52-54 Farrell Road Orange NSW 2800 PO Box 2025 Orange 2800 PH 02 63611854 ABN: 12126248039

INFORMATION HANDBOOK



Waratah Early Learning Centre i ded Preschool and Long Day Care service owned by Ron and Christine Hay.

We are open 6.30am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday - although we are closed for Public Holidays, and annually for two weeks over the Christmas period.

Our centre has five rooms catering for children aged 6 weeks through to 5 years. Each classroom has its own separate sleeping area and art space, along with dining rooms that look out upon the gardens. We are a fully catered service providing for all of your child's daily requirements.

All of our room leaders are qualified with their Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood or Diploma in Children's Services. All of our staff maintain qualifications in First Aid, Anaphylaxis, Asthma and Child Protection.

Centre Management

The daily running of Waratah Early Learning Centre is managed by our Director, Hollie McCallum. Kellie Doulin is the operations manager and our 2IC is Sophie Bartier. The office is available between 8am to 5pm. When making decisions concerning or affecting any aspect of the centre and its patrons, the Director will consider input from both the Parents, Educators, and any other Community Member who may be of assistance, including Educational Authorised Officers at the Department of Education and Training (Level 2, NSW Government Offices, Cnr Anson & Kite St Orange. Ph 02 63616990).

Parent input and feedback is always greatly appreciated and valued on any matter and at any time. We encourage you to be involved by leaving written correspondence in the feedback box, sending us an email or by communicating directly with the director who is at the centre on most days, and also available by appointment. Grievances will be managed & feedback given, in a timely manner.

Immunisation and Enrolment

Service Providers are prohibited from enrolling a child in their service without specific information regarding the child's immunisation status— please visit the following websites for more details

www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation/immunisation...
www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care...

Centre Policies

Policies and Procedures are particularly important in forming part of our code of practice at Waratah Early Learning Centre. Currently we have a number of Policies which have been formulated using our licensing regulations, National Quality Standards, and various input from specialist agencies and organisations. We encourage all families and staff members to actively be a part of this process by consulting with the Director on relevant issues or concerns. You may also like to fill out a policy feedback form from the policy folder in the front foyer.

Centre Fees

Baby 1 room	$185 per day
Baby 2 room	$185 per day
Junior Room	$179 per day
Preschool 1 Room	$171 per day
Preschool 2 Room	$171 per day
Casual Fee	Varies depending on classroom

NB: These fees are before your Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is applied, and/or *Start Strong Fee Relief* (for children who turn 3 or 4 years of age before July 31st). In order to receive CCS you must first complete an activity test through your MyGov account. Once completed please provide us with the CRN numbers and Date of Birth of your child and the primary caregiver listed with Centrelink. We will use these to activate a valid child care account and receive appropriate subsidies on your fees. If you wish to apply for Start Strong Fee Relief, please ask for Declaration Form at the office.

FEES must be paid in full, weekly or fortnightly unless other arrangements are made with the Office. Payments must be continued during a child's absence for illness, holiday, or any other reason. Statutory Public Holidays must also be paid for (at a discounted rate), however fees are not paid during our two-week closure at Christmas. Fees may increase on occasion.

If fees are more than 14 days in arrears, Waratah Early Learning Centre reserves the right to immediately cancel the position. Fees are directly debited from your account weekly or fortnightly using an account software called Debit Success — payment agreement plans will be put into place upon enrolment.

The Educational Program



Here at Waratah Early Learning, we recognise the children as individuals, as well as respecting that they each come from a unique family, with their own set of beliefs and values. We believe that children learn best when engaged in meaningful and authentic experiences, based on their own strengths and interests. Extended periods of play are vital for children to develop an understanding of different concepts and educators need to learn when they can add value to a child's play and when they should observe and allow children time to play and discover on their own.

There are a number of frameworks and approaches that inform our practice and have influenced our education program, including, The Early years learning framework and central to this are the concepts of Belonging, being and becoming.

The code of Ethics - A collection of statements related to appropriate behaviour and expectations of early childhood professionals. It also provides a framework for reflection about our ethical responsibilities as early educators.

NQS- National quality framework – A collection of documents related to the continued improvement and assessment of early education and care across Australia. This includes National Law and regulation, approved learning frameworks, a guide to assessment and rating and as well as the NQS – National quality standard, the 7 quality areas which highlight the vital outcomes for children.

Play based learning – Described in the Early Learning Framework as 'a context for learning through which children organise and make sense of their social worlds, as they actively engage with people, objects and responsibilities.

