

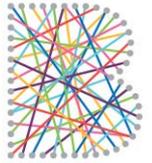


This booklet has been produced to inform parents/guardians using the Programs about our policies, procedures and the daily operations. Further information is available from our Policy Manual, copies of which are available at each program.



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# Introduction - All About BCS



## **Beginnings**

A group of local church people and doctors got together in the late 1960's to offer neighbourhood assistance among Belconnen residents and in 1970 BCS was set up as a voluntary community service. Initially local information was provided by volunteers and later this developed into information and referral to other services. A "Welcome Wagon" provided a friendly visiting service to newcomers and others experiencing isolation or loneliness.

In the early 1970's BCS offered a bereavement counselling service for families who had moved to Canberra without the support of extended family members. This service eventually was replaced by those provided by staff employed by the then ACT Health Commission.

In the early 1970's the first paid worker was employed on a part-time basis and volunteers continued to provide family assistance and community work with the support of a number of professional service workers who worked with the organisation as volunteers.

## ***Incorporation***

BCS was incorporated under the ACT Association's Incorporation Act in 1975. The first addition to BCS was a Family Day Care Scheme which later expanded to two Schemes. The Canberra Commercial Development Authority then sought the involvement of BCS in the design and management of the Occasional Care Centre which now operates in Westfield Shoppingtown as a long day and occasional care centre, known as Belconnen Early Childhood Centre.

Later, BCS responded to a request by the Bruce TAFE College to operate its Child Care Centre in the grounds of the College, now Bruce Early Childhood Centre.

## ***The 80's***

After School Care was commenced at Macquarie Primary School and School Holiday Programs were operated regularly.

In 1987 BCS accepted sponsorship of the Ginninderra Early Childhood Centre in the newly opened Belconnen Community Centre. The BCS Administration Unit also moved into community offices at the Centre.

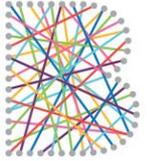
## ***The 90's***

In the late eighties and early nineties, community programs continued to expand with more support for families, frail aged and people with a disability.

In October 1996, BCS took over the management of the Belconnen Community Centre from the Belconnen Centre Management Committee, found the steady withdrawal of government funding was challenging their ability to operate the centre viably.

In January 1997, the two Family Day Care Schemes amalgamated in order to provide a better coordinated service to parents and children. In July 1997, Family Based Child Care Workers became employees of BCS, rather than sub-contractors as they had been previously.





## **BCS Today**

Today BCS is a large not for profit community based organisation, offering a broad range of programs and services to a population of over 85,000 in the Belconnen region.

BCS operations are overseen by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) with the assistance of an Executive Management Team.

The overall strategic direction of BCS is the responsibility of a voluntary Board elected from the general membership each year.

BCS offers children's services and community services to families and people of all ages, including children, young people, the aged and people with a disability and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

Services include Individual and Family Support, Children's Services, a Community Centre, Behaviour Support Services, Arts, Leisure and Skill Development, Transport, Community Care, Theatre and many more.

## **BCS Board of Governance**

The BCS Board of Governance primary role is to ensure that BCS achieves what it should and, in doing so, avoids unsuitable actions and situations.

The Board members govern with a vital interest in the people who use BCS services and the quality of services provided to them. They explore and respond to further opportunities to meet the needs of the Belconnen Community.

The Board is committed to governing through policies, enabling it to speak with one voice on critical issues and core values. In fulfilling their responsibility and exercising their powers, members are bound by the Constitution and have specific obligations imposed by the Associations Incorporation Act and the common law.

### **The role of the Board:**

Monitors organisational performance through the Board's agenda and meeting processes and committees.

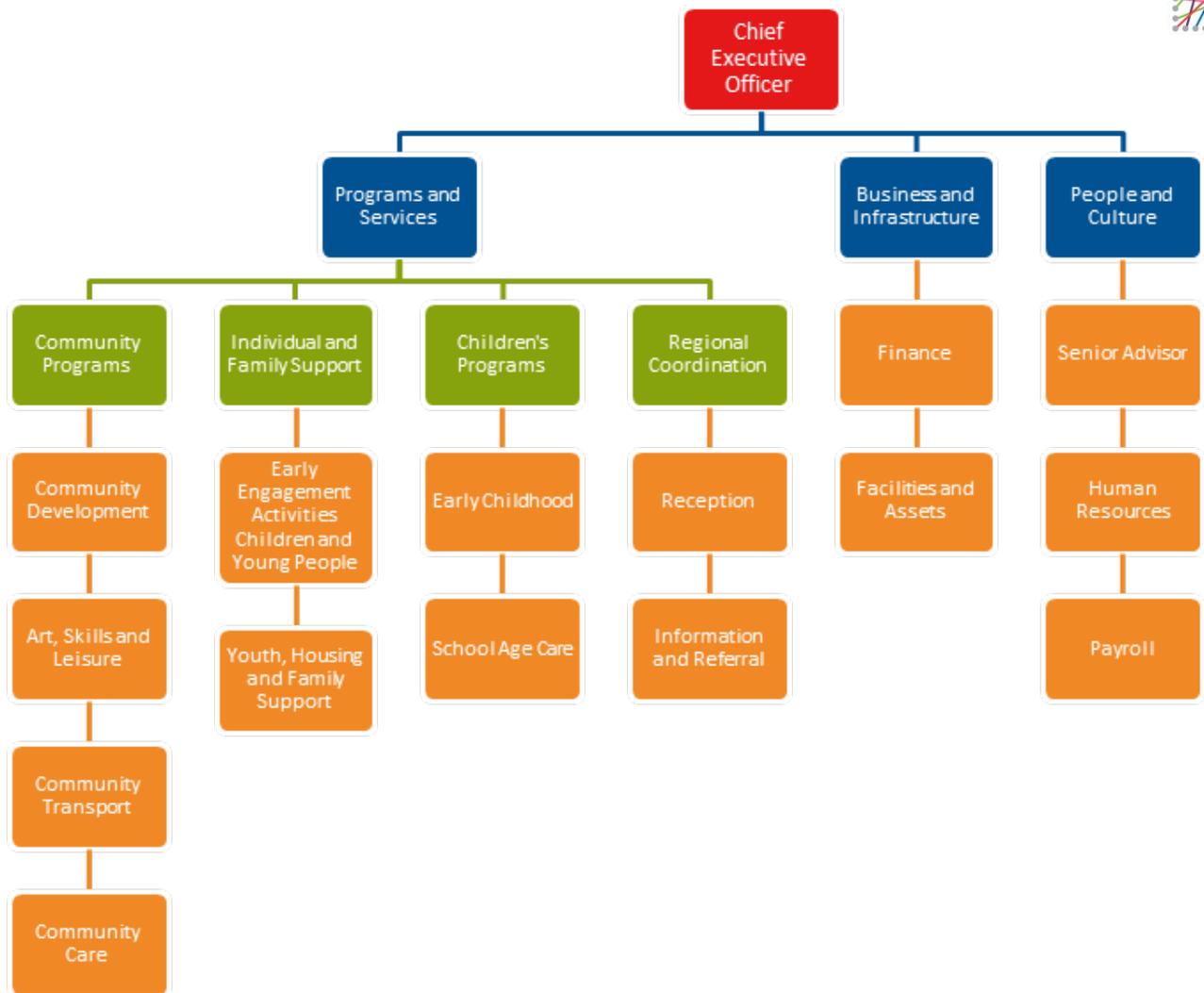
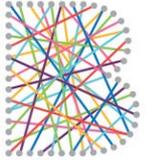
Recognises the trust placed in it by members and the wider community of interest through the way it annually reports on the performance of BCS and responds to the concerns, needs and aspirations of members.

