



Parent/Guardian Handbook 2025

Sarah Gregory
Director



Shantaz Arnol
Assistant Director



Janice Deans
Educational Leader



156 Grant Street, Yarram VIC 3971 Phone: 03 5182 5190

Office hours: 8:00am to 4:30pm Monday – Friday

Website: www.yarramelc.com.au Email: admin@yarramelc.com.au

 <https://www.facebook.com/YarramEarlyLearning>

Welcome

Yarram Early Learning would like to acknowledge the Gunaikurnai people, the traditional custodians of our land on which we gather, learn and play and pay our respects to their elders, past, present and future.

The staff at Yarram Early Learning would like to welcome you and your family to our service.

We hope that your time with us will be a rewarding experience for both you and your child. Each of our rooms here at the Centre have been named after creatures which are found in our neighbouring wetlands using the Gunai language:

Yarram Early Learning Centre (YELC) is a non-profit service that opened in July 2015 and is operated by Yarram Early Learning Incorporated. The service is an integrated 141-place Long Day Care/Kindergarten providing care for children aged 8 weeks - Preschool. YELC also run a 30-place Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) service at Yarram Primary School and a 15-place OSHC service at Alberton Primary School providing care for children in Prep-Grade 6. For more information the OSHC Handbook is available from our website.

Ngarawert	Wook Gook	Tarla	Gidi	Bataluk	Tiddalek	Narrt	Ngurran
Butterfly	Owl	Little Fish	Swan	Lizard	Frog	Turtle	Emu
						Yarram OSHC	Alberton OSHC
8 weeks-12 months	12-24 months	2-2.5 years	2.5-3 years	3-year-old Integrated Kinder/LDC	4-Year-old Integrated Kinder/LDC	Prep - Grade 6	Prep – Grade 6

Our staff team currently comprises of a Manager, Assistant Manager, Administration Officer, Finance Officer, Early Childhood Teachers, Early Childhood Educators and Support Workers with various qualifications in Early Childhood Education and Care. The Centre is an accredited Child Care Service, approved and funded by the Commonwealth Government and licensed by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority and is supported by the Department of Education to ensure ongoing compliance with the National Quality Framework.

The OSHC and Early Learning Centre operates 50-51 weeks per year, closing for two weeks over the Christmas/New Year period and on all public holidays.

Committee of Management

YELC is managed by a Committee of Management which is comprised of parents who use the services and other community representatives who have an interest in the operations of YELC. The Committee of Management is responsible for the operations of the Centre ensuring it meets all legal requirements and is financially viable. Parental involvement is very important at an advisory level to ensure the service is meeting family needs. All families are eligible to be on the Committee and are welcome to provide input into the operations of the service at any time. Please feel free to speak to the Manager or staff to raise any ideas or issues. Information on how to join the committee is available from the office.



Philosophy

This philosophy acknowledges the Gunai Kurnai people as the traditional owners of the land where children are growing and learning. Educators are committed to providing learning experiences that reflect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and traditions.

The Yarram Early Learning values of **Respect, Kindness, Honesty and Resilience** are the building blocks that help shape each child's sense of self, identity and how they interact with the world. These values are instilled through everyday interactions with educators, learning experiences, and specialised environments that make up the vibrant tapestry that is Yarram Early Learning.

Yarram Early Learning offers a welcoming, inclusive, safe, and nurturing environment where the rights of children are recognized and respected. The philosophy acknowledges the family as the child's first teacher, and educators work in partnership with parents to ensure that individual family cultures, values, and needs are reflected in the programs.

Educators recognize each child as a unique individual who brings a profile of strengths and abilities to be shared and celebrated across ages and stages of development. They form respectful and positive relationships with children making certain that all feel valued and appreciated for their personal interests and contributions. Sensory rich play-based learning environments are designed to inspire curiosity, open-ended exploration and discovery. They invite engagement which supports each child's development socially, emotionally, cognitively and physically.

Play is considered central for the overall well-being of each child and learning is presented to encourage imaginative hands-on investigations of a wide range of ideas, interests and topics, with teachers scaffolding children's learning as their inquiries unfold. Children are encouraged to engage in project-based learning which provides opportunities for independent and collaborative questioning, decision-making, problem-solving and creative thinking.

Across age groups educators design, implement and evaluate innovative and challenging programs that reflect Australian Government frameworks and guidelines, including the Early Years Learning Framework and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework. Children are supported to learn new knowledge, develop new skills, and achieve individual and group goals.

The programs incorporate the principles of Sustainability Education with children learning in, about and for the environment. Through the 'Walking Out' programs, children and educators engage in learning in the local natural world and in the built community. The primary aim is for children to develop a strong sense of belonging and connectedness to the special part of the Victorian landscape in which they live.

Family Involvement



Parents/guardians are our biggest support. Your encouragement and any assistance in whatever way is invaluable. You are encouraged to become involved with your child/ren's learning and any ideas or suggestions will be greatly appreciated. We are always happy to have visitors come in with interesting things to show and share, sing, teach or make with the children. You can be involved by discussing your child's temperament, strengths, likes, dislikes, and any special interest with the educators.

Even though a parent/guardian's life is very busy, we would appreciate a few minutes when you bring and collect your child to talk about how he/she is enjoying/participating in their learning journey. The educators are available to discuss the program and activities at any time the Centre is open. However, families wishing to discuss matters of a more confidential nature are encouraged to make an appointment to meet with your child/ren's room leader.

