

MERIMBULA-TURA



KINDERGARTEN

FAMILY HANDBOOK

CONTACT DETAILS

Address: 44 Sapphire Coast Drive,

Merimbula NSW 2548

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OPENING HOURS

7:00am – 6:00pm Monday to Friday

Closed Weekends and

Public Holidays



Merimbula Tura Kindergarten extends a warm welcome to all children, parents and extended family members. At Merimbula-Tura Kindergarten, we believe that the first 5 years of a child's life are the most impressionable and formative.

We strive on providing a safe, secure and happy environment in which your child can grow. We will collaborate with parents and families to help make the most of these years and see your child transition to their formal school years with ease and confidence.

This booklet is designed to give you an overview of our Centre and to assist you in the transition from home to childcare for both you and your child at this important time. It contains very relevant and important information about the running of Merimbula-Tura Kindergarten.

Please read through this information carefully and thoroughly to ensure that you understand the Centre's operations. I encourage you to seek further clarification on any issues to ensure you are fully prepared to uphold Centre policies and procedures.

We extend a warm invitation for you to visit our Centre at any time to see your child at play, observe and discuss their various routines and to view the developmental programs provided.

It is our hope that the Centre becomes an extension of your home environment, where both you and your child feel safe, secure and supported.

During your family's time with us, we look forward to working in partnership with you in providing quality care and learning opportunities for your child

Your MTK Family

**Owners:**

Paddy and Debbie Hodgkin – Leekin Pty Ltd (paddyh@live.com)

Director/Administration Officer:

Shanna Hodgkin – Certificate III in Children's Services, Day to day Person

Nominated Supervisor and Educational Leader

Kellie Rosseland – Graduate Diploma in Early Childhood Education, Day to Day Person

Roo Educator's – 4years-5years (Preschool Room):

Kellie Rosseland – Graduate Diploma in Early Childhood Education, Day to Day Person

Erica Robinson – Graduate Diploma in Early Childhood studies, Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood), Day to Day Person

Marni Margerison – Certificate III in Children services, Day to Day Person

Shiann Hodgkin – Certificate III in Children Services

Wagtail Educators – 3years-4 years:

Nantaka Pengprakhon – Master of Teaching Early Childhood, Diploma of Children's Services

Marissa Ingram – Certificate III in Children Services, Working towards Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood and Primary)

Lauretta Robertson – Certificate III in Children Services, Day to Day Person

Tiarne Doneman – Trainee Certificate III in Children Services

Penguin Educators – 2years-3years:

Danielle Toki – Diploma of Children Services, Day to Day Person

Sam James – Diploma of Children Services, Day to Day Person

Koala Educators – 0-2years:

Kerry-Lyn Tinson – Diploma of Children Services, Day to Day Person

Amy Barker – Diploma of Children Services, Day to Day Person

Inclusion Support, Relief and Additional Educators

Omara Crossley – Certificate III in Children Services

Alisa Western – Certificate III in Children Services

Kristy Stanford – Trainee Certificate III in Children Services

Alyce Hanley – Certificate III in Children Services, Day to Day Person (Maternity Leave)

Louise Tilley – Certificate IV in Early Childhood Education and care (equivalent to a Diploma in Children Services)

Kye Dewberry – Trainee Certificate III in Children Services

Cleaner: Colleen Rees

Merimbula Tura Kindergarten: Vision and Philosophy

Vision Statement

Our vision is to provide all children with quality early childhood education and care that enhances their identity, world, wellbeing, learning and communication and provides them with the foundation for a successful future.

Our Philosophy

In regard to children:

We believe that from birth, children are active and capable learners. We value the rights of the child and acknowledge that all children have the universal right to feel safe.

In regard to learning:

We believe that the first 5 years of a child's life are paramount to their learning and development. We value the EYLF and are guided by the principles, practices and learning outcomes. We believe children learn best when they are provided with a safe and secure environment that is individualised to cater for their needs, strengths, cultures and abilities. We value play-based learning and believe educators that are intentional and reflective in their practices enhance the learning and development of children.

In regard to families:

We view our families as their child's first teacher and believe that when families and educators form a relationship built on open communication, trust, mutual respect and collaboration children's learning and development is enhanced.

In regard to educators:

We believe all educators should be valued and respected as educational professionals. Our Educators are passionate, experienced, dedicated and intentional in their practice.

In regard to community:

We value our community links, strive to make new community connections and work collaboratively with our community to strengthen our educational programs and practices.