Monitor organisational performance through the Board's agenda and meeting processes and committees.

[Watch a movie about BCS here](#)

or at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WlXlsSNmoLk>

# BCS Governance Structure



## Reconciliation Action Plan

BCS started developing an official Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in 2011 with the formation of the RAP working group.

The RAP Working Group’s mission is to ensure that BCS finds ways to further acknowledge the discrimination experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to build relationships and respect to ensure that our services are both visible to, and inclusive of, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders.

A copy of the RAP has been included with this handbook and is also available on the BCS website..

Read the RAP [here](#) or at

<http://www.bcsact.com.au/about-us/reconciliation-action-plan/>



## BCS Strategic Plan 2012-2015



### *Our Vision*

A inclusive connected community

### *Our Purpose*

Offer flexible services that encourage and support people to participate in their community and enhance their wellbeing

### *Our Values*

#### **Integrity:**

We act with a high level of transparency, consistency and accountability in all our relationships

#### **Respect:**

We are considerate and thoughtful towards ourselves and others

#### **Optimism:**

We are positive, resilient and flexible

#### **Inclusion:**

We welcome diversity and celebrate difference

#### **Stewardship:**

We manage our resources wisely

### *Our Strategic Themes*

#### **Leadership:**

Celebrate and build on 40 years of **Leadership**

Foster **Collaboration** to support integrated person centred practice

Enhance our **People's** belief in BCS to be a truly great place to work

Secure and manage our **Resources** to support long term sustainability and community re-investment

Protect the best interests of the Organisation through effective and transparent **Governance**

## Early Education and Care Programs



Belconnen Early Childhood Centre

Shop 166 Level 3 Westfield, Belconnen ACT

Ph: 62512893

Email: [lauren.kapper@bcsact.com.au](mailto:lauren.kapper@bcsact.com.au)

Bruce Early Childhood Centre

1 Bassett St Bruce ACT

Ph.: 62517796

Email: [michelle.smith@bcsact.com.au](mailto:michelle.smith@bcsact.com.au)

Ginninderra Early Childhood Centre

Belconnen Community Centre, Swanson Crt Belconnen ACT

Ph.: 62640228

Email: [michelle.hall@bcsact.com.au](mailto:michelle.hall@bcsact.com.au)

## Hours of Operation

Belconnen Early Childhood Centre-

Monday to Friday

7.45am to 6.00pm

Bruce Early Childhood Centre-

Monday-Friday

7.45am to 6.00pm

Ginninderra Early Childhood Centre-

Monday-Friday

7.45am to 6.00pm

The Programs are open 51 weeks of the year, closing only on Public Holidays, between Christmas Eve and New Years Day and one day per year for Training and Development.

## Age Groupings/Child Educator Ratios



**Belconnen Early Childhood Centre is currently licensed for 47 children in the following age groupings:**

|                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Birth to 24 months          | 8 children – Nursery         |
| 24 months to 3/3.5 years    | 15 children – Toddlers       |
| 3/3.5 years to school start | 22 children – Preschool room |

**Bruce Early Childhood Program is currently licensed for 47 children in the following age groupings:**

|                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Birth to 24 months          | 8 children – Nursery         |
| 24 months to 3/3.5 years    | 15 children – Toddlers       |
| 3/3.5 years to school start | 22 children – Preschool room |

**Ginninderra Early Childhood Centre is licensed for 62 children**

|                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Birth – 24 months           | 8 children-Nursery           |
| 24 months to 3/3.5 years    | 15 children – Toddlers       |
| 3/3.5 years to school start | 22 children – Preschool room |

**Childcare educator’s ratios are in accordance with the National Law and Regulations and are as follows:**

|                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Under 2 Year Olds | 1 educator: 4 children  |
| 2- 3 Year Olds    | 1 educator: 5 children  |
| Over 3 Year Olds  | 1 educator: 11 children |

The above ages of room transitions may vary due to development of the child, availability of days, ratios and time of year.

Children may spend time with other age groups at various periods during the day and we encourage siblings to be with each other if they wish.

Family/Interest Grouping- During the day programmed experiences are set up in different rooms and outside. All children are free to explore the whole program, both inside and outside. Children of different ages are able to mix and play together and to make choices. They also have the opportunity to get to know other educators and rooms within the program.

# National Quality Framework



The National Quality Framework includes:

- a national legislative framework that consists of the *Education and Care Services National Law* and *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
- a National Quality Standard
- an assessment and rating system
- a regulatory authority in each state and territory (CECA-Children's Education and Care Assurance) who will have primary responsibility for the approval, monitoring and quality assessment of services in their jurisdiction in accordance with the national legislative framework and in relation to the National Quality Standard
- the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

ACECQA, the new national body is responsible for providing oversight of the new system and ensuring consistency of approach.

# Program Curriculum - Early Years Learning Framework



The Belconnen Community Services Education and Care Program's philosophy, curriculum and practices come from the beliefs and values of all educators and influences and understandings from Theorists. The Program's curriculum is based on the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.

This Framework has been developed to ensure your child receives quality education programs in our Early Childhood Settings. The Frameworks vision is for all children to experience play-based learning that is engaging and builds success for life. The educators are enthusiastic about adapting this framework into our programs through partnerships with our parent/guardians based around the 3 key areas of, "Belonging, Being and Becoming", providing high quality care inclusive of all children's capabilities. 'Belonging', acknowledges children's independence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities. 'Being', recognises the here and now of children's lives and 'Becoming' reflects this process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years.