In order to provide the best possible care, it is important for educators to be notified of any relevant information about your child/ren's health, development, and relevant personal/family matters. You are encouraged to view the Program and 'Reflection Book' on display outside each room and read the Newsletter in order to keep informed about our programs.

Educators appreciate it when parents:

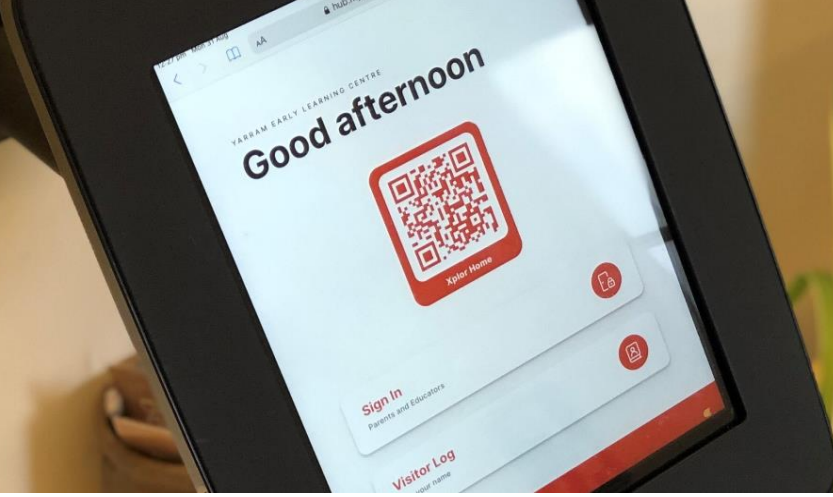
- help their children understand that learning is important.
- set expectations for learning, by considering their child's ability.
- show an interest in what their child is learning and what is happening at the Centre.
- remember that at this age, playing is a learning tool.
- read the memos and information sheets that are sent home or via Xplor or email.
- take note of important dates on the calendar.
- provide feedback to the centre to help us with continuous improvement.

Communication

At YELC we use various methods to communicate with families which involve but are not limited to:

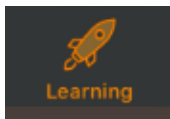
- In person during pick-up and drop-off or scheduled meetings
- Newsletter: Distributed via Xplor and hard copies in the foyer
- Xplor app

Xplor



Xplor app

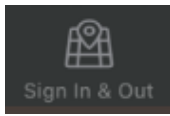
When you complete and return your child's Enrolment form you will receive a welcome email from Xplor. Xplor is the digital platform that YELC uses to connect parents to the centre and their children's educators on one automated platform. Via the app you can:



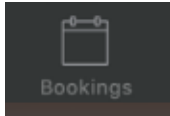
View the observations and photos that document your child's developmental achievements, current learning interests and skills



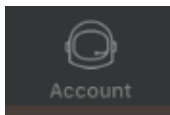
Access a record of sleep, nappy changing/toileting, food, sun protection, incidents, and medical records.



Sign your child in or out of the service



See your current bookings, advise us of when your child will be absent and request an extra booking



View your current account balance, CCS rebates, fees, and payments. See any messages sent from Admin

Communication

We use Xplor to notify parents of any important information. This may include public holidays, illness within the centre, health outbreaks, Christmas closure dates, change of room leader and staff, Newsletters, and Invitations. At times we may share information from outside sources that we feel may be beneficial for the families that attend the centre. To find the communications you will need to click on 'Account,' then on 'Admin Notes'.

Signing in/Out

An iPad is mounted in the hallway for parents to sign their child/ren in and out of the service.

Download the parent app "XPLOR HOME" or login via the website at <https://home.myxplor.com/>



Settling into Care

It is natural for both parents and their children to have difficulty parting from each other, particularly when they have not previously been parted for any length of time. Each child's experience of starting care is different and while some children eagerly join right in, other children need a longer time to adjust. Some children need a lot of reassurance to settle, while others throw themselves whole-heartedly into the indoor and outdoor learning environment straight away.

Families are welcome to stay with their child/ren until they feel they are ready to stay without them. However, please be assured that the staff are very experienced at sensitively handling any distress that the child/ren may experience when separating from a family member for the first time. Please have confidence in us!

Here are a few suggestions we hope will help make settling in your child easier -

- Be positive about starting. If you are apprehensive about leaving your child, they will be apprehensive too. Children tend to pick up on parent's feelings and often mirror them.
- Let your child bring in something comforting from home such as a favourite stuffed animal or a security blanket.
- Allow 5-10 minutes to settle your child. Rushing in and out or lingering too long can add to the anxiety.
- Always say goodbye to your child. Children feel insecure and become clingy if they think you may suddenly 'disappear'.
- Leave quickly and smoothly once you have said goodbye. If you have forgotten something, please ring the Centre rather than returning to go through the separation process again.
- If your child is quite distressed during your drop-off and will not be comforted, it is generally better not to stay too long. Children generally settle in the first few minutes after parents leave and staying only prolongs the period that your child is distressed.
- Allow our educators to guide you. Educators saying, "Give Dad a kiss and a cuddle" or "It's time for (Mum/Dad/Name) to go to work now", are giving you a cue that now is probably a good time to go.
- If you are ever worried during the day, please feel free to ring us at any time. The settling in process can sometimes be just as upsetting for the parent and a phone call may just ease your mind. Likewise, if we feel your child is not coping with their day, we will ring you.
- If your child experiences any difficulty or if you notice something in particular that helps, please talk to one of our educators. Each child is an individual who may need to be given help and support so that they can feel happy and secure at the Centre. We want the experience to be a positive one for both you and your child.