Getting Started at Merimbula-Tura Kindergarten

An enrolment form needs to be completed and returned to the office prior to your child commencing care. This needs to be done by a person who has lawful authority of the child/children. You will also need to provide a copy of;

- Your letter from Centrelink (which states your CCS% and Eligible Hours)
- Your Child's Immunisation statement from Medicare
- Your Child's Birth Certificate
- Your proof of address
- Your child's Health management plan (if applicable)

Both you and your child will need to be linked with Centrelink and obtain a Childcare Reference Number (CRN) for both you and your child.

Once the Enrolment is submitted you will receive a notification on your MyGov account, which you will need to confirm their enrolment to be able to receive CCS

All child care services must allocate places to those families with the greatest need for child care support.

The Australian Government has Priority of Access Guidelines for allocating places in these circumstances. They set out the following three levels of priority, which child care services must follow when filling vacant places:

Priority 1 - a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect

Priority 2 - a child of a single parent who satisfies, or parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under section 14 of the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*

Priority 3 - any other child.

Orientation

Our Centre provides an orientation process for new children and their families, and children when transitioning to other rooms within the Centre. Children's welfare and happiness is of the highest priority, and Educators are there to assist children and their families through this process.

The orientation visits will be organised at a time that is agreeable to you and the Centre. Families will be given a tour of the centre and introduced to your child's Educators. You will also be informed on how to sign your child in and out of the centre, and how to access room curriculums and parent communication ([KinderM8](#) and [HubHello](#))

Our Orientation process as a guide;

- The first visit will be 1 hour, the second visit will be 2 hours and the third visit will be 9:30-2:30 (if this suits)
- For the first visit of 1 hour, we encourage parents (once they feel comfortable in leaving their child) to meet with the Director in the office to complete documentation and share information.
- For the third visit, we organise for you to have a brief meeting with your child's Room Leader to discuss/answer any questions that you may have.

Before the first day

Leading up to your child's first day at MTK, we recommend that you attend orientation visits and talk to your child about the Centre and all the fun and exciting things that they will get to do. On the first day at MTK, give yourself plenty of time. Rushing will only make you and your child feel anxious.



Be Prepared

Prepare everything the night before: bottles, dummies, nappies, hat, spare clothes and any comfort toys needed for sleep.

Get to Know

Introduce yourself to your child's Educators. Get to know the Room Leader and assistants. Spend some time each morning sharing with them about your child's night, what they had for breakfast and how they may be feeling.

Stay and Play

Spend time settling your child. Read a book, draw a picture, or stay and play. This allows your child to feel comfortable and have a sense of belonging.

Say Goodbye

Whilst you may feel you want to sneak off when your child is engaged and happy, this is not recommended. Children need to develop trust; they need to say "goodbye" and know you will return. Saying goodbye is an important part of settling.

Tears

Many children cry when their parent leaves. This is a natural reaction. Once you have said "goodbye", ensure the Educator knows you are leaving, and go. This may seem harsh, but the Educators will comfort your child and help them to settle.

One More Cuddle

We know how much we love to cuddle our children. Coming back for one last cuddle may be of great comfort for you, but it makes it harder for your child to settle. It's best to establish a routine and encourage your child to establish trust in the Educators in the room.

Label Your Child's Items

You find yourself getting annoyed looking for clothes every day. Remember to label everything as it makes it easier for Educators to put back in your child's bag.

Ask Questions

If you are unsure what your child is doing or how they are going please ask questions. Educators are only too happy to assist. If you are still unsure or you are feeling unsupported, please speak to the Centre Director, send an email or phone the Centre. We are here to help you. No question is too small. We want you and your child to feel comfortable and your mind to be at ease whilst your child is beginning at MTK.

Flexibility

Your child who once went to bed easily is now struggling. Their routine is changing, and you don't like it. Try to be flexible – Educators try their best to ensure routines are met, however sometimes children need time to adjust to the noise, the smells and the new people around them.



Review

Make time at the end of your first week to share your thoughts with the Educators/ Centre Leader. If there is anything, we can do to assist you and your child, we are only too happy to help.

You are not alone!

You may feel you are the only person missing your child or the only person whose child cries every day. Just know your child is in the best of care and settling can take up to six weeks. Please share your concerns and seek help from Educators if you have queries.

Parent involvement

Families are encouraged to become actively involved in all aspects of the Centre. The Director, Educators and Parents enjoy open communication in matters pertaining to the child and family. Parents are encouraged to be involved in information sessions and special events. We collaborate with our parents about our policies and the Centre's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). Communication with parents happens on a multitude of levels. Verbal interactions, email correspondence, KinderM8 and via our reflection of the day. We value parent feedback and believe children achieve the best early years education and care when educators and parents work together. Parents are encouraged to contribute any resources they may have.
Eg: Music, dancing, arts and crafts, storytelling or just spending time with us.

