
MITCHELL EARLY LEARNING CENTRE INC

Panorama Ave., c/- Charles Sturt University Bathurst. NSW. 2795
ABN: 30630725365

Telephone: (02) 633 84346 Facsimile: (02) 633 84978

WELCOME TO MITCHELL EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

Mitchell Early Early Learning Centre is a Community Based Centre, licensed to care for 70 children. We currently cater for 22 children per day in the 0-3 age group, 17 children in the 3-4 age group and 20 children in the 4-5 age group. The Centre welcomes children of Charles Sturt University students and staff, children of distance education students who attend Charles Sturt University residential schools and the wider community.

At Mitchell Early Learning Centre (MELC) we believe a successful orientation process will reduce some of the stress and anxiety that children and families may feel when first beginning with us. We believe this is possible by encouraging families and children to visit and become familiar with our service prior to commencement and by tailoring the settling in process to meet the individual needs of each child and family. This is achieved through open, honest communication and constant discussions about how everyone is feeling. In this way we can ensure that the process is as smooth and as inclusive as possible.

The Centre is staffed by a dedicated team of Early Childhood Educators. We always operate above staff child ratios.

Each child is treated as an individual and receives as much individual attention as possible. One of the ways we are able to achieve this is through our very high staff : child ratios. At MELC we respect the right of each child to be in an early learning environment which is loving, nurturing, fun and safe. We recognise that each child develops at his / her own pace. Our experiences and activities are designed to extend children's knowledge and development and are planned using an emergent curriculum approach. An emergent curriculum responds to each individual child's needs, interests, strengths and abilities and includes a 'school readiness' program. Studies have shown that children develop a lifelong interest in learning (and learn more!) if they are presented with materials, resources and information they are interested in. Our program is flexible and stimulating and strongly encourages family participation – we believe that relationships are at the core of our work and that 'it takes a village to raise a child' (African proverb).

All staff and volunteers working in the Centre are required to undergo a criminal check.

CENTRE HOURS

The Centre opens at 8.00am and closes at 6p.m. Children and family members are not permitted in the Centre before 8.a.m. or after 6 p.m.

In order to meet the regulations for child care assistance set down by the Dept. Family and Community Services the Centre must follow the priority of access guidelines. They are:

- Priority 1. Work force participants where a single parent, or both parents are employed, seeking employment or studying/training for future employment.
- Priority 2. Children or parents with a continuing disability or incapacity.
- Priority 3. Children at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
- Priority 4. Parents at home with more than one child below school age and single parents at home.

FEES AND CHARGES

Fees from 04/07/2011 fees have been set at: \$73.00 - Snuggles and Cuddles Rooms, \$69.00 - Possum Room and \$69.00 - Blue Gum Room

Families are requested to pay their fees fortnightly in advance. For security reasons we ask you to pay your fees between 8am and 4pm Monday – Thursday inclusive and Friday 8am-12noon. Families can arrange to pay by direct debit and eftpos facilities are available.

1. The minimum daily charge for care / education is based on a minimum 10 hour day.
2. Fees will be charged for public holidays that fall during the year (except Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day which fall when the Centre is not operating).
3. Full fees will be payable when a child is absent from the Centre because of illness, holidays or occasional absences. We do appreciate a phone call letting us know if your child will be absent on their booked day.
4. Families who wish to use or hold a place at the Centre must pay full fees from the day the Centre opens in January to the day it closes in December.
5. A \$10 deposit will be required for each child on the waiting list for a place in the Centre. The deposit is non-refundable.
6. At least two week's notice must be given if a child is to be withdrawn permanently; otherwise fees will be charged.
7. Families are eligible to apply for Child Care Benefit through the Family Assistance Office.

BREAST FED BABIES

Mums are always welcome into the Centre to feed their child/ren. Unfortunately breast fed babies can only be accepted into the Centre if they will take expressed milk from a bottle or some other form of nourishment that can be administered by a staff member. It is often difficult or impossible to contact mums who are away from the Centre. If a baby is hungry and distressed we must be able to feed the child. This is the only way to provide quality care for babies.

MEALS

The Centre provides meals and drinks for children throughout the day, except for babies on formula, which needs to be supplied and prepared by the family. If your child requires a special diet MELC may request that the child see a dietician / allergy specialist to ensure their dietary needs are being met and the written information shared with the Centre.

CHILD CARE BENEFIT

Child Care Benefit (CCB) is a payment made to families to assist with the costs of childcare. CCB is calculated on the family's taxable income. The Family Assistance Office will administer this process. Families who wish to claim CCB should apply prior to or within 28 days of their child starting care.

MANAGEMENT

The Mitchell Early Learning Centre Inc. is responsible for the management of the Centre. A Management Committee meets regularly to administer all operations of the Centre. The members of the Management Committee are elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Association held in March of each year. Families are invited to attend Management Committee meetings and join in at a level that is most comfortable for them and their family.

The Centre must be self-supporting and running costs are met by fees and recurrent grants from the State Government.