

# Family Handbook

Quality care and Early Education



St Nicholas Early Education

DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE



[stnicholasmn.org.au](http://stnicholasmn.org.au)

## Acknowledgement of country and traditional owners

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which our services operate and pay our respects to the Elders, past and present, of this land who, long before us, lived, loved and raised their children on this land. We also acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in our community and their deep physical and spiritual connections to land, sea, sky and waterways.



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## Welcome

Welcome and thank you for choosing St Nicholas Early Education. At St Nicholas Early Education, we provide high quality education and care for children from eight weeks to five years and provide a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment where all children's learning, development and wellbeing are supported through a play-based program. We are committed to partnering with families and communities to ensure the values, culture and beliefs of families are represented in children's learning experiences and are welcome to contribute to the educational program.

Our centre is staffed by a dedicated team of qualified early childhood professionals and supported by the Early Education resources of the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. St Nicholas complies with all national regulations and licensing requirements, and is Child Care Subsidy approved, providing parents and carers the opportunity to access government support.

Parent and educator relationships are an integral part of an effective curriculum that leads to the best experiences and learning opportunities for your child. Thus, we value any ideas, suggestions or feedback families have and encourage you to talk to St Nicholas educators at an appropriate time to discuss these.

The Trustees of the Roman Catholic Church of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle are the approved provider for St Nicholas Early Education.

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle provides early education services through its agency St Nicholas Early Education.

This booklet provides information about St Nicholas Early Education including our philosophy, goals, staff, fees, health regulations and guidelines for your use of the centre. If you have further questions or a suggestion, feel free to approach the Director or a staff member and we will be more than happy to assist you.

Again we thank you for entrusting St Nicholas Early Education with the care and education of your children.

## Quality assurance

St Nicholas Early Education are committed to the delivery of quality services for the children being educated and cared for by the service and their families. St Nicholas Early Education maintains a Quality Management system, compliant with a range of legislation, regulations and guidelines.

### Our three main regulatory bodies are:

- ▶ **Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)**  
ACECQA are the independent national authority that assists governments in administering the National Quality Framework (NQF) for children's education and care. For further information, visit [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)

- ▶ **NSW Department of Education - Early Childhood Education Directorate (ECED)**  
The Department of Education are the Regulatory Authority for children's services in NSW and monitors services and providers' compliance with legislation and approval conditions. As the NSW Regulatory Authority for early childhood education services, the Department of Education is responsible under the National Law and Regulations, for ensuring services meet the requirements to operate under the National Quality Framework (NQF). For further information, visit [www.education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education](http://www.education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education)
- ▶ **NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ)**  
The Department of Communities and Justice are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and protecting them from risk of harm, abuse and neglect. For further information, visit [www.dcj.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dcj.nsw.gov.au)

... The family is the first school of the social virtues that every society needs.

*Gravissimum Educationis n3*

## Our philosophy

The Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle is committed to supporting family life as the foundation of society and of the Church. One aspect of this is providing educationally sound and professionally staffed early education services through St Nicholas Early Education.

St Nicholas Early Education Centres provide high quality early education services using best practice guidelines. Our goal is to facilitate each child's optimal social, intellectual and physical development and education in partnership with parents and carers.

Our aim is to welcome one and all into our centre.

We recognise that a safe, secure and consistent environment supports trust and encourages the development of confidence, skills and friendships.

We offer an environment that acknowledges change within the early years and which, in turn, allows children to become confident learners.

We are committed to providing an inclusive environment and support children with diverse needs, nourishing a sense of belonging in all children.



### In relation to families and community

Our commitment to families and the community is to promote and encourage positive and respectful relationships. We believe that families play the most important part in the life of their child and a strong link between home and care fosters positive outcomes.

*"When educators establish respectful relationships with children and their families, they are able to work together to use relational and place-based pedagogies that assist in developing curriculum relevant to children in their local context."  
(Early Years Learning Framework 2022).*

Through daily communication and shared decision-making, we welcome families to assist us to provide the best outcomes for each child on their learning journey. We respect each family's right to privacy and adhere to our confidentiality policy at all times.

We value parent and community involvement greatly and encourage links to the local community. Children at St Nicholas benefit from regular visits, including representatives from various community services, as well as excursions to explore their sense of belonging to the community.