STEAM – Using Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics to achieve learning outcomes. Educators will provide experiences that help develop understandings of each element and provide 'real world learnings'

Each room at Waratah Early Learning Centre is designed and furnished with a wide array of resources and equipment to promote curiosity, investigation, exploration and learning. We have numerous materials that have a natural aesthetic appeal to the children, and we endeavour to create an atmosphere that replicates the warmth and security of a home. Our service also values the opportunities that recycled and open-ended parts offer to the development of a child's imagination and creativity. Please see our brochure on Loose Parts and their benefits in education.

Throughout the day our educators have many interactions with the children so they can effectively engage in the child's interest and determine what new learning content can emerge from this. Our staff also provide programs that include activities and experiences aimed at developing skills & values from identified learning goals. The activities undertaken by the children are closely monitored by the staff and evaluated in relation to their planned outcomes for each child.

We encourage you to have direct input and feedback on your child's daily program and developmental profile. Feedback can be given through completing a program feedback form, or through direct conversation with your child's teacher or centre Director. We also welcome you to come in and join us throughout the day. If you have a special skill you'd like to share, or would like to see how our program operates, we would love to have your company.

Language, Literacy & Numeracy is an important part of our daily program and is carefully integrated into everyday play. Play based learning provides opportunities for children to expand their thinking and enhance their desire to know and learn (EYLF). To motivate children's participation, these activities are integrated into the children's current interests and play themes. Please ask us for further information around this style of learning.

Children and Technology



At Waratah Early Learning Centre each classroom is equipped with an Ipad, and the preschool rooms are additionally equipped with projectors. These resources are used on a daily basis to document children's learning and play. They are also used with the children to research, investigate, trial and communicate, whilst bringing to life their ideas, theories and concepts. The iPad are most commonly planned for, ensuring content viewed, and time spent on them, is appropriate and guided. The iPad are used to communicate with families and contain individual portfolios for each child's learning. Waratah's has an extensive "Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy" which is guided by the National Model Code for taking images or videos of children as well as outlining procedures for the use of technology within the classroom – a copy of this is included in your enrolment package.







Your child's Learning journey at Waratahs

At Waratah Early Learning Centre, documentation is how we notice, celebrate and support your child's growth. Guided by the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), our approach is centred on strong relationships, children's voices and genuine partnerships with families.

📸 *Moments on OWNA*

We share photos and snapshots of your child's experiences to help you connect with their day and spark conversations at home.
We aim for balance — capturing meaningful moments while staying fully present with children. Some reflections are shared straight away, while deeper learning notes are completed during programming time.

📝 *Ongoing Observations*

Educators record observations, interests and emerging skills throughout the year. These notes help us:
Plan engaging experiences
Track development
Identify strengths
Inform individual learning goals
These working notes guide our programming and are not routinely sent home.

💛 *"All About Me at Waratahs"*

At the start of the year (or upon enrolment), families share insights about their child. Educators complete a companion reflection about your child in our environment.
Preschool children are actively involved in this process through drawing, discussion, storytelling and play. This helps us understand your child's:
Interests
Personality
Learning dispositions
Relationships

🌱 *Developmental Summaries & Goals*

Twice a year, we complete developmental summaries linked to the EYLF learning outcomes and milestones.
From this, we create an individual learning goal for each child. Goals are strengths-based and informed by family input and children's voices.
If we ever identify an area needing additional support, we will speak with you and may complete an Ages & Stages Questionnaire together.
Mid-year, we review progress and update goals where needed.

🎓 *Preschool Transition to School*

For children moving to school, we complete a Transition Statement to support a smooth and confident start to Kindergarten.

💌 *End-of-Year Goodbye Letters*

Each child receives a personalised goodbye letter celebrating their growth, relationships and achievements — a keepsake to honour their journey.

- Bottles and formula
- Nappies and change products
- Bibs and bed linen
- Hats and sunscreen
- Meals and Drinks

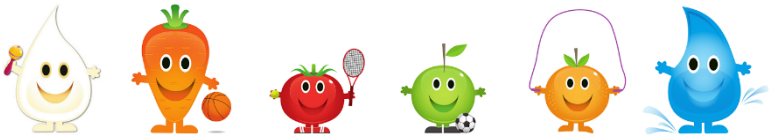
We provide all of your child's daily requirements.

Our Garden Farm

In addition to our daily classroom programs, we also offer a lovely Kitchen & Garden program.