What to pack

What to Bring

1. A hat (broadbrim or legionnaire style) no caps. YELC is a SunSmart Centre and children are required to wear hats when outside (when the UV is 3 or above).
2. A sturdy backpack that is appropriate for the child's size to place their belongings in. The Over 3 children go on a number of excursions throughout the year and often take their bags with them. A bag that they are comfortably able to carry on their backs would be appropriate.
3. Please ensure that their drink bottle is filled only with water. Please do not send any cordial or fruit drinks. Drink bottles will be filled up at various times throughout the day.
4. A healthy lunch box. Please ensure that all children come with enough brain food to last the day. It is better to over pack than not enough. Lunch boxes should include a cold pack to keep foods cold.
5. Spare clothes. Just in case! This is a must for all children. Often children engage in messy play or wet play at the centre

Please ensure that all personal belongings i.e: hat, clothes, bag, lunch box, containers and drink bottles are labelled clearly with the child's name.

Lunchbox

YELC promotes healthy eating to the children and parents who attend our Centre. We ask for a healthy nutritious breakfast (if required), fruit snack, morning tea, lunch, and afternoon tea to be sent into care for your child. We ask for children to drink plain milk and water only while in care (*refer to the Nutrition Policy*). Please avoid sending foods that are high in preservatives, colouring, sugar, and fat. These include foods like chocolate, lollies, sweet biscuits, and chips.

Nude Food is also encouraged. *Nude Food* is food without excess packaging. *Nude Food* is a part of the Centre's Philosophy and the children's program experiences. *Nude Food* reduces the amount of rubbish that needs to go in bins to be sent to landfill. Durable, reusable containers, Bento Boxes and sandwich pouches are a great way to bring food as they may last from pre-school through to primary school and beyond, providing long term cost savings and environmental benefits.

We suggest that the food for children is to be sent in an insulated lunch box with a cold pack. This practice helps them to prepare for school where their lunches will not be refrigerated and helps for excursions.

If you pack lunch for your child that you would like to be heated, please let the educators in your child's room know when you drop them off. In preparation for transition to school food will stop being heated during the three- and four-year-old kinder years as these facilities are not available for school children.

We are more than happy to prepare your child's breakfast if they are dropped off early in the morning. Please just make sure to supply the centre with the cereal and milk.

Progressive Meal Times

In recognising children as active participants in their own learning, children are encouraged to make meaningful decisions about elements of their own education and care. Incorporating progressive mealtimes into the educational program allows children to choose when they are hungry, rather than according to a timetable. This allows the ability for children to gather for mealtimes in small groups and encourages quieter, more social, and meaningful interactions at mealtime and allows for a smoother flow throughout the day. All rooms follow a rough schedule of morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea which can fluctuate a little between rooms. This schedule is a guide rather than a strict timetable.

Clothing

Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that is easily removed for toileting and suitable for running, climbing, painting, and playing in materials such as sand, water etc. Make sure your child is also wearing safe, comfortable shoes. **Thongs and crocs are not acceptable.**

Although we provide protective clothing for the messier activities, children may get dirty/wet. Please send children in "play" clothes.

SunSmart

Yarram Early Learning Centre is an accredited SunSmart Centre. The SunSmart policy has been adopted by the YELC to ensure that your child is protected from skin damage caused by the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun. The policy will be implemented throughout the year during all outdoor activities (*refer to the Sun Protection Policy*).

Children are required to wear appropriate clothing that fully covers their shoulders, and sunscreen is to be applied before outside play. A legionnaire or broad brimmed hat during outside play in the warmer months is also required (terms 1&4) or whenever the UV is 3 and above. Beanies are acceptable over the winter months (terms 2&3) unless the UV is 3 or above. Educators will be expected to role model these SunSmart practices (*refer to the Sun Protection Policy*). If your child/ren need a specific type of sunscreen, please notify staff and you will need to supply their own-labelled sunscreen that includes the sunscreens expiry date. A permission form will be supplied for you to sign that will enable our educators to apply the special sunscreen.

Please ensure your child's hat is clearly labelled with their full name. YELC hats are available for purchase for \$15 from the office. YELC T-shirts are available for purchase for \$20.

Toys From Home

YELC discourages children from bringing valuable toys or personal items from home. Any toys brought in from home are the responsibility of the child and should remain in the child's bag.



Drop off/Pick up

Arrival

When arriving to drop off your child, the office team or an educator will allow you to enter the centre. Please use the iPad kiosk to sign your child in. On arrival into the room an educator from your child's room will welcome you and your child. This is a great time for you to communicate any messages to the room. A quick goodbye is always best. If you or your other child/ren are ill, we ask you to please notify the office, they will call the room for an educator to collect your child from the foyer. We hope by following this step we can help prevent the spread of illness.

Departure

When you arrive to collect your child the office team will allow you to enter the centre to collect your child/ren. Once you enter your child's room, this is when an educator will let you know a little about your child's day and get you to sign any incident reports that may have occurred. If you or your other children are ill, we ask you to please notify the office, they will call the room for an educator to bring your child/ren out to you. Please use the iPad kiosk to sign your child out.

If the office staff do not know the person picking up your child by appearance, they will be asked to provide a form of photo identification or verify themselves by stating their full name, address, contact number and email if available to ensure they are authorised to collect the child/ren (*refer to the Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*).