Communication With Families

Families come from a diverse range of backgrounds and skills. Our Centre Educators acknowledge the importance of the family and their values/ beliefs. A partnership between your family and our team is vital for providing care that is meaningful and effective – culturally and educationally.

On enrolment, families will be invited to share information about their child so that Educators can gain insight into the child's background, interests and needs.

Decisions made jointly about care and curriculums will be documented and implemented.

On a daily basis, Educators will share meaningful information about your child's day with you, including their sleeping, feeding and toileting patterns, through KinderM8.

Regular announcements relating to the Centre will also be on KinderM8 and HubHello.

Open Door Policy

Merimbula Tura Kindergarten has an 'Open Door' policy at our Centre, and families are encouraged to come in and speak to the Centre Leader about any issues (comments, concerns, compliments, complaints) that they may have.

Signing in and out of the centre

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

On arrival at the centre you are asked to do the following:

- Place your child's lunchbox into the fridge in their room (Koala fridge in the kitchen)
- Place your child's drink bottle in the holder in their room (These will be outside if the children are outside). If you forget to bring your child's drink bottle please inform an educator so they can get one for your child to use for the duration of the day.
- Place your child's bag on their designated hook
- Document the time of your child's arrival and sign
- Present your child to the educator in charge

Before you leave the centre, you are asked to do the following:

- Come into the centre and greet your child
- Collect child's belongings
- With your child, say goodbye to the educator in charge of the group
- Document the time of departure and sign

Absent Days

In the case that your child is absent we request that you phone the centre if your child is unable to attend their session for any reason. Notice is also required in the incidence of infectious or contagious diseases in the family. Families receiving Child Care Subsidy are allocated 42 allowable absent days for each child per financial year. These absences can be taken for any reason including Public Holidays. Once the

child has reached 42 allowable absent days, CCS is not paid for any further absences, unless doctor certificates are provided.

Notice of Withdrawal

Two weeks' notice in writing is required when you are cancelling your child/ren's care at the Centre. Fees are payable for those two weeks. If your child does not attend for the last two weeks full fees are charged as no CCS is available.



What to bring

- 3 changes of clothes seasonally appropriate, including underwear (extra when toilet training)
- A spare pair of shoes
- A nut free lunch clearly marked with your child's name in a lunch box/brown paper bag not a **cooler bag**. (See lunch suggestions below)
- A water bottle, containing water, clearly marked with your child's name (water is always available in rooms and outdoors also)
- A Jumper
- Coats in cooler weather
- Bottles and Formula ready to be dispensed or served (if applicable)
- Security/comfort item
- No thongs without back straps. Although crocs with a back strap and gumboots are acceptable they do not provide support or stability for your child's feet and can be dangerous when climbing.
- All clothes are to be **clearly named** and brought in a bag [not plastic]
- A broad brimmed or legionnaires hat (clearly

marked with child's name) that will remain at the Centre (As per our Sun smart Policy)

Lunch Suggestions

Merimbula-Tura Kindergarten is committed to providing guidance to parents on what could be included in lunch boxes. Children learn best when their body is fueled with great food. Research shows children who eat foods high in nutritional value such as fruit, vegetables, meat, protein, breads, carbohydrates and dairy have increased energy, increased ability to play, learn and develop. Snack foods that are high in saturated fat, salt or sugar are generally lower in nutrients. We call these 'sometimes foods' as they should only be consumed sometimes and in small amounts. Sweet, sticky foods are also linked to tooth decay. As such we strongly encourage our families to leave lollies, soft drink, fruit juice and chocolates for special occasions and choose healthier options for their lunch boxes. We would also suggest packing only one sometimes food. We have included this poster for your assistance in selecting healthy lunch box ideas.

Please note: we currently ask that you **DO NOT** send foods that have **nuts, kiwi fruit or pineapple**.

HEALTHY LUNCHBOXES



There are many foods that can be used to pack a healthy lunchbox.

Fruit & Vegetables

Fruit and vegetables will provide a good daily source of vitamins, minerals and dietary fibre.

All chopped fruit and vegetables can be easily packed into small containers for the lunchbox, making them quick and easy to eat.

LUNCHBOX IDEAS:

- cucumber, carrot and celery sticks (steam carrot and celery until tender for younger children), corn cob, snow peas, green beans, cherry tomatoes, capsicum strips.
- fresh fruit eg apple, pear, kiwi fruit, strawberries, orange, grapes and bananas
- tub of diced fruit in natural juice
- dried fruit *occasionally* – eg mini box of sultanas or a few dried apricots or apple rings
- salad filling in a sandwich, wrap or roll (eg lettuce, grated carrot, avocado, cucumber)



Breads & Cereals

Bread, grains and cereal foods provide important nutrients and energy for busy, growing children. Wholegrain or wholemeal varieties are the best choices.

