



the
gums
childcare centre

FAMILY INFORMATION HANDBOOK

THE GUMS CHILDCARE CENTRE

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to The Gums Childcare Centre.

At The Gums, we have a unique setting, we are lucky enough to have large gardens, complete with hidey holes, trees to climb, dirt to dig in and space to roam. We encourage children to use their imagination to create, their curiosity to explore and their sense of wonder to challenge themselves and assess their own risk.

The play- based education we offer is based on many years of combined experience, current research, child, and brain development. We value education not only for the children in our care, but also for the educators that spend time with them each day. Our educators are encouraged to strive harder, continually reflect on their practice and embrace knowledge which they gain from attending workshops, conferences, and networking with other Professionals on a regular basis.

We look forward to getting to know you and your family and to working together to provide the best possible early years education for your child.

The Centre is licensed for 75 children.

		Staff to child ratio
Acacia Room	6 weeks to 2 years old	1:4
Banksia Room	2 years old – 3 years old	1:5
Wattle Room	3 years – 5 years old	1:10

MANAGEMENT

The Gums Childcare Centre is privately owned and operated. The Centre is licensed and regulated by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). Contact details for the relevant department are displayed in our foyer for your convenience.

Our Centre is an approved provider and as such, we are able to claim Childcare Subsidy on behalf of families.

PHILOSOPHY

At The Gums we believe in a philosophy that guides our everyday practice. A philosophy that aims to provide a warm welcoming environment for families, children, our staff, and the community. An environment that stimulates, challenges, and provides children with the ability to assess their own risk. A place that celebrates the joy in relationships and learning.

Our goals in implementing this philosophy are:

In relation to children:

- To develop a positive wellbeing and sense of belonging
- To be treated with respect and have their opinions valued.
- To have the opportunity to learn from peers of all abilities, and to serve as teachers for their peers.
- To be offered opportunities for risk and challenge in a nature rich environment
- To develop positive dispositions for learning, such as courage, curiosity, trust, playfulness, perseverance, confidence, and responsibility.
- To be provided with healthy food choices and physical movement options

In relation to educators:

- To develop a high staff morale
- To develop communication and teamwork
- To recognise the importance of meaningful reflections for continual improvement
- To value professional development opportunities that enable us to engage in the learning of best practice and latest research.
- The belief that children should be able to grow in knowledge through a creative and evolving learning framework (programs/policies/ procedures) that aims to meet the educational, developmental, and emotional needs of each child.
- The belief that every child has an equal value to our program, and as educators we will actively work to support full inclusion of children with diverse abilities and disabilities, as well as those from all socio-economic, ethnic, and religious backgrounds.
- To work well with others and build on individual and team strengths.
- To work within the Early Childhood Australia – Code of Ethics
- To be inspired by Reggio Emilia practices

In relation to Families and the community

- To value and respect the partnership between educators and families in sharing each child's learning journey.
- To implement practices to prevent and help limit the spread of illness and infection.
- To share with the community the importance of quality early childhood education for all
- For families to feel welcome to participate in their child's program and be involved in Centre activities

In relation to our Teaching Approach

- We believe our educators are responsible for the well-being, safety, and learning of every child.
- We believe that children should be treated with respect and dignity, to feel safe and secure to have opportunities for learning through play, decision-making, and social interaction with their peers.
- Educators provide information not only through mentorship and role modeling, but through discussion, small group activities and hands-on learning activities.
- Knowing that a child is capable and can become confident to complete their desired tasks and ideas.
- Encouraging curiosity and wonder in children.
- Encouraging children to explore the world with all senses.
- Encouraging children to think critically, and uninterrupted, about the natural world.
- Observing the child and enhancing their play through providing aesthetically pleasing experiences that reflect their abilities and interests.

The centre's philosophy is reviewed to keep pace with emerging trends in Early Childhood care and education.

ASSESSMENT and RATING

The Gums participates in the National Quality Framework. It creates a jointly governed uniform national approach to the regulation and quality assessment of education and care services and in 2012 replaced the separate licensing and quality assurance processes.

Education and Care Services are rated on 7 quality areas as follows:

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Governance and Leadership.

