



# Parent Handbook 2021



## SORRENTO EARLY LEARNING

# Welcome to Sorrento Early Learning in 2021

Thank you for choosing Sorrento Early Learning to share in your child's important early childhood learning experience in 2021. We look forward to sharing this journey of learning with you and your family, and trust that it will be a fulfilling and enjoyable time for all involved.

This Information Handbook aims to cover your questions about what happens at Sorrento Early Learning, so that, together, we can enrich your child's early learning experience.

Take a few minutes to read through this information— discover how to access the information you will need, and learn more about what is required for your child to have the best educational experience possible.

## Your questions?

### Please don't hesitate to ask!

- ➡ Matters relating to educational/health of your child - Bianca Moresco, Early Learning Team Leader,
- ➡ Enrolments and Fees - Deb Dick on Reception, Early Learning Administrator Deb Dick,
- ➡ Suggestions or matters relating to other programs at the Centre - Heather Barton, Sorrento Community Centre Manager

**Keeping Connected:** Please check any updates, notices or information through your **Xplor App**, in your **Parent's Pocket**, on the **'sign in' table**, and notices **on display** at the Centre or come to you by **email**.

**Licence to Operate:** Our service is registered with the Victorian Department of Education and Training as a Limited Hours Type 2 Licensed Service, and adheres to the Children's Services Act 1996 and the Children's Services Regulations 2009.

**Policies and Procedures** and conditions for all Early Learning Centres are prescribed by regulation. They are: Victorian State Regulations, Education and Care Services National Law Act, and Education and Care Services National Regulations. Copies of the Act and Regulations, together with the **Centre's Policies and Procedures are available at Sorrento Early Learning upon request**. If you require further information regarding the legislation governing the operation or the National Quality Standards, please refer to: <http://www.acecqa.gov.au>

## Part of a larger Community-based Centre

Sorrento Early Learning is an integral part of the **community-based, not for profit entity, Sorrento Community Centre Inc.** By enrolling with Sorrento Early Learning, you are also registered as part of the Sorrento Community Centre 'family'. As a registered user of the Centre you are also able to enrol in any of the other activities, classes or events being conducted at the Centre.

## Find Us at

Sorrento Community Centre  
860 — 868 Melbourne Road *(adjacent to car park)*  
Sorrento VIC 3943

**Phone: (03) 5984 3360**



Sorrento Community Centre and/or  
Sorrento Early Learning



**ABN:** 98 085 210 677

**Licence ID:** SE-00015842

## Who to ask for help .....

### Education and health related matters:

#### Early Learning Team Leader:

Bianca Moresco  
9am to 3.00pm Monday to Friday  
[sorrentoelc@gmail.com](mailto:sorrentoelc@gmail.com)

### Enrolments, Bookings and Fees:

Deb Dick - Administration Assistant  
9am to 2.00pm Monday to Friday  
[admin@sorrentocc.org.au](mailto:admin@sorrentocc.org.au)

### Suggestions or matters relating to the Centre: Centre Manager:

Heather Barton  
9.30am to 5pm Monday to Friday  
[manager@sorrentocc.org.au](mailto:manager@sorrentocc.org.au)

*Sorrento Early Learning - your community-based, calm and home-like learning and care environment*

# Our Philosophy and Aims

## Our Vision for Sorrento Early Learning:

To aspire for excellence in the provision of early childhood services through the creation of a safe, extended family environment and the development of a community of learners where educators, parents and other adults are committed to the children's education and wellbeing.

**Mission:** To provide early childhood services for children 18 months to 4yo , 48 weeks of the year.

## Aims:

### Environment

To create a safe, respectful, family environment where parents are welcomed and children are nurtured and challenged and where they are known and valued for their uniqueness.

### Curriculum

To provide a rich, stimulating and intentional teaching program where children's strengths are encouraged and individual learning pathways are respected and celebrated.

To assist children through example and practice:

- To develop a spirit of inquiry and to help them understand their world, themselves and their relationships with family, their peers and the wider community.
- To develop age appropriate social skills – interacting with others, entering play, turn taking.
- To learn developmentally appropriate communication, literacy and numeracy skills and to encourage a love of learning.

### Teaching approaches and methodology

To facilitate learning through free play, guided play, adult led inquiry and direct instruction. An indoor/ outdoor program is a feature of our daily approach.

Our programs are guided by the **Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)** with five (5) key outcomes:

**Identity:** Children have a strong sense of identity

**Community:** Children are connected with and contribute to their world

**Wellbeing:** Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

**Learning:** Children are confident and involved learners

**Communication:** Children are effective communicators



### Parents in Partnership

To encourage parents to share their understanding of their children's nature and development

To actively engage parents and children in planning for the children's learning and development

To provide feedback to parents on their children's learning and to provide information on how they can further their children's learning and development.