For more information you can contact: [www.deewr.gov.au /earlychildhood](http://www.deewr.gov.au/earlychildhood)

We believe that a strong and healthy relationship between educators and parent/guardians can strengthen a child's sense of belonging, well-being and ecology-focusing on the reciprocal relationships. Therefore we ask that when educators ask for your involvement into the curriculum please take the time to do so. Educators also believe that children with and without additional needs should be educated together and recognise that necessary social, emotional and cultural developments are more likely to occur in an integrated environment.

We do ask that all parent/guardians provide their child's room with a 'Family Photo'. This is to be displayed for all the children and educators to share. Children get a real sense of pride when they can discuss these photos with their peers and educators. It gives children and their parent/guardians a sense of belonging within our Program.

Parents are kept up to date with curriculum developments by day-to-day discussions, by the weekly curriculum displayed in each room, and by the week's events displayed at various locations within our programs.

In addition, each programs newsletter includes regular updates on upcoming events and activities. If you have any ideas, suggestions or special skills or time to put into our program please don't hesitate in letting us know. You best know your child and their interests and we welcome your expertise to broaden the range of experiences we offer.

Please inform us of any skills and interests you may have such as cooking, playing a musical instrument or participating on excursions that you would like to share with us at the program.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture are also embedded into curriculum planning. The programs offer the teaching of the 'Ngunnawal language' monthly with Tyrone Bell for all children and music and dance with Duncan Smith once a term for Preschool children.

*Please refer to the 'Children's Programs Curriculum Planning Policy and Procedure'*



## Celebrations

We recognise that celebrating special occasions is important to our children, families and educators. We love to help you and your child celebrate special moments and occasions whether they are birthdays, starting a new school or welcoming a new baby to the family. If you would like us to be part of any cultural event or festival please let us know and discuss them with your child's educator.

## Music/Dance Programs

All programs provide a music and/ or dance program. Basic music and dance skills incorporating singing and musical instruments are facilitated by our music teachers. Our music teachers hold Bachelor of Education Degrees in Music

## Excursions

All programs arrange excursions throughout the year for the children in the programs. Excursions can include walks in the local areas, and arranged excursions to extend on our curriculum and children's interests.

We also invite entertainers and visitors such as magicians, story tellers and animals into the program throughout the year.

*Please refer to the 'Children's Programs Excursion Policy and Procedure'*

## Transition Times

Educators believe that the transition of children between rooms is an important and sensitive time. At each program, transitions are based on the child's age, developmental level and availability in rooms. Though children and parents/guardians may be familiar with educators at the program it is nevertheless a new environment. The new room will have slightly different routines and the curriculum is planned for the age and interests of the children in that room. Parent/guardians will be informed by the Director or Room Leaders as to when their child will be transitioning to the next room. Details of when the child is graduating will be provided to the parent/guardian in writing and information about the child's new room will be provided prior to graduating.

## Inclusion Support

Children have common needs, strengths and abilities but sometimes they may have additional needs. Extra

support, such as additional educators, required equipment, changes to the curriculum and environment are necessary to ensure we provide an inclusive environment for a child with additional needs. An Inclusion Support Application may be required for children with additional needs to ensure the

educators are trained and the environment is safe to facilitate children's inclusion. This ensures children's experiences at the program are positive from the time of enrolment.



## Program menus

All programs are 'allergy friendly' and provide the children with morning and afternoon tea. The programs aim to provide at least 50% of the daily recommended dietary intake over a full day.

Educators at the program encourage parents/guardians to/ and endeavor to provide the children with a wide variety of nutritional items on the weekly menu. Menu items include: fruit and vegetables, cheese, milk, yoghurt, sandwiches, crackers and pita bread. Children's cooking experiences are also included into the menu along with the educators multicultural recipes. Meal times are an important part of our Curriculum and children and educators discuss with children options for menu items.

*Please refer to the weekly menu located in your programs.*

All menus provided by the programs are provided to Nutrition Australia for assessment annually.

## Lunch

Belconnen Early Childhood Centre -parents/guardians should provide a nutritious lunch in a clearly labelled lunch box. We recommend lunches be stored in plastic lunch boxes (as opposed to thermal) as they keep food at the required temperature and store more effectively in the fridge.

Lunch boxes should be placed in the fridge on arrival. We are able to heat lunches in our microwave oven. If food requires heating, please place in a named microwave-safe container and on arrival place on the designated shelf in the fridge. Please do not provide your child with Peanut Butter or nut products, chips, lollies, chocolate, popcorn or rollups. Food that is not nutritional will be returned in the lunch box at the end of the day.

Also please avoid using glad wrap. Foil is a preferred option.

In the instance of a child's lunch being left at home the Program can provide lunch consisting of a sandwich and piece of fruit. However, this is not to be a regular occurrence or a fee will be charged.

Bruce Early Childhood Centre has an onsite cook that prepares all meals. This is done in consultation with families, educators and children..

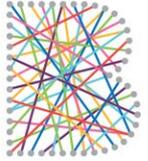
Ginninderra Early Childhood Program provides lunch which is provided by the Social Bean Café, supported by BCS. Menus are developed in consultation with children, educators and families.

## Birthdays

Birthdays are special days and we love to celebrate them with your child. Cupcakes or other special food such as ice-blocks in summer may be provided if you wish. We ask that you provide cupcakes instead of a whole cake to minimise the spread of droplet infection. A candle/s can be placed on your child's cupcake. Educators are happy to take photos with your camera or the Program's camera. Please discuss arrangements with educators. Please do not bring in lollies, chips and other junk food.

*Please refer to the 'Children's Programs Nutrition Policy and Procedure', our 'Children's Programs Anaphylaxis Policy and Procedure', and the 'Children's Programs Child Safe Environment Policy and Procedure'.*

# Parent/Guardian Involvement and Communication



All our programs value and promote involvement from our parents and guardians and place great importance on communication to and from parents, whether about your child or the operations of the program.

Parents/guardians are always welcome to spend time during the day in the program and your ideas and suggestions are valuable to the educators. Parents/guardians are encouraged to attend events held by each of the programs.

Parent feedback is invaluable to us and is a good measure of the quality of service.

If a parent has any feedback or would like to address an issue, please do not hesitate to bring it to the attention of the educator concerned or the Director. If you feel uncomfortable with this, the Program has a process for providing feedback.