LUNCHBOX IDEAS:

- sandwiches, rolls, wraps, pita bread
- fruit bread, scone, pikelets
- crackers, corn and rice cakes, breadsticks
- rice, noodles, pasta

Meat & other protein foods

Meat and other protein foods provide protein and iron. Limit the use of sausages and processed luncheon/deli meats (eg devon and salami) as they are high in saturated fat and salt.

LUNCHBOX IDEAS:

- cold roast beef, lamb, pork, chicken, tuna or salmon as a filling in sandwiches, rolls and wraps or added to salad
- hardboiled egg in salad, sandwiches or for a snack
- baked beans, lentil patty
- left-over casserole, rissoles, meatballs, bolognese sauce, stirfry with tofu

Dairy Food

Dairy foods, such as milk, yoghurt, custard and cheese are an important source of protein and calcium. Reduced fat milk and dairy foods (approx. 2% fat) are suitable for most children over 2 years of age.

LUNCHBOX IDEAS:

- cheese slice, cheese stick or cubes of cheese as a snack with cucumber slices and cherry tomatoes
- cheese in sandwiches, rolls and wraps or on crackers or rice cakes
- yoghurt or custard (small tub or pouch)
- plain milk (small UHT poppers of plain milk are easy to add to lunchboxes)
- calcium-enriched soy alternatives (soy milk, soy yoghurt)



Fact Sheet

HEALTHY LUNCHBOXES CONT.



Water

Water is the best thirst quencher and the best choice of drink for every lunchbox. Tap water is safe so you do not need to buy bottled water.

LUNCHBOX IDEAS:

- freeze a water bottle overnight; it will help to keep the rest of the lunchbox cool
- pack a water bottle even if you are sending milk – the milk can be consumed at morning tea or lunchtime and the water at other times of the day when your child is thirsty



TIP:

Don't pack too much food or too many choices, as this may be overwhelming for a young child. You only need to provide enough food and drink for 1 snack and 1 main meal. If your child is at the service for extended hours, pack enough for 2 snacks and 1 main meal.

Food and drinks to leave out of the lunchbox

Snack foods and drinks that are high in added sugar, saturated fat or salt are generally low in nutrients. They also provide a lot of kilojoules that can contribute to children becoming overweight or obese. We call these 'sometimes' foods and drinks because they should only be consumed sometimes and in small amounts. Sticky, sweet foods can also cause tooth decay.

Sticky or sweet foods:

- lollies, chocolates, jelly cups
- cakes, doughnuts, sweet muffins
- plain sweet/cream-filled biscuits
- muesli /cereal bars
- fruit bars and fruit straps

Salty, high fat foods:

- potato chips
- corn chips
- cheesy balls, twists
- small oven-baked savoury biscuits
- devon and salami

Sweetened drinks:

- cordial and soft drink
- fruit juice
- flavoured mineral water
- fruit juice drinks
- sports drinks

It is best not to pack these 'sometimes' foods and drinks in lunchboxes. If you do occasionally put a 'sometimes' food or drink in the lunchbox, keep it to a very small portion only.

Note about food allergies: Some services may ask families not to pack specific foods to ensure a safe environment for children with severe food allergies. Please discuss these needs with your service staff.

Nutrition

The centre will provide foods which are nutritious, appetizing and consistent with dietary guidelines for children. Food choices will consider children's development, culture, religious or health requirements.

- Water is available always and children are encouraged to drink regularly
- Parents/caregivers are encouraged to supply a drink bottle, containing water
- The centre supports breastfeeding and provides a suitable place within the service where mothers can breastfeed their babies or express breastmilk
- The menu is planned to be varied and nutritionally balanced using the Munch and move principals and Get up and Grow as a foundation and is displayed for Parents and Educators.
- Educators where possible will sit with the children during meal times
- Parents will be informed daily of food items that their child has not eaten.
- Changes to the menu will be displayed on food record sheets
- Koala's food and drink intake for the day will be recorded
- Penguins, Wagtails and Roos will only record what children have not eaten.
- The centre promotes fresh fruit and vegetables and encourages parents to limit food which contains added sugar supplied in their lunch boxes.
- Dried fruit is considered a risk of choking for children under 2 years. Dried banana's, apple, apricots, pears, mango and tiny teddies will not be served to children who are under 2 (at the centre)
- We are a nut, kiwi fruit and pineapple free environment and use products that do not contain these items.
- Children are encouraged to sip, swish and swallow after every meal.