Each child must be digitally signed in and out of the Centre every day that they attend. This is a legal requirement that we must follow (*refer to the Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*). These records are used in case of emergencies and for the calculation of the Child Care Subsidy (CCS).

Persons Authorised to collect Child

The Centre's primary concern is for the safety and welfare of your child. Therefore, we will only release your child into the care of either parent/guardian, or a responsible person nominated by you to collect your child (*refer to the Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*). Non-custodial parent/guardian mentioned on court orders relating to the child cannot be listed on the enrolment form (*refer to Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy and Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*).

In an emergency you can give verbal permission over the phone to the room leader or Manager and one other member of staff, for anyone not already listed on the enrolment form to collect your child. This person will be required to provide photo ID (such as drivers licence). Only the parent or legal guardian can give this permission, messages will not be accepted from any other person.

In the event where the Manager, Administration Officer or an Educator deems a parent or other person on the 'Authority to collect list', is under the influence of alcohol or drugs another person on this list will be contacted to collect the child (*refer to the Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation Policy*).

On the enrolment form you will have been asked to provide the names, contact numbers, email and addresses of at least two responsible persons who can collect your child, on your behalf in case of an emergency or illness (*refer to the Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*). We ask that you have at least ONE in town (Yarram) emergency contact. Should the Manager or any educator inform you that your child is unwell or injured, arrangements for collection from care must be made as soon as possible. Please ensure that your emergency contacts are **18 years or older**. Anyone who is under this age will not be authorised to collect your child/ren.

Access to Children

All parents/guardians/authorised persons have access to their children at all times unless relevant court orders are held by the service and specify otherwise. A copy of all court orders in relation to residence and specific issues must be provided to the service upon enrolment or as obtained. These documents will be attached to the child's records and treated confidentially. Parents/guardians are asked to notify the centre of any changes to these documents as soon as they occur. If YELC does not have a copy of the Court Order, it will assume that both parents/guardians have equal custody of the child therefore both have access. In the event that a parent/guardian breaks a court order and seeks access to the child, the parent/guardian with custody entitlements will be contacted immediately along with the Police.

Late Pick Up

Wherever possible please contact the service if you or the person due to collect your child/ren is running late. If your child/ren is not collected within 10 minutes after closing time, educators will try to ring you on your mobile, at your home and/or work number and each emergency number listed until there is a positive response. If no person can be contacted after a period of 15 minutes, educators will contact the Police (*refer to the Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*).

If you know you are going to be late, please contact the Centre and suitable arrangements can be made. Pickup past closing time will incur a "late pickup fee".

Do not leave children in cars

In Victoria, it is an offence for a person responsible for a child to leave the child unattended for any longer than is reasonable, without making appropriate arrangements for the child's supervision and care. This includes leaving a child at home, or in a car, or anywhere else unattended.

We have signs displayed in our carpark to remind families not to leave children in the car. We ask that when you come to childcare to drop off your child/ren that you take any other children present into the service with you. It is our duty of care to report children left in cars to the local police and penalties include fines, or up to six months' jail. NOTE: This legislation applies all year round and not just in hotter weather.



Daily practice

Excursions

Written permission will be required prior to your child being taken out of YELC by any educator (*refer to the Excursion and Service Events Policy*). This authorisation can only be given by the enrolling parents or authorised guardian. A form detailing the following must be completed and signed -

- The reason why your child is to be taken outside the premises.
- The date your child will be taken outside the premises.
- The proposed destination.
- The method of transport.
- The proposed activities.
- The period of time when your child will be away from the premises.
- The number of educators and any other responsible person who will accompany and supervise the children.
- Your expression of interest to accompany staff during the excursion.

Please note during any excursion the educators will carry a First Aid Kit, a mobile phone and an emergency contact list.

Sleep/Rest Time

Your child will be given the opportunity to rest or sleep if required. We respect the needs of all children and will allow them to sleep or rest at any time throughout the day according to their individual requirements. All sleep equipment meets the Australian and New Zealand Safety Standards, and we follow safe sleep practices as set out by the Red Nose Australia safe sleeping guidelines.

During sleep/rest time, quiet activities will be set up for the non-sleeping children to explore at their own leisure. Please send a comfort toy, blanket and/or dummy if your child requires these for sleep.

Toilet Training

Toilet training will be discussed with you when your child appears ready. A routine that is consistent with both the service and at home will be implemented for the child. Please make sure an adequate amount of spare clothing is provided.

Supervision

The Centre will maintain high levels of supervision of children at all times. The educator/child ratios contained within the Standards of Operation Guidelines for Long Day Care and will be strictly adhered to at the Centre.

The ratios are as follows:

Birth – 36 months: 1:4

Over 36 months up to and including preschool age: 1:11

Behavioural Management

Learning appropriate behaviour is part of your child/ren's social development. Our educators aim to help children to be responsible for their own behaviour and to develop an understanding of what is appropriate in different situations. Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss your child/ren's behaviour with the educators to ensure consistent behaviour expectations between home and YELC.

Limits to children's behaviour will always be clearly expressed in positive terms and reinforced consistently in a developmentally appropriate way. Children will be encouraged to settle their differences in a peaceful manner. The educators will focus on positive behaviour, providing praise and encouragement where appropriate. Wherever possible, problems will be prevented before they arise by using methods such as diversion and providing enough equipment for all.