ENROLMENT PROCEDURE

The Gums Childcare Centre offers early childhood education and care for all children between the ages of 6 weeks to 6 years, regardless of their gender, race, culture, religion, social status, or disability. Priority of enrolment is given according to the available space in the Centre and the guidelines set down by the Department of Families and Community Services.

We like to meet with each family before a child starts at our Centre to discuss each child's individual needs. We strongly recommend families spend at least one or two mornings at the Centre prior to starting, to ease their child's transition from home to The Gums.

The transition visits are extremely important as they enable your child to meet other children and educators and explore the new environment whilst having the security of a familiar person by their side. It also gives the parent(s) /caregiver an opportunity to gain a better understanding of daily routines and the Centre's programs.

Children aged 6 weeks to approximately 2 years old are enrolled in our Acacia Room.

Children aged approximately 2 to 3 years old are enrolled in the Banksia Room.

Children aged 3 to school age are enrolled in our Wattle Room. Enrolments run in accordance with school terms. Children attending Preschool (in the year before children attend school) are required to attend a minimum of 2 days per week. Through the federally funded Universal Access Scheme, ELC fees are reduced for children in the 12 months prior to commencing school.

ACACIA ROOM

The Acacia Room at The Gums is a purpose-built area, designed for up to 24 babies at any one time. The main indoor play space is set up with a range of everyday materials, to allow children to explore their function, using their senses to involve them in their world.

It also has a separate sleep room, allowing for children's individual routines. The sleep room is temperature controlled and play soothing music throughout the day while children are sleeping. It also has large viewing windows, allowing children to be monitored regularly while sleeping.

The garden is a space that is regularly explored by both walking and crawling children, strengthening core muscles, and developing balance and coordination. Children also enjoy exploring the native plants and grasses, weaving in and out of the bushes, touching, tasting, and sometimes picking to take inside for later.

For those not quite ready to move, the nest swing is always a winner, allowing babies to lie on their back gently moving back and forth while able to gaze and wonder at the world around them.

BANKSIA ROOM

The Banksia Room is a purpose-built space designed for up to 20 children at any one time. Its features include a large indoor play space, a separate sleep room, which is regularly monitored while children are sleeping, and a large garden.

The Banksia Room children regularly participate in inside / outside play, allowing children to make choices about where and whom they play with. The inside space is set up according to the children's interests and allows for interests to be explored in depth through play. The children are also encouraged to become more independent and do for themselves. They have access to their own bags, where they can get out extra clothing, and drink bottles. They scrape their own bowls and plates after meals, put their chairs away and are asked to help in wiping down the tables.

The outside space for Banksia children is full of challenge. The children have a trampoline, trees to climb, cubbies to play in, bikes, a sandpit, and a hill to navigate. During winter there is lots of mud to dig in and squelch in, in our gumboots and during summer there are lots of ways to explore water and keep cool.

WATTLE ROOM

The Wattle Room offers the very best in Early Years education with an integrated, play centered program based on the world recognised Reggio Emilia philosophy and practice.

Our small group size with a maximum of 25 children provides an intimate family atmosphere that enables educators to offer children developmentally appropriate experiences that support and enhance their learning.

Bush Block

Outdoor spaces offer a vast array of possibilities not available indoors. Bush Block is a 2-acre plot of land behind The Gums, which provides children with an opportunity to discover and connect with nature. The bush block is a place where children enjoy unstructured time to explore, imagine, be messy and play in a wild and ever-changing environment. Children develop risk-assessment and decision-making skills through experiencing challenges and risks. We visit Bush Block regularly during school terms.

Preschool at The Gums

As early childhood educators and Teachers who are instrumental in influencing children's learning patterns for later life, it is our responsibility to set them on a course that will inspire investigation, exploration, problem solving, questioning, discovery, and the disposition to take on challenges.