*Please refer to our 'BCS Feedback Policy and Procedure'.*

We also welcome any information you can give us about your child, as this will help us to effectively plan for your child's needs.

As working and studying parents, we understand that you are busy people. To keep you informed on the day-to-day activities of the Program, there are various strategies and procedures in place to provide for regular communication.

- Educators are always there to greet you and your child on entering your child's room. Please feel free to talk to educators about your child's day so far.
- Written communication books, boards and folders are in each room for you to enter any comments and then when you collect your child you can check on your child's sleep, eating and toileting patterns during the day.
- In each room you will find weekly curriculums, and photos of what your child has been experiencing. Parents/guardians can write comments on the book relating to the program.
- All rooms have daybooks in which educators comment on activities and incidents which occurred throughout the day and any relevant communication with parent/guardians.
- At the end of each day educators will discuss your child's day with you.
- Ongoing emails are provided to parent/guardians containing specific room information and Program information. Please take the time to read these as they are of importance and keep you informed of what is happening at the program.
- Opportunities to have interviews with educators are available throughout the year. This provides parent/guardians with the opportunity to meet one on one with educators to discuss their child's development and any other issues that you would like to discuss.
- Please feel free to meet with educators at any time regarding any queries.
- Room supervisors and Management will use the notice boards in foyers to announce special daily activities.

Please note: Communication strategies may vary from program to program

## Skoolbag App



The Skoolbag application was originally developed for use by schools as a way of effectively communicating with parents. A large number of schools in the ACT (and across Australia, approximately 1,600) use the app with great success. We saw it as a great way to enhance communication with our clients and families of children enrolled in our Children's Programs about many things including:

- Program specific news – parents/families can choose which programs they want to receive information on and an alert will be sent to their smartphone or other compatible device
- Newsletters
- Events Calendars – with ability to provide embedded maps with GPS directions
- Parents can send SMS and Email replies directly from the application, for example, rsvp for a particular event
- Cancellations
- Change of details
- Waiting list application
- Program timetables
- Emergency notices/alerts
- BCS Information

The application is available on iPhone and Android, download instructions are attached to this handbook.

## Program Events

Throughout the year the programs organise special events for the children and their parents/guardians. Events include breakfasts, a Christmas party, visitors, parent/guardian/educator interviews and times when all parent/guardian members such as grandparents and godparents and special friends can attend. Dates for these events are in the emails and notes near the sign in sheets. Children's Entertainers are often invited into the Program and if your child attends on that day they will participate and the fees for the entertainer will be charged to your account.

# Starting at the Program



## Orientation

We encourage parents and children to visit the program, meet the educators and find out about the curriculum before your child's first day. This time enables your child to familiarise themselves with their new environment. Orientation of visits before the parent returns to work or study is usually the best introduction to the Program and we are flexible to meet the needs of the child and parent/guardian. Room information will be provided to you during this process.

On your child's first day parents should try to make sure that it is only for a short time. A one hour booking is a good idea, especially if you return after 20 to 30 minutes to see how your child is settling, you may wish to then spend some time exploring the Program with your child. Feel welcome to phone or contact us at any time whilst your child is in the Program we are always happy to give you a progress report.

After you have started care we ask that you complete and return the attached 'Orientation Evaluation Form'. It is an informative way in which the Program Management can ensure they are providing a caring, informative orientation to parent/guardians when starting care.

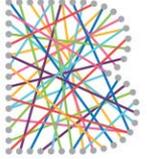
## Visiting Children

Parents are welcome at the Program at any time throughout the day, and older children often enjoy the time they share with their parents at the Program. If you or any parent/guardian members have a special skill or interest we welcome you to come into the Program and share this with our educators and children.

Mothers who are breastfeeding can discuss with educators how best to schedule visits according to their baby's requirements.

In the early days of care, parents visiting their children at the Program, and then leaving again may cause some stress to the child. The child may expect that they will be going home and have difficulty separating from their parents. Educators will let you know how your child has settled after your visit and, if necessary, suggest other times for visits that may better suit you and your child. You are encouraged, if you wish to telephone the Program to see how your child has settled.

# Arrival and Departure



## Attendance Records

All attendance records must be verified and signed by a child's parent/guardian where appropriate including signing as verification of the days that your child was absent, as per *A New Tax System (Parent/guardian Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999* and in the *Child Care Benefit (Record Keeping) Rules 2000*.

In the event of an emergency, and for Childcare Benefit purposes, the Program needs to know which children are present. **All parents must sign their children in and out** each day in the **Attendance Registers** which are located in each room. All parents/guardians must write the time and sign the appropriate boxes near their child's name when arriving and departing at the Program. Please sign in as you actually arrive not when you leave.

## Arrival and Departure

The programs have a Key Pad Entry Device as a security measure, so that the front doors of the Program are **always** locked. We will issue you with the Pin Code which **MUST NOT** under any circumstances be given to extended parent/guardian members or friends and is for Parents, Guardians or Permanent Carers only. If you need to have your child collected by someone other than yourselves, the person must announce themselves at the intercom and wait for an educator to attend to them. There will be on occasions a need to change the code and this will generally occur at the commencement of each year. Please also be aware when entering the Program that other people do not "tailgate" and gain entry at the same time that you have opened the doors for yourself. The Pin Code Entry will be disabled outside of operating hours. Pin Codes for the programs are provided on orientation.

When arriving with your child/ren please hand your child/ren over to an educator (never leave your child without informing an educator). During this time you can discuss with educators any circumstances likely to require attention that day or that may affect the behaviour of the child e.g. visitor at home, parent/guardian member away, late night out, etc.

It is very important that parents and guardians inform educators when they are leaving with their child/ren. During this time educators can give you a brief summary of your child's day and anything special that may have happened.

## Collection of Children

For the safety and wellbeing of our children, only parents and those given written permission by parents are allowed to collect children. **All persons named on the enrolment form or updated Authorisation to Collect form may collect the children at any time even without notification from parents and carers. We do however prefer to be informed if anyone other than the person dropping the child off is collecting the child at the end of the day.**

If circumstances change during the day, please email or fax through the name of the alternate collector. We are unable to take this information verbally. We advise that a person be nominated to pick up your child at all times in case of emergency. If we have not been notified of an "alternative collector" and the person wishing to collect your child is NOT nominated on your enrolment form to pick up, we will contact parents/guardians where we will ask to seek written permission. If educators are unsure of the identity of the person collecting, identification may need to be provided.