The centre takes a consistent approach to behaviour management, and we implement behaviour management strategies across the service. If you would like to see a copy of our behaviour management plan this is available from the office.

Birthday Cakes

Recognition of your child's special day is an important celebration for him/her. If you would like your child to share a birthday cake or cupcakes with the other children in his/her room, we are happy for this to happen. It is a requirement of the Education and Care Regulations that the ingredients of any food to be provided to children in the service, have a list of ingredients on display. We would appreciate if you supplied a listing of the ingredients at least one week prior to the day this will give us adequate time to check any allergies of other children (*refer to the Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy*).

Transition between rooms

When your child is close to the age of transitioning to the next room the educators from their current room will get in contact with you. They will discuss with you whether they believe your child is ready to transition up, this is based not only on age but also emotional maturity, physical capabilities, and individual routines. Some children show signs that they are ready earlier than others which is normal as each child is different. They will also ask you how you feel about them moving up or beginning transition days. Transition days can be as little as a day and as long as a few weeks, generally one of the educators from their current room will take them across during the day to the next room for a visit and bring them back again. **Please note: Transition will only occur if there is a place available in the next room.**



Fees & Sessions

Fees

Daily Fee	\$125.00
Daily Nappy Fee	\$129.00 per day
Late Pickup fee	\$20 for the first 10mins then \$1 per minute thereafter

Payment of Fees

Fees are emailed and available on Xplor on a weekly basis. Fees remain payable even when your child is absent through illness or for any other reason including holidays. Fees are not payable for the time the Centre is closed over the Christmas/New Year period. **Please Note: fees will be charged for all public holidays unless indicated by the centre.**

There are a number of payment options available to you including -

Direct Deposit: Payment details will be available on the bottom of your account statement.
Centre pay: This payment is made directly from any Centrelink payments you may receive.

Late Payment of Fees

Statements of accounts are sent each Thursday, and families have 14 days to pay their account. If fees are not paid within 14 days, the following steps will be taken:

- 14 days in arrears – families will receive an overdue notification via the Xplor app indication that payment is overdue; families are encouraged to come in to discuss the range of support options available and establish a payment plan.
- 21 days in arrears– a notification/letter advising you that outstanding fees are not paid within 7 days, or a satisfactory payment plan commenced then your child's place will be cancelled, and the account will be sent to the debt collectors. Outstanding fees are expected to be paid.
- 28 days – notice is sent to parents that their care has been cancelled and their account has been sent to the debt collectors.

Your child's placements may also be terminated if they are absent from the Centre for two weeks or more without any notice. Continual or habitual lateness in payment of fees can jeopardise the child's place at the Centre.

We have the right to obtain and use a Debt Collector to follow up on any unpaid fees when we deem it necessary. We will use the information given on your child's enrolment form to pass onto the Debt Collector. Should a Debt Collector be initiated by YELC any associated costs will be added to the outstanding fees to be paid by the family. If you are experiencing difficulty in paying your account, we encourage you to meet with the Manager or Administration Officer to discuss a payment plan to ensure continuation of your child's care.

Hours of Operation

7.45am - 5.30pm (7:00am on request)

Office Hours

8:00am – 4:30pm

Available via email after hours at

admin@yarramelc.com.au or
manager@yarramelc.com.au

Child Care Subsidy

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is a payment made by the Commonwealth Government to help families with the cost of quality childcare. The percentage of CCS will vary according to your circumstances, as this rebate is means tested. The hours of subsidised care you can get per fortnight depends on the hours of recognised activities you do. The Government will pay CCS directly to your childcare provider to reduce the fees you have to pay.

Please log in to MYGOV and apply for CCS before your child/ren commence care. If you do not have a MYGOV account, you will need to apply for an account via the website www.my.gov.au. You will be given a reference number (CRN) for yourself and your child.

Please list these details on your enrolment form. **Please note it is the parents/guardian's responsibility to apply for CCS. Until your CCS is confirmed and showing on our system you will be liable for paying full fees. If you are receiving Additional Childcare Subsidy, you will be paying full fees until your CCS claim is completed and confirmed with Centrelink.**

Child Care Absence Fees

If you are claiming Child Care Subsidy (CCS), a maximum of 42 days absence per financial year applies. If you exceed the allowable absence limit, CCS will not be payable on any further absence days. If, after your allowable 42 days are exceeded, your child is away due to any of the below, please provide us documentation such as a medical certificate so the absence can be recorded as approved. If your child is booked in on the day a public holiday falls on, this is counted as an absence day. If your child stops attending the centre and you haven't provided the 2 weeks' notice required as per the centre's policies, you will be required to pay full fees for those absence days. Services Australia won't pay for any absences before your child physically attends or after the last day your child physically attends care.

Please see the below link for more information.

<https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/child-care-subsidy/absences>

Services Australia may pay Child Care Subsidy if you have an approved reason for up to 7 absence days. If you reach your allowable absence limit, you may be able to get additional absences if any of the following applies:

- Your child is ill.
- Individual caring for the child is ill or individual living with the child is ill.
- Your child is attending preschool.
- Alternative arrangements have been made for your child on a pupil-free day.
- Your child hasn't been immunised and the absence occurs during an immunisation grace period.
- Your child is spending time with a person other than their usual carer as required by a court order or parenting plan.
- Your child's care service is closed as a direct result of a local emergency.
- Individual caring for the child chooses not to send the child due to a local emergency.

*Please note we may require supporting documents if these apply.