### In relation to children

Our commitment to children is to provide a positive, nurturing and trusting relationship so they feel a sense of belonging at St Nicholas. We aim to respect children's unique learning styles and include their voices in our curriculum.

We view children as capable, creative and confident learners and recognise the significance of the here and now, a sense of being for each child.

## Our values



### Compassion

We commit to treating all people with kindness, respect, empathy, and dignity.



### Hope

We strive to create places that allow the opportunity to thrive.



### Integrity

We have the courage to do what is right.



### Justice

We are accountable for moral and ethical behaviour.



### Participation

We unite as a community incorporating the voices of all.



### In relation to educators

Our commitment to our educators is to provide an environment that acknowledges the experience, diversity and professionalism they bring to our early education centre. Our educators demonstrate respect for each other and for the families at our centre. Professional development is supported as educators gain new ideas and approaches to their pedagogy.

We work as a team to share ideas and resources and build a collaborative relationship based on trust and honesty.

*“Educators are attuned to, and respond in ways that best suit, each child’s strengths, capabilities and curiosity. Knowing, valuing and building on all children’s strengths, skills and knowledge strengthens their motivation and engagement in learning.”*  
(Early Years Learning Framework, 2022)



### In relation to the curriculum

Our curriculum is based on children’s interests and needs, and reflects the vision of the Early Years Framework and National Quality Standard.

We include children’s voices in our program and ensure daily reflection to promote continual self-evaluation of the curriculum. We provide a stimulating and challenging environment that encourages our children’s curiosity and creativity, building confidence along the way.

Our curriculum is play-based in an enriched learning environment that includes both open-ended and group learning. We aim to link our wider community and our families to our program for optimal outcomes for each child.



### In relation to the environment

Our commitment to the environment is to create a clean, safe, stimulating and inclusive indoor and outdoor area that enhances children’s learning through the provision of natural and man-made materials. Our educators model and teach children respect for the environment and the practice of sustainable behaviours that involve recycling, gardening and water/energy conservation.

We aim to develop a sense of belonging and respect for the environment in each child by implementing practices within our curriculum that reflect this.

*“Indoor and outdoor environments support all aspects of children’s learning and invite conversations between children, educators, families and the broader community. They promote opportunities for sustained shared thinking and collaborative learning.”*  
(Early Years Framework, 2022)





## Operational information

### Arrival and departure of children

To ensure your child/ren's safety when they arrive and depart a St Nicholas Early Education Centre, we ask Families to be aware of the following procedures:

- ▶ Only authorised persons 16 years and over are able to drop off and collect children from St Nicholas Early Education Centres.
- ▶ The hours of operation for your local St Nicholas Early Education Centre can be found on your centre information sheet. While educators may be on the premises outside these hours setting up for the day, they are not licensed to be caring for children.
- ▶ Children must be signed in and out each day by an authorised person.

- ▶ Families are asked to take children to greet a staff member.
- ▶ Signing in and out must be completed accurately. This record is a legal requirement and vitally important, particularly in the case of an emergency.
- ▶ Families are asked to communicate any important information to staff.
- ▶ As a part of licensing requirements we are not permitted to have children on the premises after closing.
- ▶ Please aim to arrive at the centre with plenty of time to collect your child, sign out, collect belongings and discuss your child's day with their educators before centre closing time.

Please refer to the arrival/departure policy at your local St Nicholas Early Education Centre for more information and the full arrival/departure procedure.

## Fees and payments

St Nicholas Early Education fees may vary. For full details of your centre's fees and inclusions, please speak to a team member at your centre.

The St Nicholas Early Education Billing Team is available at any time to discuss your fees and account details. Contact the Billing Team on 4979 1182 or email [finance@stnicholasmn.org.au](mailto:finance@stnicholasmn.org.au)

### Centrelink – fee relief

St Nicholas Early Education Centres offer fee relief for parents through Centrelink and the child care subsidy (CCS).

The CCS indicates the percentage of fee relief to which you may be entitled, dependent on your gross income.

