy products will be full cream.
- If your child cannot have cow's milk, a calcium-fortified alternative will be provided by us.
- All eggs will be grain fed and organic.
- All bread will be wholemeal for its superior nutritional value over highly processed white bread.
- Water will be available at all times.
- Children are able to have second servings of all snacks and meals if available.
- If children do not eat their lunch, they will be offered an alternative meal where possible.
- Parents will be advised if their child has not eaten well or is having difficulty with the eating process and routine.
- Children's individual dietary restrictions and allergies are observed by all educators and are catered for.

Our aims for your children's nutrition and food hygiene

We provide and encourage children to experience a healthy, balanced and nutritious menu.

Food awareness experiences will be included in the teaching curriculum.

Children will be encouraged to get hands-on experience in food preparation.

Children will be encouraged to extend good eating habits at home and to school.

Parents will be encouraged to provide nutritional meals to reinforce the values of good eating habits. We would love you to share a recipe with us that your child enjoys. Parents are welcome to contribute to our menu planning in this way.

Our nutritional program is transparent, interactive and accessible

Educators will have the choice of eating with the children and share the same food. This is generally the norm but sometimes staff may like to have their own lunch due to cultural/religious/dietary reasons. They may also choose to have lunch away from our Centre as part of their break entitlements.

Recipes will be provided from a number of sources. We love to use recipes suggested by parents.

Special occasions will be celebrated in the cultural year with a meal highlighting the event. Recipes for meals will be available for parents.

The weekly menu will be posted on Storypark and also displayed in the foyer for parents/guardians. It will always be appropriate to children's growth, cultural and developmental needs.

Our Centre prioritises food hygiene

We ensure that meals and snack times are conducted in safe, clean, positive environments that promote meaningful interactions between children and others. Children and educators will be required to wash their hands before handling food or eating food.

Gloves will be worn or food tongs used by any educator handling food.

We ask that food is not brought in from home and that there is no food left in children's bags. This enables us to control a safe eating environment. The exception to this is explained in the following section on special dietary requirements. Safe food handling practices will be implemented when preparing and storing foods.

We will work with you on any Special Dietary Requirements

Children with a dietary requirement will be catered for. If specialist foods are required, a child's parent/guardian will need to provide these in consultation with the appropriate educator. This consultation must be documented and dietary requirements displayed in the food preparation area and in the children's room.

Where possible, suitable meals will be planned for children with special dietary needs. For example, gluten-free or vegetarian meals will be on the menu.

Educators will obtain information from parents and health professionals if a child has special dietary requirements and will adhere to the medical recommendations. Please communicate any changes to your child's dietary requirements to Joanna. These will be documented and communicated to our cook and other educators. This can be done via email or by phone. Parents will sign off on any changes or discussions.

Birthdays

If it is your child's birthday, you may wish to bring in a birthday cake, which will be shared with all the children at either lunch or afternoon teatime, following singing of a very loud happy birthday!

Due to safe food handling and special dietary requirements, you will need to provide us with a list of all the ingredients used and the date the cake was made. Small single cupcakes are a great idea to share with the children (store bought or homemade). Please speak to educators prior to your child's birthday.

Educators will ensure a portion of the cake or a single cup cake is used for blowing out the candles and this is given to the birthday child.

If your child is having a birthday party, and you wish to bring invitations to be given to other children, please hand them to an educator who will place them in the child's bag. We will send a text message to the parent to let them know.



Breast milk and formula

We have a policy relating to the use and storage of breast milk and formula, please see the Policies section.

Health

Child Immunisation

Please see a detailed description of our approach under Child Immunisation Policy in the Policy section.

Medication Authority Procedure

All medication brought into our Centre for the purpose of administering to a child during their time of attendance **MUST**:

- be handed over to an educator on arrival
- Prescribed medication (such as antibiotics) must be accompanied by a Medical Certificate from your doctor, stating that the child is fit to attend day care.
- Be noted in the staff communication book
- have the appropriate Medication Authority Form completed and signed by parents
- be collected from an educator upon collection of your child.