Clothing

We believe that children are creative explorers. Our natural outdoor play area will almost guarantee that your child will get messy! Please dress your child in practical, comfortable clothing to enable them to actively participate in the days program. Children need to feel that it is okay to get dirty while exploring and playing. Please also dress your child according to the weather. We respect the individual cultures of all our families and understand that some cultures may have clothing preferences for their children.



Sun smart

Our Centre is 'Sun Smart'. For optimum protection all children need to wear broad brimmed hats, t-shirts that cover their shoulders, and have sunscreen applied before they attend in the morning. Educators will guide and assist children to reapply sunscreen before we go outside in the afternoon. Please see an Educator if your child needs to use their own sunscreen whilst at the centre. Children have outside activities early in the morning and late afternoon during the first and last term of the year in line with our 'Sun Smart' policy.



Health and Hygiene

Children and educators are actively encouraged to practice good personal hygiene at the service. We believe that this helps to minimise the instances of illness at the service. We also believe that if your child is ill, the best place for them is to be at home where they can recover faster.

You will be asked to take your child home if Educators suspect your child has an illness, or an illness which is contagious, or your child requires prolonged individual attention. The level of care required of an Educator for a sick child is likely to interfere with the safety and well-being of the other children. If your child is going to be absent due to illness, please contact the centre to let us know. Contagious conditions must be posted so parents can be aware of the possibility of infection.

Please do not send your child if they have:

Diarrhoea - A Child who has an acute period of watery stools should be kept home until the day after he/she has been free of diarrhoea. (for example: if their last loose bowel movement was Monday at any point, the child could not attend again until Wednesday) If, however your Child has an allergy or condition which regularly causes diarrhoea, please inform staff at the time of enrolment.

Vomiting - A Child who is vomiting should be kept home until the day after vomiting has stopped. (for example: if their last vomit was Monday at any point, the child could not attend again until Wednesday) Micro-organisms that cause vomiting and diarrhoea are highly contagious and will spread quickly throughout the Centre.

Fever - A Child with a fever of more than 38°C should be kept home as this indicates that the child is unwell. The child should be kept at home until the day after normal temperature, his/her activity level and appetite have returned to normal. (for example: if your child has a temperature Monday they are not permitted back until Wednesday).

Unexplained Rash - A child with unexplained rash needs to be seen by a Doctor to diagnose the cause of the rash. If the rash is not contagious the child will be allowed to return to

the Centre on presentation of a medical certificate.

Chicken Pox - A child with chicken pox should be excluded until fully recovered or for at least five days after the eruption first appears.

Conjunctivitis - A child should be excluded until discharge from eyes has ceased, usually 48 hours after commencing prescribed eye drops (please note that over the counter drops are not as effective in treating the symptoms of conjunctivitis).

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease - A child should be excluded until all blisters have dried.

Immunisations - If your child has been immunised in the last 24hrs

A list of common infectious illnesses, their exclusion periods and policies and procedures related to illness and minimising the spread of infectious diseases are available on KinderM8 – Policies



Medication

If your child requires medication whilst in care, a medication record must be filled in and signed by a parent. (Ask an Educator for assistance) The medication must be in original packaging, within the expiry date and accompanied by a prescription label which states who the medication is for and the dosage (only the dose prescribed on the bottle can be given). Non-prescription medication must be accompanied with a doctor's certificate stating why the medication is needed.

If your doctor suggests a dose of general medication higher than normally given, please ask them for a note to confirm this dose for Educators or it cannot be given.

The application of creams must be described as sparingly or liberally (on the packaging).

Medication must be handed to a staff member and will be stored in a locked cupboard. Under no circumstances is any type of medication to be left in children's bag.

Immunisations

As of January 2018, all children who attend childcare **MUST** be immunised (unless they have a medical reason not to be immunised are on a catch-up schedule). Children who are not immunised due to their parent's conscientious objection cannot be enrolled in Childcare. On enrolment families will be asked to provide an up-to-date Immunisation statement (must be from Medicare). Families must update these as further immunisations are administered. If a copy of the statement is not received within 1 month of the child's due date, your child will be unable to attend the centre until a copy of the statement is received.



Accidents and Incidents

If a child has an incident, injury, trauma or illness at the centre (even minor ones) Educators will record the details of the incident, injury, trauma, illness; the action taken by the Educator and any treatment given and a sign placed above your child's bag hook. Parents are asked to read the details of the record when they collect their child and to sign the record to acknowledge that they have been informed of the events. If a head injury occurs parents are notified and advised of the details immediately. Please let the Educators know if you wish to be immediately notified of minor injuries such as grazes. In case of serious incidents, injury, trauma or illness Educators will call an ambulance to take the child to hospital and travel with them (we recommend that families look into Ambulance cover so they do not incur any out of pocket expenses –

Ambulance cover is not covered by the Kindergarten) Parents will be notified immediately. Under State Government Regulations, children **cannot** attend a Centre unless the parent has authorised emergency hospital, ambulance and medical treatment.