If you wish to receive the subsidy you will need to contact Centrelink/Family Assistance Office and pass the income test. Your child will need to be fully immunised or have the appropriate documentation stating why he/she is not immunised. One parent and the child you are enrolling will require a Customer Reference Number (CRN) to access the subsidy. Once provided with your and your child's CRN and St Nicholas enrolment form, staff will electronically link your child to the Centrelink system.

Upon confirmation of your child's subsidy rate from Centrelink, St Nicholas staff will ensure the relevant amount is deducted from the standard fee for your child.

Please note, it is necessary for St Nicholas to charge standard fees to all families until confirmation of any CCS subsidy is received from Centrelink. It is the parent's responsibility to notify Centrelink of any changes to circumstances as soon as possible. The Child Care Subsidy dollar value is reassessed by the Federal Government every year in July.

For more information, please contact Centrelink on 13 61 50 or visit [www.humanservices.gov.au](http://www.humanservices.gov.au).



## Extra information

- ▶ St Nicholas requires all fees to be paid via Direct Debit. Further details are provided in the Fee Policy, on the Direct Debit Request Form and Direct Debit Request Service Agreement.
- ▶ Full fees will be charged from the commencement day offered by St Nicholas regardless of attendance.
- ▶ Note that fees are payable when a child is absent from St Nicholas for any reason. If your child is unable to attend a scheduled day at a St Nicholas Early Education Centre, please call the centre as soon as possible to inform staff of your child's absence.
- ▶ All public holidays are charged for if they fall on your child's standard day of care.

- ▶ Any requests to change days of care, or advice that your child is leaving St Nicholas require two weeks' notice in writing to the centre Director.
- ▶ In accordance with Family Assistance Law, CCS is not paid for absences after a child ceases care at the centre. Therefore, full fees will be charged for all absent days after a child ceases care until the required two week notice period is complete.
- ▶ In accordance with Family Assistance Law guidelines, a full statement is provided to families every four weeks.
- ▶ Fee debts will not be carried over into a new calendar year. A child/ren's enrolment for a new calendar year is dependent on their fees being up to date.

If you are having difficulty paying your fees, please see the Director or contact the St Nicholas Billing Team on 02 4979 1182.

## Our staff

These qualifications include Early Childhood teachers (Degree qualified), Diploma in Children's Services, Certificate III in Children's Services, Food Safety and Handling qualifications, Workplace Health and Safety training and first aid, anaphylaxis and asthma certificates. All staff have completed child protection training and hold a current Working with Children Check (WWCC). Please see our display in the foyer of your local St Nicholas Early Education centre for a closer look at our staff and their specific qualifications. Educators at St Nicholas are continually developing skills and knowledge by attending professional development courses on a regular basis. All our educators work together to provide quality care and education for children attending St Nicholas Early Education centres.

## Enrolment and orientation

Children are eligible to commence education and care at St Nicholas Early Education Centres when they are a minimum of eight weeks old, through to a maximum of five years of age. To ensure that enrolments are offered equitably, each enrolment is considered through an application process and where the number of children applying exceeds the number of places available, names will be placed on a waiting list.

Once a place is offered at St Nicholas, the family is encouraged to arrange an appointment with the Director to visit their local St Nicholas Early Education centre for enrolment and orientation. This provides an opportunity for families to ask questions, see the centre and gather all the information they need about the way in which St Nicholas operates.

At orientation, families will receive information including:

- ▶ Enrolment form & Direct Debit authorisation
- ▶ Family Information Handbook
- ▶ A list of centre policies required under regulation 168 of the Education and Care Regulations 2011.
- ▶ Information on the National Quality Framework and the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).
- ▶ Information on Child Care Subsidy (CCS).

To complete the enrolment process, families will be asked to pay a once-only non-refundable enrolment fee. A security bond is payable before the child commences and in any event within two weeks of the offer of enrolment at St Nicholas. More information is available in the St Nicholas enrolment policy, available from your local St Nicholas Early Education centre.

Documents required before your child commences care at a St Nicholas Early Education centre:

- ▶ Completed enrolment form & Direct Debit authorisation
- ▶ Child's immunisation history statement.
- ▶ Copy of the child's birth certificate and sighted original.
- ▶ A copy of any court orders or restraining orders concerning custody of the child, if applicable.
- ▶ Current contact information for parents and emergency contacts.
- ▶ Information on children's additional needs, including medical conditions, health and developmental concerns.