To use social media to communicate with parents and make visible the children's learning through displays and postings on approved and agreed applications.

### Transition from Home to School

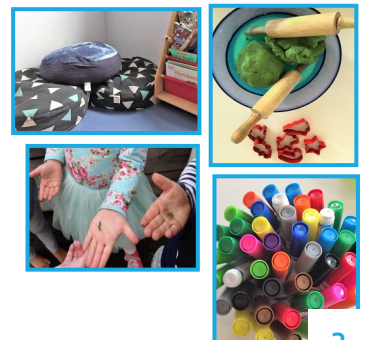
To provide practical support for transition to four year old Kindergarten and schools in the area.

To ensure the children understand the process and have an active role in preparing for these transitions.

### Sorrento Early Learning (SEL) Governance

SEL is governed by the Sorrento Community Centre Board which is licensed to operate the Service. The Board develops policy in consultation with the Manager and ensures compliance with the State Licence and State and Federal legislation.

The Board delegates the management and operation of the Service to the Centre Manager and the Early Learning Team Leader respectively.





# Our Place, Our Team

## Sorrento Early Learning - Our Place

Against the green backdrop of the David Macfarlan Reserve, away from busy traffic noise, children enjoy a full program in a calm and nurturing environment.

The children enjoy our indoor/outdoor program, where, depending on their area of interest at the time, they move between spaces and activities at various times.

Spaces are arranged so children are not overwhelmed; they can enjoy some quiet time reading or creating a masterpiece, or socialise with others, learning while sharing, enjoying music and games.

## Belonging to the Broader Local Community

Being part of a non-profit community-based Centre gives children and families opportunities to develop a sense of belonging to both the Centre as well as the broader community. Families are encouraged to access other programs, activities and services offered through Sorrento Community Centre, and gain the benefits of meeting new people, learning new skills, and extending networks. The small annual Registration Fee paid on enrolment covers access to all Centre programs.

Research proves that when parents are involved with their child's place of learning, the children's educational outcomes are enhanced. Families get together at events designed for whole families, or social events for just parents.

We always encourage feedback from parents on issues that matter to them.

## Our Personalised Approach

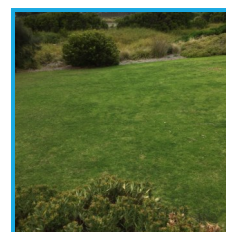
We are a small, friendly centre, where children and families feel they belong and are part of the whole Centre community.

Being licensed for a small number of children (22) enables us to provide an atmosphere that is personal; family members are known by name, and we value all of their talents and interests.

## Our Educators

Bianca, our fully qualified and experienced Early Learning Team Leader, together with her team are warm and welcoming to all who come to the Centre.

They are passionate about providing intentional and personalised early learning programs to positively impact children, setting them up for a positive learning experience throughout life.



2021 Term Dates	Start	Finish
<b>Term 1 (ELC resumes)</b>	Monday 11 January	Thursday 1 April
School Holidays - Centre Open	Friday 2 April	Sunday 18 April
<b>Term 2</b>	Monday 19 April	Friday 25 June
School Holidays - Centre Closed	Saturday 26 June	Sunday 11 July
<b>Term 3</b>	Monday 12 July	Friday 17 September
School Holidays - Centre Open	Saturday 18 September	Sunday 3 October
<b>Term 4</b>	Monday 4 October	Friday 17 December
School Holidays -Centre Closed	Saturday 18 December	<b>Term 2022 – 10 January 2022</b>



# Settling In

## Electronic Sign In and Out of the Centre

The safety and security of all children is critical.

You or your authorised registered representative will need to sign your child in and out on the iPad at the entrance to register your child's attendance. This program records the time of day, identifies the person dropping off and collecting your child (each person authorised by parents to drop off or collect your child, needs to know your family's unique code).

When dropping off your child, please leave him/her in the [direct care of a staff member](#).

Please note that children can only be collected by people who are:

- Registered with us as an 'authorised person'
- Aged 18 years and over.

Unless there is a Court Order in place which limits access of parent/s to their child, both parents have lawful authority to collect their children.

It is your responsibility to notify us if a Court Order is in place; you will need to supply us with a copy of the Order which is currently in place and supply updated Orders as they come to hand.

## Late or Absent? Ring Deb - 5984 3360

To save worry, please let us know if your child will be absent, or late to arrive. It is important to be on time to drop off and collect; children left behind after others have been collected is a very lonely experience.

If your child is not collected before Centre Closure at 2.15pm, parents/guardians will be called. **Late fees will be charged** if a child remains at the Centre after closing times.