For safety reasons we request that you do NOT:

- put medication in the fridge or in any other medication storage without an educator's knowledge
- leave medication in your child's bag

Prescribed medicine

Medication that has been prescribed by a doctor **MUST** be administered in line with requirements and dosage on the label. Prescribed medication must be in the original dispenser/container. The child's name must be on the container.

Medicine purchased over the counter

Any form of medication that has been purchased without a prescription over the counter will not be administered for longer than three consecutive days without a Doctor's written permission. This does not include over the counter creams (e.g. nappy rash creams). The medication must be suitable for the age of the child. The dosage administered must not be more than the recommended dosage for the age/weight of the child.

Herbal remedies

Any form of herbal or natural remedy must be accompanied with a letter from a medical practitioner. It must be in its original container, bearing the original label and instructions, and its expiry date.

Use-by dates

Medication will not be administered to a child if it is passed the 'use-by date'.

Administration of medication

All administration of medication is to be carried out by two educators. Both educators will check all details of the medication in accordance with the label including name of medication, child's name, dosage, frequency and use-by date along with the signed instructions of the parent. The qualified educator will measure and administer the medication while the other person witnesses the administration. Parents will be asked to sign the administration of medication upon collection of their child.

If your child has asthma, epilepsy or is at risk of anaphylaxis, your child's medication must be kept at the centre. You will be notified a few weeks prior to expiry date on all medications. Out of date medications will be returned to the parent and up to date medication must be handed to an educator. (Please refer to our Medical Conditions Policy)

Infectious Diseases

Our policy is based on *Staying Healthy in Child Care*, 5th Edition.

Recommended minimum periods of exclusion from school, preschool and child care centres for cases of and contact with infectious diseases. National Health and Medical Research Council, January 2013. A complete list of exclusion illnesses is included in the section under **Exclusion Policy**. If your child has an infectious disease, you may be requested to bring a medical clearance certificate from a medical practitioner before your child returns to day care.

Sick Children Policy

The health and safety of all children is of major concern to educators and parents using childcare. We ask that sick children do not attend childcare due to possible cross infection. Please keep your child at home. Examples of conditions where children should be kept at home include a burst eardrum, vomiting, diarrhoea, urinary tract infection, hand, foot and mouth disease, conjunctivitis, unidentified rash or a dark green runny nose. Any child or educator suffering from any infectious disease will be excluded from our Centre until complete recovery has been made. In the case of a severe outbreak of a highly infectious disease, notices will be placed in the foyer. Parents will be notified of the infectious disease and the age group of the children infected.

If a child is prescribed medication by a Doctor and it needs to be administered at day care, you are required to obtain a Medical Certificate stating that your child is non-infectious and is fit to attend day care. Antibiotics must be taken for 24 hours before your child can attend day care.

Parents are encouraged to inform educators when their child is unwell and to consult a medical practitioner if your child has symptoms of an infection such as a fever, cough, rash or diarrhoea. Out of courtesy, please inform us if your child will be absent on your booked day.

If your child becomes ill or has an infectious disease whilst at our centre, two educators will first confirm that the child will be sent home before calling you to come and collect your child. If you cannot be contacted, your emergency contact number will be tried. Your child will be offered a quiet place to rest until the arrival of parents/guardian. We expect that a child should be collected within an hour of notification. Your child will be tenderly cared for by an educator. For serious incidents, educators will make the appropriate arrangements for medical treatment if you cannot be contacted.

When groups of children play and learn together, illness and disease can spread from one child to another, even when Educators implement hygiene and infection control practices at all times.

Other illnesses

High Temperature Parents will be contacted if their child's temperature is 38°C or above.

Vomiting Parents will be contacted if their child vomits at day care. Your child

may return to child care once they have been symptom free for at least 24 hours. In cases where there is an outbreak of gastroenteritis, your child must be kept at home for 48 hours after symptoms have stopped.

Diarrhoea Parents will be contacted if their child develops diarrhoea – your child may return once they have been symptom free for at least 24 hours. In cases of an outbreak, your child may return after 48 hours after symptoms have stopped.