**Both parents legally have EQUAL RIGHT of access to their children UNLESS there is a current court order stating otherwise. Current court orders must be shown, copied and given to the Director.**



**Only people over 18 years of age are permitted to collect and sign children out.**

*Please refer to our 'Children's Programs Authorisation of Collection of Children Policy and Procedure'*

## Health and Hygiene

We are committed to minimising the risk of transmission of infectious diseases by quickly and effectively responding to a suspected or identified infectious disease or illness.

To ensure your child is comfortable, if they are unwell we encourage you to make alternative arrangements

for their care. If your child is showing signs of an illness or infectious disease while in our care, we will contact you and request that you collect your child.

### Illness at the Programs

Educators will contact parents if their child becomes ill at the Program so that he/she can be taken home or to the doctor. The parent must collect their child within the hour after initial contact or advise the Program of other arrangements.

If a child is excluded at the first sign of illness and kept at home until completely recovered, cross infection will be kept to a minimum and the likelihood of re-infection or further illness for that child is reduced.

*Please refer to the "Children's Programs Health Policy and Procedure"*

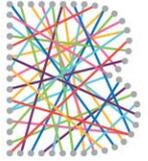
### Immunisation

It is BCS policy that not all children attending the Program must be immunised.

To prevent the spread of infectious diseases we encourage parents/guardians to fully immunise their children in accordance with the Department of Health and Ageing National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule.

For those children immunised, parents/guardians are required to bring proof of their child's immunisation status when completing enrolment forms and after every subsequent immunisation update. For children who cannot be immunised for medical reasons, the Program requires a letter from the Doctor stating the reason for this. Parents/guardians who object to immunising their children must sign a conscientious objection letter stating this. Children who are not immunised or whose immunisation records are not up to date will be excluded during an outbreak of a communicable disease until proof of immunisation is sighted.

Reminders to parent/guardians to provide records of their child's immunisation will be provided through Newsletters and Transition Information. The current immunisation schedule can be obtained from the programs. *Please refer to the 'Children's Programs Immunisation Policy and Procedure'.*



## Medication

Educators at all programs understand the importance of reducing the risk of cross infection when children and educators are ill at the Program. There may be times when a child becomes unwell and parents/carers have been informed from the doctor that he/she may need to be administered medication. Educators are aware of the implications and needs of administering medication to children when at the Program.

Educators at the Program will only administer **prescribed medications i.e. antibiotics**. However the child must not return to the Program until 24 hours after the initial dose. Educators will **not** administer “over the counter medications” such as Panadol and Dimetapp unless prescribed with labelled information on the bottle or a letter from the doctor. The letter must state: who the medication is for; what the medication is for, the dosage of the medication and when to administer the medication.

If your child requires Paracetamol (Panadol, Dymadon, etc) for an elevated temperature before attending childcare he/she **MUST NOT ATTEND**.

For the protection of all who attend our Program, we must exclude children who present with signs and symptoms of an infectious disease, including:

- fever;
- vomiting;
- diarrhoea;
- unexplained aches/pains/lethargy;
- infected discharge from eyes, nose or ears;
- continual discharge from the nose;
- unable to be comforted;
- unexplained rashes.

*Please refer to our ‘Children’s Programs Medication Policy and Procedure’*

***Please do not leave medication in bags or on benches.***

Parents are also responsible for collecting medication at pick up time however educators are happy to put reminder notes on the room white boards.

Medication is kept in specific locations at each program

*Please refer to our ‘Children’s Programs Medication Policy and Procedure’*

## Hand Washing

Safe hand washing practices are the best way to prevent the transmission of germs. Washing and drying hands effectively decreases the amount of germs that can be passed on to others. Children learn to wash hands through games and play.

Children and adults are encouraged to wash their hands when they arrive and before they go home to reduce the spread of germs. Your help with this would be very much appreciated.



## Returning to the program after illness

When your child returns to the Program after an illness please ensure that you see an Educator, so that further requirements for medication can be established and the child's condition can be assessed.

Parents/guardians need to consider their child's ability to cope in a group setting, involving the normal indoor/outdoor program before allowing the child to return to the Program.

A CHILD **MUST NOT** RETURN TO THE PROGRAM UNTIL 48 HOURS AFTER THE FIRST DOSE OF A COURSE OF ANTIBIOTICS, OR 48 HOURS AFTER THE LAST BOUT OF VOMITING OR DIARRHOEA.

EVEN IF A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE IS PRODUCED, THE PROGRAM RETAINS THE RIGHT TO EXCLUDE CHILDREN REGARDED BY THE DIRECTOR OR ROOM SUPERVISOR AS UNWELL OR UNABLE TO COPE WITH THE PROGRAM.

Exclusion Regulations are listed in the 'Staying Healthy in Childcare Manual' located at each program. These specific guidelines are for the exclusion of sick children and educators at the programs. These guidelines must be adhered to however some exclusions may vary. Please speak with the Program Director if required

The BCS Exclusions for Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease, vomiting and diarrhoea and Cold Sores are different than those guidelines issued by Staying healthy in Childcare. The educators believe that cross infection of children in a group setting can be prevented by early exclusion from the program.

Any possible outbreak will be reported to ACT Health and recommendations followed. We will also advise you of any infectious disease in the program (whilst maintaining confidentiality) by placing notices in the programs and/or by contacting parents/guardians by phone or email.

## Management Plans

All children with a medical condition including but not limited to conditions such as Asthma or Anaphylaxis must provide the program with a signed Action Plan from a Medical Practitioner (documented on a Letterhead) and their required medication, e.g. Auto Immune Injector (epipen/anapen), Asthma medication, etc. All medication provided must be 'in date' and if prescription medication the label on the box. Children cannot attend the Program if their child does not have their medication stated in their management plan, the medication plan is more than 12 months old or if medication is out of date.

## Nappies

The programs provide nappies and wipes for all children in the Nursery and Toddler rooms. Children who still require nappies and or pull ups in the preschool room must provide them from home. Please ensure you provide your child with the required nappy cream. **PLEASE CHECK THAT NAPPY CREAM DOES NOT CONTAIN NUT OIL**

*Please refer to the 'Children's Programs Nappy Policy and Procedure'*

# Child Safe Environment



## Accidents and Injuries

We are committed to creating safe environments for children and programs are designed to provide a safe but challenging environment for children according to their developmental levels and needs. Children use play to actively investigate and explore their world. During play children will take risks to build new knowledge, and to understand and to enhance and test their own capabilities. Even though all due care is taken to ensure the safety of children, educators and parents at the Program, there may be times when accidents occur. When an accident occurs educators will administer the required first aid and complete an accident/injury form stating the details of the accident and the injury that occurred. At the end of the day educators will inform parents that their child has had an accident and parents are required to read and sign the accident form. Accident forms will be completed even if there is no visible injury as at times bruises and marks may not appear until later on.