Over the past few years our centre has developed a petite farm, consisting of a chook pen, a worm farm, compost area, and vegie plots. Each classroom spends time on specialised activities such as raising seedlings, weeding & watering, feeding our hens & collecting their eggs.
In addition, there are activities that link to our main kitchen such as chopping up ingredients, cooking & lots of tasting of course! The children can visit the kitchen at any time of the day, & they are regularly making trips to drop off eggs and ask the chef what is for lunch!

Meals and Snacks



Waratah Early Learning Centre plans a daily menu that contains a wide variety of fresh food, different tastes, and textures. Each day's menu provides essential nutrients in the form of a hot main meal and wholesome snacks for morning and afternoon tea. A light breakfast and supper is also provided for those that attend the centre during those hours. Our menu is based on a weekly rotation that is designed to include a wide variety of foods. The daily menu is displayed on the notice board in the front foyer, & we encourage families to contribute their thoughts and suggestions through verbal feedback, or via the suggestion forms found at the kitchen window.

Nutritional care for all ages: Our centre supports breastfeeding of babies and provides a quiet place for nursing to occur. Infant formula is provided, and fresh foods are prepared daily to correspond with the development and skills of young children being introduced to solids.

Religious and cultural needs: We recognise that we live in a diverse community and because of varying religious or cultural beliefs some children may require food options that differ from the main menu. Please discuss with us how we can best meet your needs.

Food allergies and intolerances: Because food allergies and intolerance's can be serious and in some cases life threatening, we have strict procedures in place to protect affected children. Our centre is a PEANUT FREE facility—this means that we do not serve any food that contains peanuts or knowingly use a product that contains peanut derivatives. NO food or drinks are to be brought into the centre for children by parents, family or visitors at any time. Most food allergies and intolerance's can be accommodated at the Centre; however, we do require written instruction from a Health Care Professional detailing your child's dietary requirements or restrictions.

The Dining Environment: At our centre we see the dining and kitchen areas like those in any home, a relaxed place where friends can come together for good food and conversation. We believe that good nutritious food should be served in attractive surroundings, whether eating in our lovely sunny dining rooms, on the veranda or picnicking in the landscaped gardens. Mealtimes also present an opportunity for children to develop independence and learn new skills; the children are encouraged to assist with the planning and preparation of their meals and the dining area.

Waratah Early Learning Centre is responsible for providing the highest quality nutritional care for all children at the centre. We follow recommendations from the: Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013, Nutrition Checklist for Long Day care Centres, Feeding Policy for Infants and Toddlers - Nutrition Australia, and NSW health initiative 'Munch & Move'. Our menu is carefully planned in consultation with a Dietician to ensure that all children are offered an adequate number of nutritious serves to meet half of their recommended daily requirements. We also maintain high standards of food safety and hygiene to ensure the health and wellbeing of all children and staff at the centre. Our Centre will comply with all legislated requirements for a food handling operation, and all kitchen staff will have completed a Safe Food Handling or Food Supervisors Certificate

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Working With You

If you are requiring any additional support or help to enrol or participate in the programs at Waratah Early Learning Centre please let us know so that we can help you.

We can access help for non English speaking or non literate families requiring assistance, and for children with a special need requiring assistance, we may be able to access additional equipment, resources and funding through an intervention support service. For more information please consult with our Director.

Parent Meetings

Parent & teacher meetings are offered formally to all children in their year before school (preschool 2 room). However please note that all families can request a meeting with your child's carer at any point during the year. Please feel comfortable to talk to your child's teacher about making a mutually convenient arrangement.

Staffing

Staff rosters are always organised in the best interest of all children and families. Continuity of care is essential when providing an environment that children feel safe and secure within. Children and families need to feel comfortable with their care givers, and feel that they have confidence, and trust, in their ability. Sometimes educators will need to be rostered on based on the qualifications of a staff member, and at other times they may be organised based on how familiar staff are with a group of children. At all times of the day there is a staff member whom has a first aid certificate and anaphylaxis and asthma training. Our service does have a small pool of casuals which are used throughout the year, and trainees who are undertaking their qualification with us.

Medication



Sun Safety at Waratah Early Learning Centre

As Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, we believe it is important to educate our children about safe sun practices. Wearing sunscreen and selecting sun safe clothing and hats is vital, as outlined by our policy below;

Clothing

What should you dress your child in?

Think about the whole environment that they are in whilst attending the service. They engage in learning experiences both inside and outside every day, and need be dressed in the appropriate clothes to suit all conditions. To protect our children from the sun they need to wear clothing that covers most of their skin. This includes; Loose fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves, collars or covered neck, longer style skirts, shorts and trousers.
Please note: Midriff, crop or singlet tops are ***not*** sun safe as they do not provide enough sun protection.
Below are some examples of what is and what is not appropriate for day care.