Asthma, Allergy, Epilepsy or Diabetes

If your child suffers from asthma, allergies, epilepsy, or diabetes an action plan is required to be completed by your doctor (This documentation needs to be given to the centre before your child commences orientations). These forms are available from your doctor. Educators regularly update their knowledge through attending training sessions. All relevant information will need to be completed and handed in before your child can start at the centre.

Emergency Contacts

The name and telephone numbers of any emergency contact persons with access to transport must be supplied. The emergency contacts must be informed by the parent of their responsibilities when they agree to be emergency contacts. The Director/Educators must be informed of any changes to the address, place of employment or phone numbers of the emergency contacts in writing.



EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Emergency Evacuations

Emergency evacuations as well as lockdown procedure drills will be conducted every 3 months. Parents will be notified beforehand of the date, time and type of evacuation. In the event of a real 'bushfire,' the threat will be monitored closely through www.rfs.nsw.gov.au (this is why it is important to sign your child IN and OUT each day).

If at any point Educators feel that children's safety is at risk the Nominated Supervisor, Director or Responsible Person will advise all Educators of closure and parents will be notified by email with a follow up phone call to come and collect their children.

Advice – A fire has started.
There is no immediate danger.
Say up-to-date in case the situation changes.



Watch and Act – There is a heightened level of threat. Conditions are changing and you need to start taking action now to protect you and your family.



Emergency Warning – An emergency warning is the highest level of Bush Fire Alert. You may be in danger and need to take action immediately. Any delay now puts your life at risk.



Excursions and Incursions

Excursions/Incursions that are safe and meet the needs of the children, parents and educators, and may be implemented as part of the planned Curriculum. Parents and Caregivers will be notified before such events and charges will be billed to parent's accounts. (refer to Excursion Policy).

Celebrations

A child's birthday is a very special time for them. Families are welcome to bring in a store bought cake (that lists the ingredients) for your child to share with their peers. Please inform Educators if you do not wish your child to participate in these celebrations



Children with Additional needs

In the Centre, all children's needs are met, and individual planning occurs.

Support is available from the educators. Additional funding may be applied for to provide extra support in a room if required. The Educators will support families and network with appropriate services in relation to:

- Children with additional needs
- Non-English speaking children
- Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islanders



Payment of Fees

Fees are to be paid weekly, unless otherwise arranged with the Director.

Payment of fees can be made by internet transfer or eftpos at the centre. **We do not accept cash.**

Internet transfers are to be made to Leekin Pty Ltd BSB 082-439 Account number 185611632.

Accounts (Invoice statements) are emailed weekly to parents

Parents/guardians should check their statements carefully and refer any problems immediately to the Director.

Parents are responsible for checking the CCS% which appears on their statement.

Once fees exceed 2 weeks unpaid your child's position at the Centre may be in jeopardy of cancellation.

Jet Funding Assessment (JFA) notices must be given to the Director before fee reductions can commence. The notice must be kept on record at the Centre.

Am I entitled to government assistance?

The Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is a payment made by the Australian Government to help families with the cost of quality childcare and education. This is paid directly to the service to reduce your weekly fees.

Three things will determine a family's level of Child Care Subsidy:

1. A family's combined income will determine the percentage of subsidy that you are eligible for.
2. An activity test will determine how many hours of subsidised care families can access, up to a maximum per fortnight
3. The type of Child Care service will determine the hourly rate cap.

Some basic requirements must be satisfied for an individual to be eligible to receive the Child Care Subsidy. These Include:

- The age of the child (must be 13 or under and not attending secondary school)
- The child meeting immunisation requirements
- The individual, or their partner meeting the residency requirements

The number of hours of subsidised child care that families will have access to per fortnight will be determined by a three-step activity test

In two parent families, both parents, unless exempt, must meet the activity test. In the case where both parents meet different steps of the activity test, the parent with the lowest entitlement will determine the hours of subsidised care for the child

Low income families who earn under a government set threshold who do not meet the activity test will be able to access 24 hours of subsidised care per child per fortnight without having to meet the activity test, as part of the Child Care Safety Net.

Step	Hours of activity*	Maximum number of hours of subsidy per child*
1	8-16 hours	36 hours
2	More than 16 hours to 48 hours	72 hours
3	More than 48 hours	100 hours

*Per fortnight. Source: <https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-subsidy-activity-test>

You can read more about the Child Care Subsidy and Activity test and complete an online estimator at <https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-package-families>.