Parents are also asked to complete an accident and injury form on arrival at the program if their child has had an accident and visible injury to ensure educators are aware that the injury did not occur at the Program.

## Emergency Medical Treatment

In the case of an accident or emergency resulting in the need for immediate medical attention, the Director or person in day to day charge will assess the situation, and if life threatening (e.g. severe asthma attack) will call for an ambulance. **The cost of the ambulance is the responsibility of parents/guardians therefore it is recommended that every parent/guardian takes out ambulance insurance.**

*Please refer to the "Children's Programs Ambulance Transportation Policy and Procedure"*

For situations that are not life threatening, parents will be notified that their child requires medical attention and they will be given the option of taking their child or calling for an ambulance.

## Safe sleeping

The programs have a Safe Sleeping Policy and Procedure reviewed with SIDS and KIDS that enforces safe sleeping. SIDS and KIDS recommend that children, mainly infants not be placed to sleep with quilts, doonas, pillows and toys. If your child does require a comforter you will need to discuss this with an educator and ensure you have signed the enrolment form giving permission to do so despite best practice advice in relation to reducing the risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).

*Please refer to the 'Children's Programs Safe Sleeping Policy and Procedure'*

## Bedding

Please speak with educators at the program in regards to bedding for your child.



## Program Safety

The Programs each have a Workplace Safety Representative who is responsible for ensuring all hazards are documented, reported and managed. These representatives attend regular meetings to address any Workplace Safety issues.

## Gates and Doors

If you go through a door or gate, please shut it behind you. Children are quiet and quick. A door that has not been shut is a door through which a child will venture!

## Safety in the Car parks

We ask that all parents and children use any available **CROSSINGS IN THE CARPARKS** and use safe road sense and do not walk behind reversing cars. Young children often have poor road sense and they are difficult to see in a rear-vision mirror, especially at night in the winter months.

## Sun Protection

Individual Australian states have additional sun safety requirements. Our early learning professionals will ensure your state's sun protection measures are applied. Our policy and procedure is developed with the ACT Cancer Council and curriculums are planned in accordance with individual state and Cancer Council recommendations, as per below:

- ACT: Sun protection is necessary for part or most of each day between August to May when Ultra Violet Radiation (UVR) levels reach three and above. Educators will minimise outdoor activities and events as much as reasonably practicable between 11am–3pm during the daylight saving period.

The Programs will endeavor to promote positive attitudes towards skin protection and encourage lifestyle practices that can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer.

It is the parent's responsibility to:

- Sign consent on the enrolment form to allow educators to apply sunscreen to your child/ren.
- All children must wear sunscreen and there is the option of applying sunscreen at home or on arrival at the Program. **Sunscreen is provided if parents/guardians wish to apply sunscreen at the Program.** Sunscreen is SPF 30+ and broad spectrum water resistant sunscreen. Each room has a container of sunscreen.
- If your child requires specific sunscreen due to allergies, parents/guardians must supply this to the Program. If no sunscreen is supplied your child will **NOT** be able to participate in full outdoor experiences as they must sit in the shade.
- Ensure their child is dressed appropriately by dressing children in clothes that have sleeves and a collar. Children are not to be brought into the Program with tops with no sleeves. If a child attends the program with no sleeves your child will be unable to participate in full outdoor experiences as they must sit in the shade.
- During the months of June and July children will not wear hats or use sunscreen in order to decrease the risk of low Vitamin D levels.

*Please refer to our 'Children's Programs Sun Protection Policy' reviewed by the Cancer Council.*

# Parent/Guardian Responsibilities



The physical safety and wellbeing of children are important responsibilities of the Program. Parents and educators must observe the following rules at all times.

Parents are required to:

- Sign your name and the time of arrival in the sign-in book in the rooms.
- Hand their child over to an educator before leaving.
- Write child's name on board.
- Assist your child with hand washing on arrival and departure.
- Apply sunscreen to your child if arriving between 8.00am and 11.00am or 3.00pm and 6.00pm between the months of August and May
- Ensure your child is in a clean dry nappy.
- Provide nappy cream
- Remove lunch boxes from bag and place in the fridge (Belconnen Early Childhood Centre).
- Ensure doors and gates remain closed.
- Provide practical, appropriate clothing and footwear.
- Inform an educator when picking up your child,
- Provide a labelled drink bottle for children.

It would be appreciated if you would ensure that your child **does not bring or arrive at the program with:**

- plastic bags, rubber bands or glass containers;
- ALL nuts and nut products;
- Chewing gum or Bubblegum
- balloons;
- jewellery except religious, cultural items and medic alert bracelets – (please inform educators);
- make up;
- sharp objects such as badges, nails;
- matches;
- toy guns and knives;
- capes; or
- toys other than a cuddly toy for sleep time.
- Drinks other than milk and water

Generally, we ask that children do not bring their own toys to the program. Children can become distressed when their favourite toy cannot be found at the end of the day.

If your child wishes to share books, photos or special toys please speak with the educators in the room.

## Up to date contact numbers

It is very distressing for children, educators and parents if we are unable to contact parents when the need arises. If your home or work number changes or if your emergency contact numbers change **it is your responsibility** to inform the Program immediately. 'Change of Details' forms are available if required.



## To be provided daily

- At least one complete change of clothes including underwear, socks, singlets, pants, tops and shoes
- If your child is toilet training, several complete changes of clothes including shoes
- If your child requires a bottle (formula/breast milk) please ensure this is clearly labeled. Please provide the bottle with water and the formula in a 'formula divided' container
- Lunch, and if preferred snacks for babies who cannot eat morning and afternoon tea provided by the program
- Lunch only for toddlers and preschoolers.(Belconnen Early Childhood Centre)
- Water bottle all children
- Wide brimmed hat, bucket style or legionnaires hat with cords removed (August –May)

## Appropriate Clothing

In order to ensure that children can play and participate in activities safely and comfortably we request that parents bring their children in practical, appropriate play clothes and shoes.

We foster children's appreciation and expression through creative arts. Painting, collage and sculpture are just some of the ways children express themselves using colour, texture and form. These art forms can

sometimes become messy and uncomfortable. We do however provide art aprons if they choose to wear them for added protection over their clothing.