You can find your child's absence record through MyGov in the Child Care Details and Payments tab. This can also be found on the Express Centrelink mobile app.

Occasional/Casual Bookings

Occasional/casual bookings may be made **if spaces are available**. Cancellation of casual bookings will require 24 hours' notice as educators will be employed based on bookings. If notification of a casual care cancellation is not received by 8:30am the working day before

the booking, full fees will be charged, as the service needs to cover operational costs such as staffing.

Waiting List

Each room at the Centre is limited to a maximum number of enrolment places. On occasions where you require ongoing extra childcare days your child's details will be added to the waiting list.

Withdrawal from Care

If you withdraw your child from care, we request two full weeks' notice in writing. The notice is required in order to provide the centre time to fill the vacancy. If your child does not attend the Centre during this period, full fees are still payable.

If you cancel care during the last 4 full weeks prior to the Christmas closing period, fees must still be paid till the end of the year regardless of two weeks' notice being given. Notice of withdrawal will be accepted during the normal opening hours of the centre but will not be accepted during the Centres one/two week close down over the Christmas period. The notice of withdrawal is effective from the date it is lodged with the centre.

Please Note: If your child is absent from care on the last day/s of care, Child Care Subsidy will not be paid. Parents will be billed for the full cost of care for this period. Centrelink will only pay CCS up until the last day your child physically attends.



Medical

Immunisation

Under the 'No Jab, No Play' law, to finalise enrolment for a child, parents/carers have to provide the service with an immunisation status certificate that shows their child:

- Is fully immunised for their age OR
- Is on a vaccination catch-up program OR
- Is unable to be fully immunised for medical reasons

An immunisation status certificate is a statement showing the vaccines a child has received and is available from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR).

You can request this form from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register by:

- Phone: 1800 653 809
- Email: acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au
- Website: www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/online
- Visiting a Medicare Service Centre
- MyGov

Exclusion from Care

Due to Illness

As a general principle, children should not be brought into the Centre unless they are able to cope adequately with the normal daily routines and activities. Please use your own judgement. Your child may not be contagious but if generally feeling unwell may need to stay at home for rest. The health and safety of children is of major concern to teachers and educators and parent's co-operation is sought to prevent the spread of infection. Parents are requested not to send sick children to care. Children who are showing signs of illness or who require medication such as paracetamol or cough medicines at regular intervals throughout the day, are not considered well enough to attend. Teachers and educators regularly monitor the health of children throughout the day and parents of children deemed to be unwell are contacted and required to arrange for immediate collection. Parents will be contacted if their child has a temperature at or above 38 degrees.

Your child will not be able to attend the Centre for any period of time during which:

- He/she is suffering from a disease or condition that is contagious through normal social contact (refer to the Dealing with Infectious Disease Policy).
- A medical practitioner has recommended that he/she not attend childcare.

If your child is unwell and has been swabbed by a medical practitioner, please notify the centre. Your child will need to remain at home until you have received your results, and you have notified the centre of the outcome. You will then be advised as to how long your child will need to remain at home depending on what illness your child has. If

your child is being swabbed, please keep siblings at home until you have received your results.

Or if your child is so sick that he/she:

- Requires four hourly paracetamol.
- Has been unwell prior to arriving at the Centre.
- In the first 24 hours of receiving antibiotics
- Has been hospitalised in the last 48 hours.
- Sleeping at unusual times
- Has a fever of 38 °C
- Is crying constantly as a result of discomfort due to illness
- Is reacting badly to medications.
- In need of constant one to one care
- Has two loose bowel motions
- Has an unknown skin rash.
- Is vomiting or has vomited within a 24-hour period.
- Any Covid symptoms

If your child becomes ill at the service, you or your emergency contacts will be asked to collect him/her from care. If your child has been sent home from the Centre due to ill health, he/she will be required to stay at home the following day unless medical clearance has been obtained from your child's doctor. All child illnesses will be recorded in the illness book in your child's room.

If sent home due to diarrhoea, they must have had a 'normal' bowel motion before returning to the Centre and be symptom free for at least **24hrs**. If your child has been prescribed antibiotics, they can return to the service **24hrs** after the first dosage. For any contagious illness or unspecified rash, you must produce a doctor's certificate stating the details of the illness and that your child is no longer contagious and is fit to return to care.

If any condition or illness usually prevented by immunisation occurs at the service, children who have not yet been immunised against that illness or condition may be excluded from care for their own safety and wellbeing as directed by the Department of Health.

Gastroenteritis

Gastroenteritis (gastro) is a bowel infection that causes diarrhoea (runny, watery poo) and sometimes vomiting. The vomiting may settle quickly, but the diarrhoea can last up to **10 days**.

Many different germs can cause gastro, although the most common cause is a viral infection. Most children do not need to take any medicine for gastro; however, it is important that they drink plenty of water to avoid becoming dehydrated.

A gastro outbreak is classified by the Department of Health as two cases within a **48hour** period of either vomiting or diarrhoea. In the event of a gastro outbreak, children are required to not return to the Centre for **48hours** from the last vomiting or diarrhoea incident.

Accidents

All accidents/incidents requiring first aid will be written up in an Accident, Injury, Trauma and Illness record. The person who collects your child will be notified and asked to sign the form as confirmation that you have been notified. We ask that you contact us should you seek medical attention for your child in relation to the accident/incident (*refer to the Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Policy*).