It is the responsibility of the parent to register for Child Care Subsidy. This can be done by contacting Centrelink either in person, by phone 136150 or by accessing your MyGov account at <https://my.gov.au/>

Flexible hours and Child Care Subsidy

We know that there is not just one option that will fit all our families when it comes to Early Childhood Education and Care. That is why we are giving our families the freedom to choose which session times will suit their needs.

Nine hour, ten hour and Full day session options are available to all families when you enrol your child (this can be altered at any time whilst your child attends the centre). This will enable families to make the most out of the Child Care Subsidy.

Designed to reduce out of pocket costs and increase access to subsidised hours, this has been introduced as part of our commitment to providing greater access to quality early childhood education and care.

Choose from our nine-hour, ten hour or full day sessions to make the most out of your child care subsidy

	Nine-hour	Ten-hour	Full day
Session times	Between 8:00am and 5:00pm	Between 7:30 am and 5:30 pm	Between 7:00am and 6:00pm
Fee	\$100 per day (before CCS)	\$101 per day (before CCS)	\$102 per day (before CCS)
Extra charges	If your child is dropped off or picked up outside their chosen hours you will be moved to the session time that corresponds to their sign in and out times	If your child is dropped off or picked up outside their chosen hours you will be moved to the session time that corresponds to their sign in and out times	
Late fees	If your child is picked up after 6:00pm a late fee of \$1 per minute is charged to your account (minimum of \$20)	If your child is picked up after 6:00pm a late fee of \$1 per minute is charged to your account (minimum of \$20)	If your child is picked up after 6:00pm a late fee of \$1 per minute is charged to your account (minimum of \$20)
Inclusions	Fees include: nappies morning tea afternoon tea late afternoon tea	Fees include: nappies morning tea afternoon tea late afternoon tea	Fees include: nappies morning tea afternoon tea late afternoon tea

Dealing with Concerns and Complaints from Parents/Guardians

- Parent who have a concern or complaint are encouraged to approach the Nominated Supervisor or the Day to Day Person on duty with their concern or complaint or contact the Director on 64953304 or the Provider/owner paddyh@live.com or Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate, Department of Education **Email:** ececd@det.nsw.edu.au **Phone:** 1800 619 113 (toll free)
- Concerns and complaints will be confidential.
- Educators will direct the Parent to the Nominated Supervisor or the Day to day Person on duty with their concern or complaint
- A Parent concern/complaint form is filled out by the Parent and the Nominated Supervisor or the Day to Day Person.
- Concern/complaint is then discussed and noted down on the form.
- Discuss reasons why the concern/complaint could be happening.
- Strategies from the Parent are discussed and noted.
- Strategies from Nominated Supervisor or the Day to Day Person are discussed and noted.
- A time period is agreed upon of when and how strategies will be implemented.
- A response to a complaint received at a Children's Service form will be completed and sent to the Director, Central licensing and Regulatory Support unless the complaint is what the Department deems of a trivial nature.
- A conclusion is then noted on the Concerns and Complaints form.
- Strategies are then put on trial.
- An evaluation of the strategies that were implemented is then evaluated.
- Parent to discuss end result with Nominated Supervisor or the Day to Day Person.

A decision will be made by both parties that the matter has either been resolved or they wish for the complaint to be escalated and forwarded to Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate, Department of Education **Email:** ececd@det.nsw.edu.au **Phone:** 1800 619 113 (toll free)

Guidance of Children's Behaviour

- Merimbula Tura Kindergarten is committed to a Behaviour Guidance Policy because it reflects the values, attitudes and current recommended strategies that promote positive play behaviour and patterns. Families and Educators should use appropriate strategies to guide children to recognise, manage and learn from their behaviour and express their emotions in a positive, non-threatening and productive way.

The purpose of the service's Behaviour Guidance Policy is to

- Encourage acceptable forms of behaviour by using strategies that build children's confidence and self-esteem
- Provide children with support, guidance and opportunities to manage their own behaviour
- Promote collaborative approaches to behaviour guidance between the Centre and/or external agencies.

As a Centre, we:

- Respect the importance of interactions and relationships between children, families and Educators.
- Encourage children to co-operate to enhance their self- esteem and encourage their ability to interact with others.
- Emphasise that children have the same rights as adults
- Recognise values and celebrate the differences and similarities that exist in all persons.