## Curriculum and program

It is the aim of St Nicholas Early Education to provide an integrated curriculum that promotes holistic practices which are developmentally appropriate and supportive of children's different learning capabilities and styles. Through play, children at St Nicholas develop a range of skills and processes such as problem-solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating themselves and their world. The curriculum reflects the principles, practices and outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) for Australia to promote the vision of "belonging, being & becoming". It provides an open-structured environment that encourages child-initiated, child-directed, staff-supported play. The EYLF encompasses five learning outcomes:

- ▶ Children have a strong sense of identity.
- ▶ Children are connected with and contribute to the world.
- ▶ Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.
- ▶ Children are confident and involved learners.
- ▶ Children are effective communicators.

Information regarding planning of the curriculum and program for children's individual abilities and interests is the result of close observations, assessments and reflections, which in turn increase children's dispositions for motivated learning in meaningful experiences. Inclusive curriculum practices (when educators make thoughtful and informed curriculum decisions and work in partnership with families) will be implemented which create continuity between home and care settings, fostering a sense of belonging for individual children and families.

## School transition program

St Nicholas Early Education is committed to providing children with the best start to their schooling lives and making the transition to kindergarten as smooth as possible. At some St Nicholas sites, we may include the following activities into our program:

- ▶ visiting school grounds to familiarise children with facilities
- ▶ visiting school libraries and canteens
- ▶ visiting the kindergarten classrooms.

In all of our preschool programs we provide activities to foster children's transition to school, by

- ▶ developing independence - dressing, toileting & eating
- ▶ developing social skills and friendships
- ▶ learning how to look after own belongings
- ▶ recognising and writing own name
- ▶ following directions
- ▶ fostering the child's individual stage of development.

All of our programs are based on the individual developmental level of each child, and all at St Nicholas Early Education Centre are committed to providing experiences in line with each child's needs and interests. We also value the input from families, as parents know their child/ren best. If you have any suggestions or comments about the program, please don't hesitate to talk to your child's teacher.





## Health and safety

St Nicholas Early Education, consistent with the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, provides an environment that promotes effective health and safety practices that minimise risk and ensure best practices in our centres.

The St Nicholas policy manual, located in our foyer, provides more detailed information regarding our practices.

### Effective Health and Safety practices will include:

#### Child protection

Children and young people have a right to grow up in healthy communities which offer protection from harm, security of accommodation and stability of care. St Nicholas Early Education centres are mandatory reporters and have a responsibility to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of every child and young person in our care. We work in a co-ordinated and co-operative manner with relevant regulatory bodies and the Office of Safeguarding to ensure protection and timely intervention where children and young people are at risk of harm.

The Office of Safeguarding is an integral part of St Nicholas, and is placed outside St Nicholas' services and programs, overseeing their safeguarding standards in operation.

The Office of Safeguarding works with NSW Police, the Office of the Children's Guardian, the Department of Community and Justice and other statutory authorities and specialist authorities within the Catholic Church in Australia to fulfil its responsibilities and maximise the safeguarding of children and vulnerable persons.

#### Immunisation records

Families are required to provide St Nicholas Early Education with documented evidence of their child/ren's immunisation status prior to commencement at our centres. This will initially be provided at the time of enrolment and updated as necessary. It is a parent's/ carer's right not to immunise their child; however they will be excluded during an outbreak of vaccine-preventable disease.

#### Administration of prescription medication

In recognition of the duty of care there will be occasions when the administration of prescribed medication may be necessary to support children during the course of normal attendance at St Nicholas.

St Nicholas educators will:

- ▶ provide families with medication forms that are essential for medication to be administered at St Nicholas
- ▶ administer prescribed medication and be witnessed by a second staff member as per our medication policy.

Responsibilities of Families:

- ▶ Any medication must be given directly to a permanent St Nicholas staff member on arrival at centre and a medication authorisation form must be completed for each medication provided. This must be completed accurately and signed and dated by family. If anyone other than the family is bringing the child to St Nicholas, a written permission note from the family, including the above information, must accompany the medication. The guardian will be requested to complete the medication form at the centre.