In the year before children attend school, they are classified as being in their 'preschool year.' The 'preschool year' curriculum at The Gums involves activities and experiences that may include, but are not limited to:

- visits by children to local primary school settings
- visits from Primary school teachers and/or Principals to our Service
- exchanging information about a child's individual strengths and needs
- networking with educators, primary school teachers and Principals

- developing children’s talking and listening skills
- early literacy- rhyme, chants, songs
- alphabet and number awareness
- shapes and colour recognition
- social and emotional enhancement
- pre-writing development
- name writing and recognition.
- concentrating on the task at hand
- responding positively to new situations
- taking responsibility for their own behaviour
- developing the communication skills necessary for group or individual play
- developing positive feelings about themselves and others
- experiencing a sense of self-satisfaction resulting from achievement
- experiencing eating from lunch boxes, as we educate children about different foods eaten at recess and lunch and how to open different packaged foods.

FEES

Please refer to our Fee & Bookings Policy and Parent Agreement in your Enrolment Pack.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Gums Childcare Centre Monday to Friday 7.00am - 6.00pm

ELC - Wattle Monday to Friday 8.30am – 4.00pm (school term time)

CHILD COLLECTION & ACCESS ORDERS

Please sign your child/ren in and out on the iPad in the foyer. It is your responsibility to notify staff of who is going to collect your child/ren. Each child should be brought into the Centre and signed in for the day by a parent / guardian who is over 18 years of age.

No child will be able to leave the Centre with any person other than those nominated on the enrolment form as collection authorities. Collection authorities must be aged 18 years or over. In the event of an emergency, please telephone the Centre with the name and description of the person nominated to collect the child/ren. A driver’s licence will need to be sighted as evidence of identity.

We are obliged to comply with current court orders, please provide the Centre with a copy of any existing court orders. Any changes to access/custody and to persons authorised to collect children must be made in writing.

SETTLING CHILDREN IN

Saying “goodbye” to your child can be difficult. Parents often find they also have a mixture of feelings when placing their child in an early childhood education setting for the first time. Our

Centre Educators can be very helpful in offering advice and direction to help you work through any concerns you may have.

OUR EDUCATORS

One of the most important elements of early childhood education and care is having warm and caring educators who understand the needs of children and their families. Our passionate educators have a range of qualifications and experience including educators with university degrees or diploma certificates and educators who are currently studying.

We frequently have students from TAFE, Universities and school students on work experience learning about early years education. They are under supervision and are given duties suitable for their development.

IMMUNISATION

Under the *South Australian Public Health Act 2011* (the Act), children cannot enrol in or attend early childhood services unless all immunisation requirements are met (No Jab, No Play).

A current approved immunisation record needs to be supplied:

- at the time of the child's enrolment
- after the child turns 7 months of age but before the child turns 9 months of age
- after the child turns 13 months of age but before the child turns 15 months of age
- after the child turns 19 months of age but before the child turns 21 months of age
- after the child turns 4 years and 2 months of age but before the child turns 4 years and 8 months of age.

The child's immunisation statement must be provided at these times and stored on file, to show that the child is up to date with all vaccinations. The specified times reflect the childhood immunisation schedule points.

Parents or carers can access an immunisation history statement via:

- [Medicare online account through myGov](#)
- [Express Plus Medicare mobile app](#) (through an existing MyGov account)
- contacting the Australian Immunisation Register general enquiries line on 1800 653 809 and requesting a statement be mailed out.

ILLNESS

The Centre believes that the physical health and safety of all children is paramount. All possible precautions are taken to make sure the areas used by children are physically safe and kept clean.

The Centre's *Health Policy* is based on a careful assessment of information supplied by the Women's and Children's Hospital, Child, and Youth Services, DECD and support agencies. All

educators use preventative measures with regard to personal hygiene and in the maintenance of the Centre to help protect against the occurrence and transmission of disease.

The Centre reserves the right to decide whether a child is too unwell to stay in childcare. This decision will be made by the Team Leader and the Director or Assistant Director. As educators who care for children at the Centre, we are often able to recognise the first signs of illness. We also realize the difficulties facing parents/guardians with an unwell child. The Centre's *Health Policy* is implemented by educators in the best interest of ALL the children at the Centre. As such, the decision to call a parent/guardian to collect an unwell child from the Centre is not taken hastily nor without careful consideration. The Centre recognises the difficulties of finding alternative care for a sick child but must stress that we do not have the facilities or staff to care for sick children. Bringing an unwell child to the Centre may cause additional stress for that child.