Please refer to the Recommended Minimum Exclusion Periods by the National Health and Medical Research, which is included in our Exclusion Policy.

It is understood by our staff/carers, children and families that there is a shared responsibility and mutual interest that the Immunisation and Health-related Exclusion Policy and Procedures are accepted and followed as high priority.

In meeting our Centre's duty of care, it is a requirement under the Occupational Health and Safety Act that management and carers implement and endorse our Centre's Immunisation and Health-related Exclusion Policy and Procedures.

Please do not send your child to day care if they are unwell. Children need to be cared for at home until they have recovered.

Hygiene

Our Staff ensures that our Centre is kept in a healthy and hygienic state at all times. The bathroom area is cleaned twice during the day and when required. The change tables are wiped down and disinfected after each change and Staff wash their hands constantly. Food is stored in appropriate conditions and food waste is disposed of properly. Children's hands and faces are washed before and after meals and hands are washed after toileting. Children and staff wash hands on arrival at the centre and when leaving the centre.

Our Centre is part of the Food Safety Program and is proactive in its implementation.

Our Centre prevents the spread of illness and disease by:

- promoting hand washing and other hygienic practices
- identifying and excluding children/carers with symptoms of an infectious illness or disease
- maintaining clean and hygienic environments
- encouraging child and adult immunisation.

Smoking

Our Centre has a strict NO SMOKING policy in accordance with the Amendment to the Tobacco Act 1987. Smoking is NOT PERMITTED inside the Child Care Centre AT ANY TIME. Smoking is not permitted within four metres of the building. This policy applies to staff, parents and visitors without exception.

Accidents and illness

If your child has an accident or takes ill while in our care, a staff member will document what occurred on the appropriate form and parents must sign and sign it. If two educators believe

an incident or illness is harmful to the child or contagious and/or if medical attention is required, parents will be notified to collect their child. Parents will be notified by phone (or a text message, with a photo attached) of any injury to their child's face and head. Any other injury, a text message will be sent to notify parents and to let them know that there will be a form for them to sign on collection of their child. If you have a preferred parent to contact in the first instance, please make this known to the Educators and on your enrolment form. (A comprehensive Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy is available in the office)

The program

Our Early Years Learning Framework

Educators plan a program of learning experiences, which reflect Mentone Park Child Care and Pre School's philosophy and goals for the children, parents and staff. Our Centre has implemented the Early Years Learning framework. This framework enables parents to see what outcomes are delivered in our centre and how learning experiences are planned based on observations on children's developmental stages and their interests.

The Early Years Learning Framework comprises of five Learning outcomes:

- Identity
- Community
- Wellbeing
- Learning
- Communication

These are reflected in our programs through experiences such as painting, collage, puzzles, project work and science experiences, math games, role-play and music and movement.



Experiences such as painting, collage, puzzles, pre-reading activities, maths games, play dough and clay can all help your child develop fine motor skills and foster cognitive development.

Group experiences include songs, finger plays, rhymes and storytelling, all of which assist children to increase their listening and verbal skills. Outdoor play such as running, swinging and climbing encourages children to refine their gross motor skills. In very warm weather, a special program is set up for children indoors and water play is one example of a favourite learning experience.

Children are able to choose for themselves the learning experiences they would like to be involved in. Educators will support children in making choices, where appropriate. Children are encouraged to develop their independence through daily routines such as toileting, feeding, dressing and packing away.

Educators are required to keep individual learning stories on all children. Such observations are confidential and an appointment may be made at your convenience to discuss your child's progress at our Centre.

Storypark is an app which educator's use to communicate with families to share observations, learning stories, programs, photos and other community posts. Families are able to provide comments and offer feedback. Each family will be invited to join Storypark when their child's enrolment commences.

Please do not expect perfection as your child/children are in their early learning years. Not all children want to do something, which can be seen or taken home. Children also practice other important skills such as social development in our home corner; motor development through manipulating clay or dough; cognitive development and pre-math skills through measuring and using water play or language development through enjoying listening to a story. The children have opportunities throughout each day to increase and enhance their self-help skills.