We ask that all parents provide a warm jacket and beanie in the cooler months of June and July for outdoor play. Wide brimmed hat, bucket style or legionnaires hat with cords removed (August –May)

*Please refer to the 'Children's Programs Appropriate Clothing Policy and Procedure'*

## Jewelry

Earrings **must** be studs. No sleepers or hanging earrings are to be worn by the children. **No** chains around the neck or on wrists are to be worn by the children as a child may be choked or the jeweler broken. Please speak with the educators if your child wears jewelry for cultural or medical reasons

*Please refer to the 'Children's Programs Appropriate Clothing Policy and Procedure'*

## Footwear

For safety reasons children are not permitted to wear thongs, slippers, gum boots or crocs at the Program.

*Please refer to the 'Children's Programs Appropriate Clothing Policy and Procedure'*

## Naming Belongings

All children's clothes and possessions must be clearly labelled.

## Fundraising

Always an important part of any Program! Parents and educators organise fundraising events throughout the year. All monies raised are used to buy resources and equipment for the children.

# Educators



## **Educators**

Educator's names, photos and qualifications are displayed in the Program foyers. Children often use this opportunity to ask their parent/guardians who the educators are and their names, a great way for the children to become familiar with all the educators in the Program.

## **Relief Educators**

The programs we endeavor to employ regular relief educators. We understand and value the importance of continuity of care in all rooms and throughout the Program.

## **Meetings**

Communication between educators is vital to the running of a quality program. Meetings between room supervisors and the Director are held regularly as are full educators meetings. Room meetings are held when the need arises. Topics regularly covered include policy implementation, assessment and rating, programming issues and individual children. Meetings are also organised with educators from the other Children's Services Programs within BCS and the wider Community. This is a great opportunity for educators to network and participate in professional Conversations.

## **Training**

Keeping up with changing attitudes and current best practice is vital to the running of a quality program. All educators regularly participate in a variety of training to learn new skills and ideas.

The Program closes one day per year (fees are not charged) for an Educator Professional Development Day.

## **Students**

From time to time we offer placements at our Program to students seeking work experience from various schools, colleges, TAFEs and Universities. The supervision of these students places extra load on our educators and this is always considered in organising placements however we place high value on mentoring and ensuring our students feel welcome and are provided a learning environment as we too can learn from them and can be benefited by having the ability to recruit those who meet BCS Values and expectations..

## Bookings and Fees



Each financial year the Director, Senior Manager of Children's Programs, Executive Manager Business and Infrastructure and the BCS Board review the preceding year's budget and draws up a new one for the following financial year.

Fees for all programs may increase annually. This is to ensure we can invest back into our programs, keep up with the increase of costs including food, electricity and wages. Please note, the above amount is a minimum and an above increase to this amount may occur.

Parents/guardians will be informed of any fee increases with a minimum of 4 weeks notice.

### How to pay

**The billing cycle for the payment of fees is as follows:** All parents/guardians are billed for 2 weeks in arrears to ensure that parent/guardians who have chosen to receive their CCR payments as a fee reduction are provided with accurate payment information and that their fee reductions and payments correspond with the relevant time in which care was received. Accounts will be emailed fortnightly. Fees can be paid by Direct Debit, Bpay and credit card. You may choose either weekly or fortnightly options and the Direct Debits are processed on a Thursday.

Please contact the Children's Services Admin Team on 62640200 regarding any queries relating to accounts.

Fee payment must be up to date at all times. Parents/guardians who do not pay their account by the due date will incur a \$10.00 late fee each time the account is overdue.

Fees are charged for 51 weeks, including public holidays, except for the Educators Professional Development Day.

**Fees are payable whether your child attends or not as per the terms and conditions agreed to on enrolment.**

*Please refer to the 'Fees in Children's Programs Policy and Procedure'*

### Government Assistance

Family Assistance towards your fees is available. If you would like to access this assistance please speak with the Children's Services Admin Team and provide them with:

- Your Customer Reference Number (CRN—issued to you by the Family Assistance Office)
- Your child's Customer Reference Number (issued to you by the Family Assistance Office)
- Your date of birth (CRN Holder) and
- Your child's date of birth

This information will be provided to and validated against Department of Education, Employment and Workplace

Relations records to determine if you can receive a Child Care Rebate (CCR) and/or Child Care Benefit (CCB). If you do not have a CRN please contact the Family Assistance Office.



## Child Care Rebate (CCR)

The CCR is additional assistance if you are using approved child care for work, study or training-related reasons. The CCR covers 50 per cent of your out-of-pocket cost for approved child care. The CCR does have a limit. To learn more about CCR, please contact the Family Assistance Office or visit the website at [www.familyassist.gov.au](http://www.familyassist.gov.au).

## Child Care Benefit (CCB)

CCB is a payment from the Government that will provide financial assistance towards the cost of your child's care. CCB reduces the cost of your total child care fees. It is available to you if you are a parent, foster parent or grandparent with a child in your care who is attending a child care program approved by, or registered with, the Government. There are certain eligibility requirements you need to meet to be eligible for CCB. Until your CCB has been approved and has commenced we will require full payment of your child's early learning and care fees.

Parents need to inform the Family Assistance Office of any changes that may affect their assessment. Please let the Children's Services Admin team know if your child's siblings are attending another BCS Children's Program and you would like to claim the multiple Child Care Benefit percentage.

## Public holidays

Our centres are closed on public holidays. Fees apply for public holiday closures that fall on your usual day of attendance. CCB will not be paid for public holidays if 42 absences have already been used.

## Bookings

Please provide the Centre Director or Admin Team with your request in writing two weeks in advance if you would like to change your child's regular day/s. We will endeavour to accommodate your request to the best of our ability. Please note: programs do not swap 'booked days'. If you require another day it will be an additional day charged.

## Ceasing Childcare or Reducing Days

We require a minimum of 2 weeks' notice in writing if you wish to withdraw your child from care. **ACCOUNTS MUST BE FINALISED TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO YOUR FINISHING DATE.** If your account is in arrears your child may not be able to attend childcare for the time following your written notice. If this notice is not provided the equivalent of two weeks fees must be paid prior to the child leaving the Program. If you choose for your child **NOT** to attend the last 2 weeks, you will be charged the **FULL FEE, NO CHILD CARE BENEFIT CAN OR WILL APPLY**, as per Section 10 of *A New Tax System (Parent/guardian Assistance) ACT 1999*.

**Once your final 2 weeks notice has been provided your child must attend care on their last booked day to ensure you receive any CCB you are entitled to**



## **Late Collection and Fees**

Belconnen Community Service adopts a zero tolerance policy on late collection of your child from any Belconnen Community Service child care program.