#### Managing high temperatures

On enrolment, parents are requested to consent to the administration of liquid paracetamol to their child should it be needed. This will only be administered once in the case of a child's temperature reaching 38 degrees or higher. In this case the child's parent or emergency contact will be called to pick up the child and verbal consent will be sought over the phone. Parents will then be required to sign a Medication Authorisation and Administration Form upon picking up their child. If a child's parent or emergency contact cannot be reached, verbal authorisation will be acquired from a doctor or emergency service.

#### Infection control

St Nicholas Early Education promotes and adheres to best practices that will reduce the transmission of infectious disease through policy and procedure on general hand washing, toileting, use of gloves, nappy changing, handling of body fluids, cleaning and maintenance.

Families are asked not to send a sick child to the centre as they can become quite distressed and run the risk of infecting other children and the staff. The Director and the Room Leader are authorised to refuse a child's admission to the centre if they feel it is in the best interests of the child and the centre.

**A child starting a course of antibiotics is recommended to stay home for at least 24 hours from the first day of the course. Please see the medication policy for further information.**

#### Exclusion

St Nicholas Early Education manages an outbreak of an infectious disease in the centre by appropriate exclusion of sick children and staff. St Nicholas Early Education Centre's Exclusion Policy Guidelines have been formulated with reference to the NSW Health Department's Exclusion Policy Guidelines.

#### Parent notification

St Nicholas will inform all parents when an infectious disease occurs in the centre and place notices about the occurrence of the infection in suitable positions in the centre.

Exclusion guidelines and relevant procedures are sought from the Public Health Unit to advise and protect children and staff at St Nicholas.

## Exclusion periods

St Nicholas Early Education is staffed by a professional team with a wide range of qualifications and experience.

While every precaution is taken to prevent transmission of illnesses within our centres, at times children become unwell and exclusionary periods are applied to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

St Nicholas follows the exclusionary periods as outlined in the 'Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services' guideline - scan here.



Please also refer to St Nicholas' Policies and Procedures - scan here



## Medical conditions

St Nicholas will facilitate effective care and health management of children with medical conditions including asthma, anaphylaxis, diabetes and epilepsy.

The Director is responsible for ensuring effective care and health management of children with a medical condition and ensuring the following steps are undertaken.

For children attending with a specific medical condition we will:

- ▶ on enrolment provide each family with a copy of the medical conditions procedures as they relate to the child's specific medical condition and the risk minimisation plan (Regulation 90)
- ▶ receive from parents a medical action plan from the child's medical practitioner
- ▶ meet to discuss and document a Risk Minimisation Plan. Where possible, the Director, parent/guardian and the child's primary educator will all participate
- ▶ update the risk minimisation plan when notified of any changes to a child's health needs. It is the parent's responsibility to notify St Nicholas of any change
- ▶ ensure that no child with a diagnosed medical condition attends St Nicholas without their treatment/medication
- ▶ inform all educators of the child's medical condition, and the location of both the medical condition action plan and risk minimisation plan
- ▶ ensure educators have undertaken Anaphylaxis and Asthma Management training, and engage in regular practice sessions with training apparatus.

## Good nutritional values

At St Nicholas Early Education, we recognise the importance of supporting families in providing healthy food and drink. We implement the key messages outlined in Munch & Move, supporting the National Healthy Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings. We also follow procedures to encourage and support breastfeeding, promote healthy food, safety, safe food handling, positive eating environments, education and communication.

## Dental health

At St Nicholas we aim to promote good dental and oral hygiene behaviour in children and families by:

- ▶ having dentist contact details provided on enrolment
- ▶ encouraging children to drink water between meals and throughout the day
- ▶ only having bottles for formula, breast milk or cow/soy milk NOT sweetened milk, cordials or fruit juices
- ▶ providing resources that will teach children about good oral health, encouraging families to take their child to a dentist
- ▶ discouraging both finger/thumb sucking habits and putting babies to bed with bottles as these may lead to future dental problems.





## Water safety around water hazards

St Nicholas Early Education endeavours to prevent child accidents and illnesses relating to water hazards by:

- ▶ having staff closely supervising children engaged in water activities at all times
- ▶ tipping out water at the completion of an activity
- ▶ incorporating water safety into the educational program for children
- ▶ having Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) charts located in all rooms.