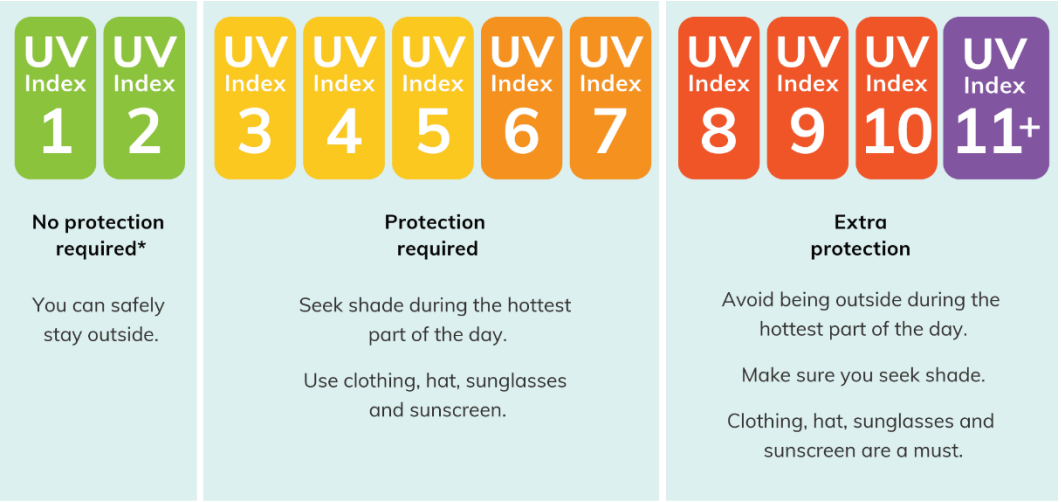
Sunscreen application

In the morning, drop off times can be very busy and to ensure all the children have sunscreen on, we would appreciate your help in applying your child's first application of sunscreen. As per our policy, we will then re-apply every 2 hours (20 minutes prior to sun exposure).

Outdoor Activities

- October – March. Sun protection is required at all times. Between 11am – 3pm extra sun protection is required and minimising outdoor activities including frequency and duration when the UV index is high
- April – September. Activities can take place at any time – however, sun protection is required between 10am – 2pm
- June – July. When the UV index is low sun protection is not required. We still do encourage the children to wear hats to develop safe sun practices.

  NB: These are general guidelines. Educators will check the UV Index prior to going outside, to further guide their application of sunsafe practices.



Remember to;

✔ Pack lots of extra clothes for water play

✔ Apply sunscreen on drop off

✔ Sun safe clothing is a MUST

✔ Babies under the age of 12 months should not be exposed to full sun light. Seek shade when outside and apply a small amount of sunscreen to exposed skin with the permission from parents.

Slip, slop, slap for safe fun in the sun!

Our Philosophy

We believe that children are curious and inquisitive about our world and eagerly embrace the learning opportunities that it offers.

We believe that children are capable and skilled and have a wealth of knowledge and experiences to share with others.

We acknowledge that children come to us as part of a family and welcome all parents as partners in the care of their child.

We believe that our environment plays a crucial role in the holistic learning and development of each child. We believe that our environment is reflective of our culture and therefore it will be designed and furnished to portray the children, families and caregivers that occupy it.

We believe that our staff are facilitators of learning, and that staff and children are co learners working together as a team to extend thinking and development. We believe that there should be no hierarchy between staff, families and children, only a mutual respect and appreciation for each other.

We believe that our service is an integral part of the broader community. Families use us as an extension of their environment, and in return we use the community to extend on our ability to support children and families.

We see that children are significantly affected by their relationships - their interactions with family and community members, the events they are involved in, and the decisions of immediate others.

We recognise and respect that each child has their own learning style. We see the importance of acknowledging each learning style while providing a variety of rich, hands-on learning experiences.

We believe that children learn best when they have a heard opinion regarding their environment and learning experiences. We believe that children need to be provided opportunities to control and act upon their own ideas. Children should be actively engaged in their own learning.

We recognise that some of our children and families may have additional needs that need to be considered and planned for. We aim to ensure that our service is providing both diverse and inclusive practices.

We believe that play is a powerful tool in motivating and educating young children. We aim to use play as a partner in presenting, and developing, rich and engaging educational programs.