The Centre believes that parents/guardians will adopt a responsible approach to our policy and will act quickly to prevent the spread of illness by keeping unwell children at home when necessary. If your child has an infectious disease, a medical certificate may be required upon return to the Centre. In the event that your child is sent home due to illness, exclusion periods may apply (see table below). This is to ensure that your child is well enough to attend care and to prevent the spread of further infection. The centre reserves the right to continue to exclude children if it is believed the child poses a health and safety risk to other children and their carers. A doctor's letter may be required upon the return of your child to care.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING YOUR CHILD INTO THE CENTRE WITH THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS/ILLNESSES:

- **FEVER/ HIGH TEMPERATURE**
- **DIARRHOEA**
- **VOMITING**
- **EYE DISCHARGE/CONJUNCTIVITIS**
- **RASH**
- **SORE THROAT**
- **CROUP/ PERSISTENT COUGH**
- **PERSISTENT INFECTED / GREEN RUNNY NOSE**
- **NO ABILITY TO BE ABLE TO COPE IN A GROUP SITUATION**

What is a fever?

A fever is when the body's temperature is higher than normal. A fever occurs when the child's temperature taken by a thermometer under the arm or an infra-red thermometer reading on the temple is over 37.5 degrees Celcius. Fever is a sign of infection in the body. The most common cause of fever is a viral infection. Viral infections can cause colds and flus, ear infections and throat infections.

In the event of a temperature greater than 37.5 degrees Celsius the parent will be contacted and is expected to collect the child as soon as possible after being notified. The child's clothing

may be removed and sponging with a lukewarm flannel may also be necessary. The child will be encouraged to drink to prevent dehydration.

EXCLUSION

Please notify the Director / Assistant Director if your child has an Infectious Disease. In the case of an Infectious Disease being present in the Centre, a notice will be displayed in the front foyer, and an update of any confirmed cases notified to parents in the weekly email to families with written information on the disease available where possible.

A number of infectious diseases have the potential to cause injury to an unborn child. Parents who are pregnant or planning a pregnancy should contact their doctor for further information. Parents will be provided with information on the main noticeboard at the front entrance if a child who usually attends the centre has an infectious disease that may cause injury to an unborn child. Examples are German Measles (Rubella), Cytomegalovirus (CMV) and Chicken Pox.

If a child is in need of urgent medical care, we will call an ambulance and contact parent/s or emergency contact/s immediately. In emergencies we use the Clare Medical Centre or Clare Hospital.

Please remember to call and let us know if your child is not attending for any reason by 8.30am on that day.

EXCLUSION PERIODS FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Reference: <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/staying-healthy-preventing-infectious-diseases-early-childhood-education-and-care-services>

Chickenpox	Exclude until all blisters have completely dried.
Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased on waking.
Diarrhoea or Vomiting	Exclude until ceased minimum of 48 hours.
Hand foot and mouth disease	Exclude until well and until all blisters have dried.
Head lice	Exclude until effective treatment has been given and the scalp is completely cleared of both the Lice and the nits (the eggs).
Hepatitis A	Exclude until receipt of a medical certificate of recovery.
Impetigo (School Sores)	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced and sores on exposed surfaces are covered with a dressing.
Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after the first day of appearance of rash.
Meningitis	Exclude until well and child has received (Bacterial) appropriate antibiotics.
Meningococcal infection	Exclude until appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed.
Mumps	Exclude for 9 days after onset of symptoms.
Ringworm (Scabies, pediculosis (lice), trachoma)	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced.
Rubella (German measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of the rash.
Streptococcal Infection (Including Scarlet Fever)	Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the person feels well.
Tuberculosis	Exclude until production of medical certificate from appropriate health authority.
Whooping cough (Pertussis)	Exclude for five days after starting antibiotic treatment or for 21 days from the onset of coughing.
Fever / Temperature over 37.5 degrees	Exclude for 24hrs after the last recorded fever / high temperature

ACCIDENTS & EMERGENCY

Every effort is made to prevent accidents. However, should an accident occur, staff will take appropriate action according to the Centre's policies and procedures. An accident report form is kept on each room iPad, showing details of the date, time, nature of the accident, treatment used and who attended. This must be read and signed by the person collecting the child.