If you are late due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g. parent/guardian emergency), please contact the program immediately.

In circumstances where parents/guardians have been late on repeat occasions, the Senior Manager Children's Programs can cease care effective immediately.

If a child is not collected by 6.00pm, with no previous contact, educators will endeavour to call parents and emergency contact by phone. If no one can be contacted at this time, educators will contact Parent/guardian Services (ACT Government) so the children may be placed in other appropriate care. *Please refer to the 'Children's Programs Late Collection and Abandonment of a Child Policy and Procedure'*

## **Absences from the Program**

We understand that sometimes due to illness, vacation or other reasons children need to have time away from the program. Please let us know if your child will not be attending on any given day. If your child is absent you will need to sign the attendance record indicating your child has been absent. We recommend you provide documentation to support absence days, such as Medical Certificates.

## **Initial Absence Days**

As with most Child care centres, your child's place is reserved when they are away so the day still needs to be paid for. Each financial year, the Family Assistance Office will pay your child's CCB entitlements for the first 42 absence days. These absences can be for any reason, including public holidays. These initial 42 absence days must be used before any additional absences can be claimed (see below).

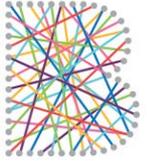
## **Additional Absence Days**

You may receive CCB for absence days after the initial 42 days each financial year. For all absences beyond the first 42 absent days, CCB will only be paid if you are able to provide evidence to demonstrate the absence has occurred under permitted circumstances. There is no limit on these days but you will be required to provide documentation to support the absence.

## **Exceptional Absence Days**

You may receive CCB for an additional 20 exceptional absence days after the initial 42 absence days per financial year. These CCB entitlements can be claimed without evidence if documentation is provided for 31 of the initial 42 absence days.

# General Information



## Behaviour Guidance

The Program reserves the right to choose participants according to the needs of the Program.

Educators at the Program will access the Behavior Support from external agencies for support and strategies to cope with a child displaying difficult behaviours. Parent/guardians must sign consent for the educators to do so. If your child is displaying repetitive behavioral issues, educators have the right to contact you and ask you to collect your child within the hour. If you cannot return within the hour you must notify us of alternative arrangements.

If the behaviour continues and educators feel that there is no more they can do for the child, the program reserves the right to ask a parent/guardian to find alternative permanent child care arrangements. The parent/guardian will be given 2 weeks' notice to find alternate care

*Please refer to our 'Children's Programs Behaviour Guidance Policy and Procedure'.*

## Emergency Procedures

The Program is prepared for various possible disasters including bombs and fires within the building. Safety routines are reinforced by regular evacuation and lockdown drills and educators and children are aware of the procedures they must follow when the alarm sounds.

In each program the Chief Fire Warden is the Director and there are designated educators as Fire Wardens. Parents of children are not permitted to enter the Program if fire evacuation procedures are in progress. Parents/guardians should familiarize themselves with the designated assembly points

## Child Protection (Mandatory Reporting)

Children have the right to be free from harm and to play, learn and be cared for in a safe and secure environment. Our educators are committed to the protection and wellbeing of your child.

It is a legal requirement of educators at the Program to report any suspected cases of child abuse.

"Child Abuse is the term used to describe different types of maltreatment inflicted on a child or young person. It includes non-accidental physical injury, neglect, emotional abuse, including psychological harm or sexual exploitation of children and young people and requires different and specialized responses"

Section 159 of the "Children and Young People Act 1999" legally requires a person caring for a child at a Child Care Program to report to their Director when they have formed a reasonable suspicion that a child or young person has suffered sexual abuse or non-accidental physical injury.

*Please refer to the " 'Child Protection Policy and Procedure' "*

## Public Concerns about Child Care

The Office of Child Care is obliged to respond to all concerns from the public about children's services. The primary concern at all times is the well-being of children in care.

If you have any concerns you can contact Children's Services ACTon **6207 1114**.



## Child Related Information

Programs provide and maintain current information relating to child safety, development, child rearing and other related child issues. These are available at the programs, are sent via email and displayed in the foyers.

Along with the Policy and Procedure Manual please feel free to peruse this information and we can supply copies if needed.

## Policies / Procedures

The policy manual is available for your perusal and copies are available on request. Each program has a manual available for perusal. Policies are continually under review and parents/guardians are asked to be involved in this process. Policies and procedures that are due for review will be emailed to parents/guardians asking for any feedback. Please provide all feedback to [policy@bcsact.com.au](mailto:policy@bcsact.com.au)

BCS has a Policy Reference group to assist in the reviewing of policies. If you are interested in being on this committee please speak with the Director.

Parents/guardians will be informed of Policies under review in the Newsletter, in person or via email.

Parents/guardians will be given 2 weeks' notice of any changes in a Policy.

If you are interested in assisting with Policy reviews please speak with the Director.

## Attachments

- Program Philosophy and Goals
- Feedback Policy and Procedure
- Medication Policy and Procedure
- Child Protection Policy and Procedure
- Fee Policy
- Direct Debit Information
- Orientation Survey
- Person Centred Thinking Framework
- One Page Profile
- Relationship Circle
- Who Am I-My Places
- Room Information
- Skoolbag Application

## Useful Contacts



|  |          |
|--|----------|
| Childrens Services Admin team<br><a href="mailto:csat@bcsact.com.au">csat@bcsact.com.au</a>  | 62640200 |
| BCS Children's Programs Senior Manager<br><a href="mailto:Allison.sullings@bcsact.com.au">Allison.sullings@bcsact.com.au</a>       | 62640215 |
| Belconnen Community Services<br><a href="http://www.bcsact.com.au">www.bcsact.com.au</a>   | 62640200 |
| Childrens Services ACT<br><a href="http://www.decs.act.gov.au/services/chcar_13.htm">www.decs.act.gov.au/services/chcar_13.htm</a> | 62071114 |
| Australian Childrens Education & Care Quality Authority ( ACECQA)<br><a href="http://www.acecqa.gov.au">www.acecqa.gov.au</a>      |          |
| Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)<br><a href="http://www.deewr.gov.au">www.deewr.gov.au</a>      |          |
| Human Rights Commission<br><a href="http://www.hrc.act.gov.au">www.hrc.act.gov.au</a>  | 62052222 |
| Parent Link<br><a href="http://www.parentlink.act.gov.au">www.parentlink.act.gov.au</a>  | 62058800 |
| Family Assistance Office (FAO)   | 136150   |
| Interpreting Services  | 13 14 50 |

Amended February 2017