## Protection from ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun

St Nicholas Early Education has adopted the Cancer Council NSW Sun Protection Policy as best practice in all centres. The policy applies to children and staff attending St Nicholas, and parents, students and volunteers are also asked to model sun protection practices when involved in service activities. The Sun Protection Policy relates to:

- ▶ **Shade.** St Nicholas Early Education provides and maintains adequate shade for outdoor play.
- ▶ **Hats.** Staff and children are required to wear sun-safe hats that protect their face, neck and ears whilst exposed to sunlight outdoors.
- ▶ **Clothing.** When outdoors, staff and children wear sun-safe clothing that covers as much of the skin (especially the shoulders, back and stomach) as possible.

- ▶ **Sunscreen.** All staff and children apply SPF50+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen (provided by St Nicholas unless your child has an allergy, in which case families are asked to send specific sunscreen to leave at the centre for your child) 20 minutes before going outdoors and every 2 hours thereafter.

## Educators as role models

Sun protection is incorporated regularly into learning programs, and sun protection information is promoted to staff, families and visitors.

- ▶ All sun protection measures (including recommended outdoor times, shade, hat, clothing and sunscreen) will be considered when planning excursions and incursions.

## Children's clothing

Clothing needs to be comfortable, practical and appropriate for the weather conditions on the day. Shorts and t-shirts in summer and tracksuits in winter are the most practical, as they enable children to move freely whilst playing. As most children are active and creative in their learning, we recommend clothing is casual and suitable for messy play. Packing spare clothing is encouraged for children to change into, when needed.

Children are encouraged to develop their independence through dressing and toileting. To help your child experience success, avoid buckles, belts, and overalls. When dressing for the day, children should wear:

- ▶ A wide-brimmed hat
- ▶ Clothing that covers their shoulders
- ▶ Sturdy shoes suitable for climbing and active play
- ▶ If earrings are worn, small sleepers or studs, for safety reasons.





## Grouping of children

Children move between rooms once they reach an appropriate age. Transition visits occur to allow the child an opportunity to become familiar with the new room, staff, children and routines.

Transition to the next room is based on each individual child's readiness, and on each family's needs. If no vacancy exists in the next room, the child will remain in the existing room until a space becomes available.

Families will be consulted about any change in rooms for their child.

All children attending St Nicholas Early Education centres receive individualised programs to suit their needs and stage of development, whichever room they are in.

## Settling your child into the centre

How you can help:

- ▶ visit the centre with your child to promote familiarity with the new environment.
- ▶ on the first day spend some time involving your child in an experience. When the time comes to leave, say goodbye and reassure them that you will be back later to collect them.
- ▶ tell a staff member when you are about to leave so they can be with your child to provide a cuddle or to help wave goodbye.
- ▶ when you are ready to leave, please do so quickly as prolonging the goodbye can prolong the process for your child. Please be assured that most children settle within 15 minutes.

Please feel free to phone us throughout the day to see how your child has settled. Whatever the situation, we do not allow a child to be distressed for a long period and would notify you if this was the case.

## Rest and sleep

All children have the opportunity to have a rest/sleep during the day, depending on individual routines.

- ▶ **0-2 year olds** are encouraged to follow their own sleeping patterns, as they would at home. Each child is provided with a cot or appropriate bedding as required.
- ▶ **2-3 year olds** are encouraged to take part in a rest/sleep in the room after lunch. Children are provided with beds and assistance is given by staff to help those children who need a sleep. Quiet activities are provided for those children who don't sleep, after they have had a rest. Families are to provide a small cushion or pillow if their child requires it.
- ▶ **4-5 year olds** do not take part in a formal rest schedule, however for this age, we do acknowledge the need for a quiet time in the day for children to engage in a relaxed environment.

Please discuss your child's sleep routine with staff, to ensure consistency whilst attending St Nicholas.

## Emergency and evacuation procedure

In case of an emergency situation, every effort will be made to contact parents to collect their child. The centre is fitted with safety devices which are maintained regularly. Regular fire drills are necessary for regulation purposes and every effort will be made to make evacuation procedures enjoyable rather than stressful events for children. Regular emergency procedures give children an opportunity to become familiar

with the routine and planned evacuation. If you are present at a fire drill, you are required by law to participate. Emergency evacuation plans are displayed in the centre and staff are familiar with emergency procedures and policies. Parents and visitors are asked to make themselves familiar with the evacuation plan and where hoses and first aid equipment are to be found.