If a child is in need of urgent medical care, we will contact parents or emergency contact/s immediately and if needed call an ambulance.

MEDICATION

Staff will only administer medications that are prescribed by a doctor, **NO OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATIONS WILL BE ADMINISTERED** (Nappy rash creams excluded) unless on a doctor's letter stating the time and dose to be administered. Long-term medication requires a doctor's letter stating its use and for the period required. (E.g., Ventolin for Asthma) and must accompany an Action Plan provided by the centre.

Parents/guardians must fill out the details on the medication form located in your child's room with the name of the medication, the time it is to be administered and the dose, including any other instructions as required by the doctor. Medications must be given directly to staff on duty and must not be left in the child's bag or locker. Medication must be in its original container, labeled with the child's name.

Please do not bring your child to the Centre if they have had Panadol or any other unprescribed medication overnight or in the morning. If they need Panadol, they are not well enough to be in childcare. Panadol or any other unprescribed medication will not be administered to children in the Centre.

LONG TERM ILLNESS & ALLERGIES

Where a child has a long-term illness or allergy, parents will be asked to complete a Risk Minimisation Plan and provide The Gums with a Medical Action Plan and any required medication prior to starting at The Gums. These documents are required to be updated every twelve months at minimum, to ensure that the plan and medication (if required) is appropriate to the child's current condition. Details of routine, extra medications, and the actions to be taken in the event of an illness or allergy must be specified in the child's action plan.

FOOD & NUTRITION

We aim to provide a healthy and balanced diet for your child by providing an eating environment that is safe, positive and supports healthy eating for all children.

The centre provides morning fruit, lunch, afternoon tea and late snack for children who are at the centre after 5.30pm.

The centre provides cow's milk however parents are required to bring their own babies' formulas. All children are required to bring a named water bottle and are encouraged to drink regularly throughout the day. Please only fill your child's drink bottle with water. No cordials or juices.

Parents are asked on the enrolment form and again at the enrolment interview if their child has any special dietary needs. Most of the time, these can be catered for by the Centre. Parents of children requiring a modified diet for medical, cultural, or religious reasons or through parent choice (e.g., vegetarian diet) must complete a **Special Diet Form**.

The weekly menu is on display in the dining room window for parents to view and on the Xplor Family App. The menu provides a healthy and balanced diet with multicultural dishes being prepared on a regular basis. There is an emphasis on fresh food with reduced salt, minimal preservatives and colour additives.

Our centre adopts policies and procedures with a view to ensuring that we are a nut-free zone. It is appreciated while we are unable to guarantee this, all reasonable and possible steps are taken to seek to comply with this mandate. Parents of children with nut allergies are encouraged to seek further information about the policies and procedures in place at this centre in seeking to determine the suitability of their child for enrolment.

Babies who have sterilized bottles and/or individual formulas will need to bring these to the Centre prepared in named bottles each day. Please supply enough formula to last the day, we usually recommend one extra just in case of emergency. Infant formulas must be refrigerated, and great care is taken in warming bottles.

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY

The Centre's **Behaviour Guidance Policy** focuses on supporting and fostering appropriate behavior.

In everyday life children are exposed to new events and experiences such as their first day at childcare or kindy, moving to a new house or the birth of a sibling. Babies and young children may be frightened and upset by these new experiences and express their distress in a number of ways such as crying, withdrawing, or clingy behaviour. When parents and educators respond in a caring way, for example with a calm tone of voice, holding, rocking and gentle touch, children learn they can feel comfortable and safe again. They learn that others will be available to help them notice and understand their feelings and behaviours and provide comfort when needed.

As a child learns to self-regulate, skills such as concentrating, sharing, and taking turns also develop. This enables a child to move from depending on others to beginning to manage by themselves. Most children at some stage will struggle to manage their feelings and behaviours, particularly when they are tired, hungry, or facing new experiences. When this happens, they might become upset, sulky, or angry. This is all part of being a young child and is not necessarily cause for concern.