## Please let us know immediately

any changes to your **address, phone number/s, emergency contact's address or phone number, or pick up arrangements?**

It is your responsibility to ensure that the Centre has up to date records of your personal details, as well as that of your Emergency Contacts.

This is vitally important to ensure the safety and security of your child.

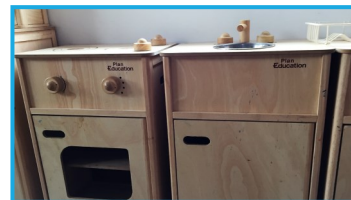
Please advise Deb, Early Learning Administrator - **5984 3360** - of any changes to your circumstances **as they occur**.

## Healthy Eating

We are committed to developing healthy food attitudes and habits.

## Egg and Nut Free Environment

The Centre has a strict 'NO NUTS' and 'NO EGGS' policy; please do NOT include these products in your child's snack or lunch, e.g. muesli/ eggs /peanut butter.



## Photographs

We understand that keeping a memento of your child's time as a pre-schooler is important.

A photographer visits, usually in the second half of the year, to take natural individual and group photos. Photos can be selected for purchase.

**If you object** to your child appearing in promotional photographs, please indicate this on your Enrolment Form.

## Birthdays

On your child's birthday, we invite you to bring along a cake - wrapped and purchased at a store. For children who have allergies or need gluten free food, we ask parents to provide a treat to keep on the shelf or in our freezer for these occasions.

Party invitations are discretely distributed by staff.

## Toys from Home

Soft toys and books associated with comfort and security will help children to more successfully manage separation and settle into the Centre.

If your child would like to bring a toy for 'show and tell' please place it in the box provided (this way we can make sure it won't get lost).



## What to Bring

**A large Back-Pack** (named) to carry clothes and other items (see below):

**Water Bottle:** A named water bottle each day.

**A Generous, Healthy Snack** to enjoy mid-morning

**Lunch:** *(if staying the full session until 2.15pm)*

Please ensure that your child brings a second **named** container, packed with a healthy lunch.

\*\*\* Please — **NO EGGS, NO NUTS** policy applies.

**Play Clothes:** Children tend to throw themselves wholeheartedly into activities and often get wet and/or dirty. This is all part of experimenting and learning and is considered an essential part of early childhood education. Therefore, children need to be dressed in clothes that wash easily. Please remember to dress your child in clothes that he/she can **manage by themselves** (for example: trousers that pull down easily when children go to the toilet). Long dresses make climbing difficult and dangerous, so please dress your child in clothes they can be fully active in.

So that your child can be ready for all opportunities and does not miss out on 'messy play' please provide at least **one and possibly two changes of clothes**.

**Shoes:** As children are very active, they need closed-in toe footwear that is sturdy and non-slip. Thongs and Crocs are NOT suitable for safe play.

**Hat:** In summer, a wide-brimmed sunhat is essential — please impress upon your child the need to wear it.

**Coat:** In winter, a warm coat is necessary, as a feature of our program is indoor/outdoor play (where they can move between the inside and outside play areas).

**Named belongings:** As children often take off clothing, it is strongly recommended that **all** items of clothing be labelled, especially hats, coats and other spare clothes.

**Art Smocks are provided** - fun is guaranteed!

## Being Sun Smart



Sorrento Early Learning is an approved SunSmart Centre and is committed to meeting the Cancer Council's SunSmart practices for educating and protecting children from the harmful effects of the sun and the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation.

Childhood is a critical period during which exposure to UV radiation is more likely to contribute to skin cancer later in life.

From **mid-August until the end of April**, when UV levels are above 3, please help us to help your child to learn sensible sun protection habits whilst at Sorrento Early Learning.

- **SEEK!** Encourage children to play in the shaded areas. When necessary, the outdoor program layout will make full use of the shade that is available.
- **SLIP!** Wear long-sleeve tops. Tank tops and singlet tops are discouraged.
- **SLAP!** Wear a wide-brimmed hat that shades the face and neck (legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket style - but NOT a peaked cap or visors please!).
- **SLOP!** A SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is available at the Centre. Families are welcome to use the sunscreen and children are encouraged to re-apply sunscreen during the day. **Sunscreen:** Please let us know if your child has a **sensitivity to sunscreen**.
- **SLIDE!** Where practical, children wear close-fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

## Medications:

When your child requires medication during the day, you will need to:

- Complete and sign the appropriate **Medication Permission Form**. Permission to administer medication can only be given by the parent / legal guardian.
- Bring medication in the **original container** with your **child's name on the label**. Authorisation must be consistent with the prescription label and directions as advised.
- Medication must be **within its expiry date**.
- On collecting your child, parents must sign the Medication Authority to acknowledge the child has received the medication and **collect medication** to take home.

On arrival, **hand the medication** to a staff member who will place medications in the medication cupboard or in the fridge.