Our program is always on display

Please read the program displayed in each room and on Storypark. This plan highlights the experiences and learning areas that the children are interested in. Educators will ask for your input throughout the learning cycles.

Group time

Group time experiences include music and movement, rhymes, finger plays, story telling and picture books. In group time the children learn to take turns, share and participate in large groups. The experiences are designed to enhance the children's social and emotional development. Group time is very special as children feel part of our community.

Sleep & Rest time

All children are encouraged to have a sleep or quiet rest period during the day. For those children who do not sleep, quiet experiences are provided after a short rest period. The babies have their own sleep room and they have their own individual sleep patterns. Safe sleep practices are followed and staff take part in on line training. Rest time encourages the children to learn the technique of relaxing and taking time out from a very busy day.

Please view an informative website on sleep:

<https://sleepfoundation.org/sleep-topics/children-and-sleep/page/0/2>

Kindergarten Program

The centre provides a kindergarten program to all children in the 3-5 year room.

This is delivered by a Kindergarten Teacher. Our kinder program is integrated into a Long Day Care setting.

Those children who are not attending another kinder program in a community kindergarten will attract funding to the centre to offset the employment and conditions of our Kindergarten Teachers.

Our 3 and 4 year old Kindergarten program is implemented by trained Kindergarten Teachers. We offer an inclusive play-based program that explores the children's current interests and combines structured learning with purposeful play to create a learning

environment that meets the needs of all children. Our program is inspired by the Reggio Emilia Approach through our encouragement of children to direct their own learning and in partnerships with families. It is also inspired by Montessori through the incorporation of real-life experiences such as children setting tables for lunch, making their own beds and caring for the garden.

Our program supports transitions to school by incorporating the Early Years Learning Framework, encouraging children to have a strong sense of identity and well-being, be connected to the community, to be an active learner, and an effective communicator.

Funded Kindergarten Program

Free Kinder is for all children. Free Kinder will offset out of pocket fees for children attending a Kindergarten program in our LDC Service.

Children can access a minimum 15-hour kindergarten program (or shorter Three-year-old kindergarten) for free. Free Kinder is a fee offset of up to \$2,050. Families may still be required to pay additional fees depending on the number of days their child attends our Service.

To be eligible for Free Kinder, families can only enrol their child in one Free Kinder program at any one time. Families are required to sign a “[Funded Kindergarten Place Declaration Form](#)” to confirm their child is receiving their funded kindergarten program from one service. For information on the following:

- Second Year of Funded Kindergarten
- Exemption from School
- Early Entry to Kindergarten
- Kindergarten starting age
- Kindergarten Inclusion Support and Pre-School Field Officer programs

- School Readiness Funding
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)
- Child Safe Standards

Please refer to the [Kindergarten Funding Guide](#).
<https://www.vic.gov.au/kindergarten-funding-guide>

Observations

Children’s programs are based on observations and Early Years Learning Framework. Observations of the children are made and captured by Educators. Observations may be written, photographic or in the form of art. Observations are then used to implement the program. Planning time is allocated on a weekly basis to the team leader in the room to ensure the program meets the needs of the children in our care. Observations may be viewed by parents/guardians at an arranged time. Parents/guardians are encouraged at all times to contribute to the program with suggestions.

In the 3-5 year old Kinder room, parents, guardians, relatives and siblings are encouraged to attend a kinder session or to assist on an excursion. A mutual time should be arranged with the Kindergarten teacher in charge.

Fees and operating hours

Our operating hours

Mentone Park Child Care and Pre School operates Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 6.00pm sharp, excluding public holidays. The centre closes for approximately two weeks over the Christmas period. Staff meetings are held twice during each term after hours. On these occasions, we may ask that all children be collected no later than 5.30pm. Prior notice will be given for the earlier closure.