PROGRAMMING

The Centre plans and implements suitable educational programs to encourage each child's development. The programs provide choice and challenge in all areas including intellectual and language development, gross and fine motor skills, aesthetic awareness, creativity, social and personal development.

Each program provides a balance between quiet and active experiences, indoors and outdoors, large, and small groups and individual play, structured and unstructured activities.

Activities include music, drama, indoor and outdoor games, story telling and reading, dance and movement, water play and a wide range of creative arts. Educators provide time for exploratory play, free play, and social interaction. Each of the age-appropriate rooms are programmed using the National Early Years Learning Framework *Belonging, Being and Becoming*.

Educators also focus on early learning concepts including patterns, colour recognition, shapes, size, measurement, days of the week as well as practicing writing their own name. Our programs aim to promote each child's natural curiosity to observe, explore, question, reason and solve problems.

If your child is regularly in for more than one day per week, they will be programmed for individually. When programming, Educators take observations on children's interests and areas of development that help inform future programs and goals.

ASSESSMENTS & CHILD PROGRESS RECORDS

The system of assessment used by our educators is known as "performance" or "authentic" assessments. It involves evaluating the growth and development of each individual child in the Centre. The system can consist of Developmental Checklists, Learning Trees, Portfolios, and summary reports.

Portfolios are purposeful collections of children's works that illustrate their efforts, progress, and achievements over time. Educators and children compile the collections together as they talk about the child's interests and progress. Photos are used to help identify and explain the learning process and skills acquired. Observations assist educators to plan for specific activities that enhance and assist in meeting each child's specific interests and stage of development.

Programs are displayed in each room for all parents to view and comment on. If you would like us to include an activity or work on an area with your child, please let your child's educator know either verbally or in writing. We value and appreciate your support and suggestions.

Parents are also encouraged to participate in our program by sharing a skill or talent with the children i.e., singing, cooking, dancing, etc. We acknowledge parents' skills and occupations as learning resources. Parents, grandparents, and extended family are encouraged to become involved and participate in the activities of the centre. Please let us know if you would like to be involved.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT & COMMUNICATION

We aim to support parents by providing an environment that is comfortable and welcoming, by encouraging parents to be involved as much as they would like to, and through the exchange of information about their child.

The Centre has an open-door policy which encourages parents to visit their child at any time of the day. If you are thinking about your child and wondering how they are, please feel free to phone or come in for a visit.

Regular communication between parents and educators is essential to maintain high quality education and care programs. Educators are best able to meet the needs of each individual child if they have relevant information about important happenings at home, updates on the child's health and on things of particular current interest to the child. Likewise, we are able to give parents information about the events of the day.

Information about important events and Centre news are shared through our Family Communication app, Xplor.

The noticeboards in the front foyer are used for general information regarding the National Quality Framework and Quality Improvement.

Parents are encouraged to discuss any issues or problems concerning their child with educators. Any information given to us is treated in confidence. Interview times can be arranged if parents wish to discuss any issues or concerns in private.

PARENT GRIEVANCES

Our Centre has an open-door policy and encourages parents to come and discuss any concerns regarding the Centre or staff, or the care / education being provided for their child/ren with the Director.

All possible steps will be taken to resolve the problem to the satisfactory conclusion of all parties. All matters will be held in the strictest confidence.

SUN PROTECTION

Our Centre has adopted the guidelines proposed by the Anti Cancer Foundation for Sun Protection. We aim to promote positive attitudes towards sun safety through role modeling, education, and appropriate behaviours. Our policy states that when the UV is rated 3 and above, children and educators are required to wear hats and sunscreen while outdoors.

BUSHFIRE POLICY

Bushfires threaten life and property throughout South Australia each summer. Making the right decision to stay or go is critical for the safety and survival of the children, staff, and visitors at The Gums Childcare Centre. As a result of the Victorian bushfire disaster in 2009 the CFS has revised its bushfire emergency warning and rating system, and the Department of Education

and Child Development (DECD) has instigated specific school closure days for kindergartens and schools in the Yorke and Mid North District. While we are not a DECD site, we have chosen to adopt DECD recommendations from our closest DECD site, Clare Primary School.