## Family involvement

Family are welcome into the centre at any time. Family participation sends strong positive messages to your child that you support them and are part of the environment. There are many levels of family participation and we appreciate and form of involvement you offer. Family involvement may include:

- ▶ attending special activities and functions
- ▶ suggestions for programming
- ▶ feedback regarding the service
- ▶ attending information evenings
- ▶ sharing your hobbies and/or occupation with the children
- ▶ sharing cultural celebrations and practices with the staff and children
- ▶ sharing languages other than English spoken in your home

## Children's birthdays

Birthdays are special times for children and St Nicholas enjoys sharing the occasion. Families are welcome to send along a store bought cake to share if they wish, however are asked to send plain cakes only. Cakes must be sealed and have an ingredients list on them (supermarket purchase) due to allergies.

No homemade cakes are able to be accepted by St Nicholas centres. Please feel free to speak to staff about birthday cake alternatives.

## Policies and procedures

St Nicholas Early Education has developed a wide range of policies that cover a variety of issues. The policy manual is located in the foyer and is available at any time.

We invite parents to borrow this folder to take home and read the policies more thoroughly. Please see staff if you would like to do so. All of St Nicholas' policies and procedures are available on our website at [stnicks.org.au/policies-and-procedures](http://stnicks.org.au/policies-and-procedures).

Staff and management regularly review all policies and families are notified via email of any changes. Families are encouraged to provide feedback and/or comments to St Nicholas on policies at any time.

By signing enrolment forms at St Nicholas, families are agreeing to comply with the policies of the centre. The information in this book details some of our operational policies, for a more detailed explanation refer to the policy manual.



# Everything our families need to know, right here.



ST NICHOLAS  
POLICIES AND  
PROCEDURES



NSW  
IMMUNISATION  
SCHEDULE



STAYING  
HEALTHY IN  
CHILDCARE



GUIDE TO  
NATIONAL  
QUALITY  
FRAMEWORK



EDUCATION &  
CARE SERVICE  
NATIONAL  
REGULATIONS



EDUCATION &  
CARE SERVICES  
NATIONAL LAW



NATIONAL  
APPROVED  
LEARNING  
FRAMEWORKS



CHILD  
CARE  
SUBSIDY



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*St Nicholas*

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## Family concerns

Families are requested to raise any concerns with their educator in the first instance. Following this, families can speak to the Director if they feel that their concern has not been satisfactorily resolved. Directors are available to discuss children's care and education with families at any time. All family concerns will be dealt with in a confidential and professional manner, however if a family is not comfortable discussing with the Director, the Area Service Managers can be contacted via the Head Office on (02) 4979 1110. Please refer to the Complaints Procedure on our website. If unresolved by St Nicholas, families are also able to lodge a formal complaint with the Department of Early Childhood Education and Care or NSW Ombudsman.

## Finally...

Please do not hesitate to approach St Nicholas staff if you would like more information about anything related to your child's education and care at St Nicholas Early Education.

Thank you again for entrusting St Nicholas Early Education with the care of your child. We will endeavour to make your child's time with us a positive and rewarding experience.

## Useful contacts

### St Nicholas Corporate Office

246 Parry St Newcastle West NSW 2302

**Phone** (02) 4979 1110

**Email** [contactus@stnicholasmn.org.au](mailto:contactus@stnicholasmn.org.au)

### Department of Early Childhood Education and Care

**Phone** 1800 619 113

**Email** [ececd@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ececd@det.nsw.edu.au)

### Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority

**Phone** 1300 422 327

**Email** [acecqa.gov.au](http://acecqa.gov.au)

### Centrelink

**Phone** 136 150

### Immunisation Register

**Phone** 1800 653 809

### Office of Safeguarding (Diocesan Child Protection unit)

**Phone** (02) 4979 1390

**Email** [childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au)

### NSW Ombudsman

**Phone** 1800 451 524

### St Nicholas Billing Team

**Phone** (02) 4979 1182





**St Nicholas Early Education**

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**Head Office**

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