The service recognises and understands that a child's behaviour may be affected by their:

- age and development
- general health and wellbeing
- relationships with their Family and/or peers
- play and learning environments, which includes the physical indoor/outdoor settings transition times,
- the weather, the time of year, the time of day.
- Educators' strategies and practices, which includes how those strategies are implemented
- Relationships with other children and members of the community, such as student volunteers and visitors.
- And external factors, such as family, home life, school or peer group experiences, or media coverage of traumatic events.

While Educators are aware and respect individual children's and Family's backgrounds, beliefs and privacy the sharing of information will assist Educators to accommodate for your child's individual needs.

It is the responsibility of the Educators to:

- Respond to, and acknowledge children's emotions, such as happiness, anger, pleasure, fear, anxiety, frustration, sadness, and pride.
- Acknowledge that the emotions experienced by children are significant.
- Understand that children may not have developed the appropriate strategies to deal with their emotions due to their age and/or stage of development.
- Demonstrate an understanding and empathy towards children who display behaviour that is not always consistent with their development and/or general disposition.
- Maintain full confidentiality and privacy about individual children's behaviour
- To uphold rights of a child according to the United Nations convention on the rights of the child.
- And fulfil their duty of care.

Families and Educators display respect and empathy towards children when they label behaviour and not the individual Child. This means that the behaviour is managed, not the child.

Behaviour guidance management plans may be set in place with collaboration between the Director, Educators and family to eliminate negative behaviour and guidance towards positive interaction. External sources may also be sought.

Under article 19 of the United Nations convention of the rights of a child, children have a right to be protected from being hurt and/or mistreated both physically and/or mentally. Children may need to be sent home from our centre if their behaviour violates the right of other children or impedes the ability for an Educator to conduct their duty of care.

Developmental Records

Curriculum plans are developed for each room and reflect the needs, abilities, culture, strengths and interests of the children in the room. These form the basis of planned intentional teaching opportunities for each room. The Early Years Learning Framework underpins our curriculum decision making. As such we assist children to develop a strong identity, become connected to the world, assist in their wellbeing, their learning and communication. Educators use a variety of observation formats to assess the learning and development of each child. Developmental records are uploaded to KinderM8 to allow parents to enjoy reading and viewing these at a time that is convenient to them. We encourage and value the importance of parental input and feedback

Merimbula-Tura Kindergarten Preschool Program

Merimbula Tura Kindergarten offers a comprehensive preschool and school readiness program in our Roo's Room. The following program is a **guide** to help Educators implement spontaneous and intentional teachable moments into the daily program. Children's interests will determine when the learning occurs throughout the year. Children are encouraged to achieve these outcomes through play based learning

Mathematical and Scientific Development Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners	Language and Literacy Development Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners <i>Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes the location of an object using directional and position words• Identifies, describes, extends and creates patterns using concrete objects• Compares, sorts and orders objects• Identifies and describes opposites• Counts through and beyond 10 with 1:1 correspondence• Recognises, writes, and uses whole numbers through 10• Identifies and describes measurable attributes such as size, length and weight to compare and order objects• Identifies, names and describes a variety of shapes, such as squares, triangles, circles and rectangles• Identifies and matches colours• Problem solves, hypothesizes, investigates and experiments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Copies letters and writes some unprompted• Matches sounds to appropriate letters• Recognises and writes own name• Identifies parts of a book• Retells important details in a story• Make reasonable predictions about stories• Uses images to tell the story• Identifies and recognises words beginning with the same sounds• Begins to hear, identify and make rhyming words• Speaks to inform or relates experiences• Expands word choices to communicate effectively• Expresses a thought or idea using drawings, letters or words• Contributes to discussions (eg. news)• Listens to stories• Takes part in conversations
Creative Development Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners	Physical Development <i>Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates works of art and discusses artwork with peers or Educator• Uses different mediums to create artistic works• Joins in jingles and songs• Dances to a beat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hops, jumps and runs with ease• Climbs steps with alternating feet• Gallops and skips by leading with one foot• Transfers weight forward to throw ball• Attempts to catch ball with hands• Holds pencil between thumb and first two

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to make music • Imitates variety of shapes in drawing, e.g. circles • Adds increasing detail to art works 	<p>fingers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibits hand preference • Independently cuts paper with scissors
<p>Social/Emotional Development</p> <p><i>Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world</i></p> <p><i>Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity</i></p>	<p>Self-Help Skills</p> <p><i>Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing • Rules in games • Takes turns • Recognises and regulates emotions • Takes academic risks and has a go • Ability to work alone and in a group • Displays emotional security • Engages in play with peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can toilet independently • Can dress/undress independently • Can open lunch independently • Can recognise own belongings • Can ask for assistance when required

If you have any questions or comments in regard to the information supplied in this handbook, please phone or email the centre and speak with the Director