Our fees

A \$200.00 bond will be required upon enrolment. At the end of your child's enrolment we will reimburse the bond, providing all fees are up to date. The bond will not be reimbursed if you were to change your mind before commencing child care. We just ask that you provide us with two weeks' written notice via email of your intention to leave. We ask for fees to be paid on a weekly/fortnightly basis. We do not allow swapping of days, however you may take an extra day if one is available.

Daily fee: \$145.00

Weekly fee: \$675.00

Little Feet Music: \$55.00 per term

All Public Holidays are charged. There is no charge when the centre closes over the Christmas period for 2 weeks.

Kinder rebate applies to all funded 3 and 4 year old Kindergarten children.

On Tuesday's the Centre hosts a music program, "Little Feet". Parents of children who attend on Tuesday's will be invoiced for these programs at \$55.00 per child, per school term.

All fees are to be paid electronically. Please include your child's name in the description. Invoices are emailed to families on a weekly basis.

Below are our bank account details:

Account name: AJS. VALENCIA PTY LTD

BSB: 013-483

Account number: 6571-63816

Receipts of payment will be sent to you via email.

Our accounts manager will be following up debts and ensuring all fees are being paid regularly. All debts will be recovered through the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) Civil Disputes – Small Claims. Please be reminded that attending VCAT will be recorded and this will affect future credit ratings of the respondents. This action will not be taken lightly but we are a small business and cannot carry debt. Parents who are experiencing difficulties with payment of fees should speak to the Director.

Child Care Subsidy

On receiving Child Care Subsidy, the percentage calculated by the Family Assistance Office will determine the actual fee charged by our Centre. All absences must be recorded. The information on allowable absences is a directive to all approved child care providers. Please make yourself familiar with the guidelines.

Late Pick-Up Policy (Also refer to detailed 'Delivery to and collection from the Service Policy')

Children must be picked up by 6.00pm. Late pick up fees apply after this time.

When children have not been collected when our Centre closes at 6.00pm, staff are required to pursue the following procedure with the aim to have the child in his/her parent's care as soon as possible.

When a child has not been collected at 6.00pm, the staff member in charge will call the parent(s).

If the parent(s) are unable to be contacted, the emergency contacts on the enrolment form will be called. Where successful contact is made, staff will explain the situation and ask for that contact person to come and collect the child from our Centre as soon as possible. Staff will place a note on the front door with your emergency contact name.

If staff is unable to make contact with the emergency contact and/or the contact person is unable to collect the child, staff will continue to try to contact parent(s). If no one has come to collect your child and/or no contact has been made with parent(s) or emergency contacts and 90 minutes has passed since closing time, staff will call the After Hours Child Protection Service by telephone on 131278 to seek further advice.

Absence due to illness

Normal fees must be paid for permanent bookings even if your child is absent for a few days due to illness. This ensures that your permanent booking is held and that your child's place is not given to someone else.

Christmas break

Our Centre will close on Friday, 20th December, 2024, at 5.00pm for the Christmas break. Fees are not applicable when our Centre is closed.

We will re-open on Tuesday, 7th January, 2025. The centre operates from 7.30am until 4.30pm during the first week. A discount of \$10 per day applies for the first week due to the earlier closing. There is no charge for families who do not return to day care during the first week.

Full fees for all families resume from 13th January, 2025 for all children enrolled at our Centre unless you choose to take your half rate holiday fee, leaving one week holiday fee for the remainder of the year.

Holidays

You may take two week's of holidays during the year and pay half fee for this period. **This must fall in a complete week and a week's notice must be given in writing via email.**

If you intend to take extended holidays (over four consecutive weeks), please discuss with the Approved Provider, Summer Zhu.

Emergency Evacuation Rehearsals: We are required to rehearse our emergency and evacuation procedures every 3 months as per the Education and Care Services National Regulations to ensure the ongoing safety and well being of all children in our care. All rostered staff and enrolled children will be involved in the evacuation and whilst it's essential that all steps of the procedure are strictly carried out, it is conducted in a manner to assist the children in remaining calm and be able to reach the required assembly point in the shortest possible time.