As per Education and Care Regulations, all incidents/accidents that require medical advice are forwarded to the Department of Education. In the case of an accident or emergency resulting in the need for immediate medical attention parents will be contacted along with a call for an ambulance. **Any cost incurred from Ambulance Victoria will be the parent/guardian responsibility (refer to the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy).**

Infectious Diseases

The service has adopted the Department of Health's recommendations regarding the exclusion of children from the Centre because of illness as outlined in the table at the end of this booklet. You will be notified of any common infectious diseases by notices posted on the entry door to the Centre.

If your child contracts any of these infectious diseases whilst at the Centre, the exclusion periods listed in the table will prevail. See Appendix 1.

Medical Conditions

If your child has a medical condition such as eczema, allergies, or asthma; a number of *medical forms* are to be completed before your child can commence their enrolment at the Service. These forms will include a Medical Action Plan form signed by a doctor (please note that a stamp or printed name is not compliant) and Risk Minimisation Plan. Risk Minimisation Plans are to be read and signed by a parent. Action Plan forms are available from the office. The room leader will complete the Risk Minimisation plan for you to review and sign. Action plans must be reissued every year and Risk Minimisation Plans are reviewed each term so that the most up to date information is recorded. If your child has an intolerance of any kind, but it is not classed as an allergy, we require a letter from your doctor stating what the intolerance is and what action we need to take.

Head Lice

If educators have located live head lice or eggs in your child's hair, you or the listed emergency contacts will be contacted to collect the child (*refer to the Dealing with Infectious Disease Policy*).

We will request you treat the lice with an appropriate treatment and your child may return to care when there are no visible live lice or eggs in the child's hair. A note will be placed on the door when we have had a case of lice, and a communication will be sent out via Xplor.

Medication

If your child requires medication while they are attending the service, you must complete a medication form that identifies the name and amount of medication to be administered by educators. Educators will also be required to complete a medication administration form when the medication is administered to your child (*refer to the Administration of Medication Policy*).

Educators will only administer medication that is currently in date, has the name of your child clearly on the label and will only administer the amount as prescribed by the medical practitioner (*refer to the Administration of Medication Policy*). Medication must be handed directly to the teacher/educator and not left in the child's bag.

In the case of a high fever, parents/guardians will be notified and asked to collect the child as soon as possible. While the service is waiting for the child to be collected by the parent/guardian, staff will use measures such as removing clothing and encouraging intake of fluids, to keep the child cool, comfortable, and well hydrated.

If parents/guardians request that educators administer paracetamol, educators will:

- Verify the parent/guardian authority with another staff member over the phone.
- Administer only to a child who has a temperature above 38°C.
- Administer only to a child who is over 6 months of age.
- Administer only one dose in any instance.
- Use only single doses and disposable droppers/applicators.
- Administer the most appropriate concentration/dosage for the child.
- Complete an illness/incident form for the parent to sign.



Policy Summaries

Smoke Free Zone

YELC, including the car park is a smoke free zone. In the interest of both adults and children, please DO NOT smoke in the Centre grounds or drop cigarette butts at the entrance to the Centre grounds.

Child Protection

All staff at the Centre are mandatory child protection reporters. This means that they are required by law to report any suspicions of child abuse to the Department of Human Services (*refer to the Child Safe Environments Policy*).

For further information please see the Child Protection Guidelines www.dhs.vic.gov.au or speak to the Director.

Privacy and Protection of other Children and Families

Staff and families must adhere to the Privacy Act 1988 and respect the privacy of the children and families that use the Centre (*refer to the Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*).

Under **no** circumstances are parents to approach other parents using our services in regard to their child's behaviour or any other issues that may occur. Under the same circumstances, no persons accessing the service are to approach/interact with other children attending our services.

If you have any concerns, please speak to an educator or the Manager and the matter will be dealt with appropriately.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality of all matters concerning the YELC, and families must be maintained at all times. Educators cannot give out any details contained in a child's records to any other persons or discuss details of any child who has caused injury to other children at the Centre.

Any information you share with an educator will remain confidential unless it meets the mandated requirements of reporting (*refer to the Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*)

Emergency Procedures

All educators have been trained in emergency safety procedures. As part of the Education and Care Regulations staff will conduct an emergency drill

(Evacuation/Lockdown/Medical emergency) once every three months. Evacuations will be to the nominated area where we will assemble and mark the daily roll to ensure that all children have been identified as present. We will then wait until the building is deemed safe to enter. In the case of a real evacuation, you or an emergency contact will be notified of the emergency and requested for your child to be collected (*refer to the Emergency and Evacuation Policy*). After any emergency drill families will be notified via Xplor.

Grievance Policy for Parents/Guardians

At YELC we believe parents/guardians are partners in the education of children. Regular two-way communication between parents/guardians and the educators is essential in helping children achieve their potential. YELC is committed to ensuring that anyone with parental responsibilities for a young person can raise a concern or complaint, with the confidence that it will be heard and responded to in an appropriate and timely manner. If you have a concern in relation to an experience at the Centre, you are encouraged to address the issue with the person involved. If your concern is not resolved or you feel uncomfortable, please make time to speak with the Manager. Allow a reasonable time for the issue to be resolved. Your confidentiality will be respected at all times (*refer to Complaints and Grievance (parents/guardians) Policy*).

Code of Conduct Policy for Parents/Guardians

All parents/guardians who enrol their child/ren at YELC are bound to adhere to the Code of Conduct Policy for Parents. This policy outlines the behaviour that all parents are expected to display while at the Centre and the behaviours that will not be tolerated. If any parent/guardian/approved person fails to adhere to this policy, it could result in your child/ren's care being cancelled (*refer to Code of Conduct (parents/guardians) Policy*).