The Gums is in an extreme fire risk area. In alignment with DECD policy and in the interests of the safety of our children and staff, the Centre will close on days forecast as Catastrophic (Code Red) fire danger weather and take advice regarding closure on extreme fire danger days in our region. Families need to consider our plan when developing their own home bushfire response plan.

The Gums will advise parents via the Family Communication App Xplor, group email and The Gums Public Facebook page if the Centre will be closing due to the forecasted fire danger conditions the day prior by 5pm. On closure days parents will need to make alternative arrangements for their children. Fees are payable for days of centre closure as advised by the CFS. Childcare Subsidy will be claimed as normal on Centre closure days and the absence recorded as an 'allowable absence' or 'additional absence' according to how many 'allowable absences' have already been claimed per child.

SMOKING and ILLICIT DRUGS

The Gums aims to provide a safe environment for children, families and staff, free from the influence of tobacco smoke and drugs. Tobacco smoke and drugs are not to be consumed within the grounds of The Gums Child Care Centre.

CLOTHING

At The Gums, children learn through all types of play experiences. It can be very frustrating for children if they are restricted in what they can do by clothes that must not get dirty or long dresses that limit physical activity such as climbing. Please be aware that thongs and party shoes are not appropriate and, in some cases, unsafe. Footwear with velcro that is easy to take off and put on independently is very useful.

Parents/ Caregivers should dress children and provide spare clothing for children that is comfortable and provides sun protection to the shoulders, no singlets please. Please also provide gumboots and waterproof jackets to allow children to participate in the program in all weathers.

All bags and clothing, including socks and shoes should be clearly named.

TOILET TRAINING

Toilet training is in conjunction with parents' requests and the child's individual stage of development. If you are thinking about toilet training and are unsure where to begin, please have a chat with the Team Leader in your child's room and he/she will advise you on the respectful approach we recommend at The Gums.

While children are learning to use the toilet, they can sometimes have accidents. When faeces accidents occur, we dispose of any solid matter into the toilet, and then all soiled clothes are placed in a sealed plastic bag for parents to take home and wash. Washing soiled clothes at

the Centre can spread germs, particularly gastroenteritis. Parents should supply at least two clean changes of clothes and 4-6 pairs of underpants.

BIRTHDAYS

We like to observe birthdays and help celebrate your child's special day. Our Centre celebrates children's birthdays with ice cream in cones. Due to possible child allergies please do not bring cakes from home.

TOYS FROM HOME

We request that children do not bring toys, books, or handheld IT devices to the Centre. An exception is made for security toys required at sleep time or for group show and tell as per the room's program.

MANDATORY REPORTING

Our centre is committed to the prevention of child abuse and neglect and is a child-safe environment. If you are concerned about a child's physical or emotional wellbeing, please talk to the Centre Director who can help you make a notification or provide you with information about relevant agencies to provide support. Employees of The Gums are mandated notifiers and are obliged by law to report any information provided to them or any suspicions they have of child abuse and/or neglect.

CHILDREN'S REQUIREMENTS

We supply the following items:

- Nutritious meals prepared fresh in our kitchen.
- Nappies and wipes
- Sunscreen

WHAT WE ASK FAMILIES TO BRING?

- Named bag or small backpack.
- Named water bottle.
- A spare set of clothing and underwear (including singlet and socks)
- A broad brimmed or legionnaire style hat
- Warm headwear, footwear, and clothing for winter days
- Gum boots
- Water-proof jacket
- Parents are encouraged to apply SPF 50+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen to children before coming to the Centre for the day, or to apply sunscreen to their child/ren upon arrival. The Centre will supply sunscreen unless you prefer your child to use a specific brand.
- Any long-term medication, with appropriate documentation
- A comfort toy (if necessary) can be brought and stored in your child's bag.

Additional items for Babies:

- Comfort items such as dummies, soft toys, blankets, etc.
- One nappy per day, for home time
- Prepared named bottles – to be placed in Baby room refrigerator.
- 3 spare sets of clothing