Social Media Policy

As social media plays such a big part in our lives these days, please ensure that all parents/guardians adhere to the following guidelines that form our policy:

- You must ensure that you do not use or disclose any confidential information, post or respond to material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, constitutes a contempt of court, breaches a Court suppression order or is otherwise unlawful.
- Child protection protocols must always be observed.
- Under no circumstances should disrespectful or offensive comments be made about staff, children, and parents of YELC in general. Parents are requested not to comment upon nor forward unsupported information e.g., rumours concerning YELC or comment or post material that might otherwise cause damage to YELC or a staff members reputation or bring it into disrepute (*refer to Social Media Policy*).

Social Media

Please ensure that you are mindful when posting photos from the Centre on social media that you don't post photos of other children who attend YELC without their consent prior to posting, e.g. a group photo of your child/ren's class photo. We also encourage all parent/guardians who have Facebook to 'like' our YELC page to ensure you are kept up to date with any information or events at the Centre.

Permission to use your child/ren's photo

On a daily basis the educators at YELC take photos of your child/ren. We are often using these photos for observations, social media, promotional material, our monthly Newsletter, and local publications. On our Enrolment Form you will be given the opportunity to opt out from having your child/ren's photos published in these areas, so we ask that you ensure you tick this box if this is what you require.

Minimum period of exclusion from primary schools and children's services¹ for infectious diseases cases and contacts

Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019

Schedule 7

Column 1 Number	Column 2 Conditions	Column 3 Exclusion of cases	Column 4 Exclusion of Contacts
1	Chickenpox	Exclude until all blisters have dried. This is usually at least 5 days after the rash appears in unimmunised children, but may be less in previously immunised children	Any child with an immune deficiency (for example, leukaemia) or receiving chemotherapy should be excluded for their own protection. Otherwise not excluded
2	Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased	Not excluded
3	Cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
4	Diarrhoeal illness*	Exclude until there has not been vomiting or a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
5	Diphtheria	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received following at least two negative throat swabs, the first not less than 24 hours after finishing a course of antibiotics and the other 48 hours later	Exclude family/household contacts until cleared to return by the Chief Health Officer
6	Glandular fever (Epstein-Barr Virus infection)	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
7	Hand, Foot and Mouth disease	Exclude until all blisters have dried	Not excluded
8	Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)	Exclude until 48 hours after initiation of effective therapy	Not excluded
9	Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness	Not excluded
10	Hepatitis B	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
11	Hepatitis C	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
12	Herpes (cold sores)	Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing, where possible	Not excluded
13	Human immuno-deficiency virus infection (HIV)	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
14	Impetigo	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing	Not excluded
15	Influenza and influenza like illnesses	Exclude until well	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer
16	Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer	Not excluded
17	Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash	Immunised contacts not excluded. Unimmunised contacts should be excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case. If unimmunised contacts are vaccinated within 72 hours of exposure with any infectious case, or received Normal Human Immunoglobulin (NHIG) within 144 hours of exposure of any infectious case, they may return to the facility
18	Meningitis (bacterial —other than meningococcal meningitis)	Exclude until well	Not excluded
19	Meningococcal infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed	Not excluded if receiving carrier eradication therapy
20	Mumps	Exclude for 5 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner)	Not excluded
21	Molluscum contagiosum	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
22	Pertussis (Whooping cough)	Exclude the child for 21 days after the onset of cough or until they have completed 5 days of a course of antibiotic treatment	Contacts aged less than 7 years in the same room as the case who have not received three effective doses of pertussis vaccine should be excluded for 14 days after the last exposure to the infectious case, or until they have taken 5 days of a course of effective antibiotic treatment
23	Poliovirus infection	Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Re-admit after receiving medical certificate of recovery	Not excluded
24	Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (head lice)	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced	Not excluded
25	Rubella (German measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of rash	Not excluded
26	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is produced	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer
27	Shiga toxin or Verotoxin producing Escherichia coli (STEC or VTEC)	Exclude if required by the Chief Health Officer and only for the period specified by the Chief Health Officer	Not excluded
28	Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well	Not excluded
29	Tuberculosis (excluding latent tuberculosis)	Exclude until receipt of a medical certificate from the treating physician stating that the child is not considered to be infectious	Not excluded
30	Typhoid fever (including paratyphoid fever)	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer

Regulation 111

A person in charge of a primary school, education and care service premises or children's services centre must not allow a child to attend the primary school, education and care service premises or children's services centre for the period or in the circumstances:

* specified in column 3 of the Table in Schedule 7 if the person in charge has been informed that the child is infected with an infectious disease listed in column 2 of that Table; or

* specified in column 4 of the Table in Schedule 7 if the person in charge has been informed that the child has been in contact with a person who is infected with an infectious disease listed in column 2 of that Table.

*Diarrhoeal illness includes instances where certain pathogens are identified including Amebiasis (*Entamoeba histolytica*), Campylobacter spp., Salmonella spp., Shigella spp. and intestinal worms, but is not limited to infection with these pathogens.

Further information

Please contact the Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Section on 1300 651 160 or visit www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/school-exclusion

¹ Children's services cover the terms 'education and care service premises' or 'children's services centre' used in the regulations. It includes centres such as childcare centres and kindergartens.