**Medication must never be left in your child's Back Pack.**

Staff are not permitted to give medication using their own discretion. We cannot be responsible for any allergic reaction or injury caused to the child by the administration of the medication in accordance with the parent's written authority.

# Health and Hygiene

## Asthma / Allergies / Anaphylaxis Action Plan

This information is an abridged version of our Policy and Procedure relating to these issues (The full Policy and Procedure is in the sign-in area)

So that we can continue to provide a safe and healthy environment for everyone, and to ensure your child's needs are fully met, please inform us at the time of enrolment (or at any other time, should circumstances change), of any medical conditions, asthma, allergies or risk of anaphylaxis.

Again, please be aware that Sorrento Early Learning is an egg and nut-free environment

If your child suffers from any of the above conditions, **before commencing**, you will need to provide

- an Action Plan signed by your doctor.
- Ventolin, Spacer, Epipen/Anapen and / or Antihistamines if required are to be kept on the premises. Please ensure that these items have a valid expiry date - and **are within date** at all times.
- A Risk Minimisation Plan (can be prepared in consultation with the Centre prior to commencement), an action plan for anaphylaxis, a communications plan, and a Medical Communication form must be completed. These will be reviewed at least annually and always on re-enrolment.

We will

- advise you who your nominated responsible staff member is (all our educators hold current qualifications in asthma and anaphylaxis management)
- ensure that staff, children and families attending the Centre are aware of your child's requirements
- enforce our rule of no food sharing and be alert to cross-contamination; only food that is supplied/permitted by you will be eaten by your child; your child will not be permitted to accept food from others
- advise you if emergency medication has been administered.

## Your Child is in Good Hands

As part of our commitment to good practice, all of our staff hold a current Level 2 First Aid Certificate (including CPR) with additional qualifications in Anaphylaxis and Asthma management.



If a serious accident occurs or your child shows signs of developing an illness during a session, then you will be contacted by phone first. All accidents and symptoms of illness are recorded for parents to sight and sign. Policy Reference: "Children's Health & Safety"

**Smoke Free Zone** Smoking is not permitted within the Centre, nor within four (4) metres of the perimeter.

**COVID Rules Apply—How sick is too sick to attend?** Regular attendance is important for children to gain the full benefits of their early childhood experience. However, if your child has any symptoms, they should stay at home for extra rest and cuddles until they feel better, and safeguard other children from contracting the illness.

**Exclusion Policy:** This is both for your child's sake and to eliminate the risk of infecting other children.

Please keep your child at home if he or she:

- Has a temperature above 37C and for 24 hours after the temperature has dropped to normal
- Is suffering from a condition which is contagious to other children such as signs of conjunctivitis, respiratory infection (more than just a cold), impetigo (or school sores), hand, foot and mouth disease (where weeping blisters are present), slap face syndrome
- Has been recommended by a doctor or specialist not to attend the Centre, or seems unwell
- Has a gastro (vomiting or diarrhoea) - children are strictly excluded for 24 hours or until they pass a solid stool and vomiting has ceased
- Requires four hourly paracetamol
- Has any rash or irritation you cannot identify
- Is within the first 24 hours of starting a course of antibiotics
- Is within the first 24 hours after immunisation
- Has been hospitalised or been under a general anaesthetic in the last 48 hours.

Please use your own judgment. **If you are unsure, refer to <http://ideas.health.vic.gov.au/guidelines/school-exclusion-table.asp> or call the Centre (5984 3360).**

## Managing Behaviour

We apply positive behavioural guidance strategies to assist children in developing socially appropriate behaviours. Staff will positively guide and encourage each child to use acceptable behaviours.



# Enrolment - Forms, Fees, etc.

## Enrolment

Enrolment is permanent, and based on a 5-hour session. Sessions run from 9.15 am to 2.15pm each day (Monday to Friday) 48 weeks of the year.

***\*It is important to be on time to drop off and collect; for a child left behind after others have left, it is very worrying thinking that their parent/carer has forgotten to collect them.***

**Cancellation of Enrolment** Two (2) weeks notice is required if you wish to cancel your child's enrolment.

## Fees and Unpaid Fees

As a community-based not for profit organisation, we work to keep fees as affordable as possible. Currently the fee is \$65.00 per session. **All children's booked days, including public holidays and absent days, must be paid to retain your child's place.** Fees will not be reimbursed and 'catch-up' or 'make-up' sessions will not be applied if your child does not attend the Centre for any reason, including illness, on any enrolled days.

**Unpaid Fees** can lead to your child being asked to leave the Centre, or incur a \$20 administration charge.

**How to Pay your Fortnightly Account:** Please pay at Reception (cash or card) or direct deposit to BSB 633000 (Bendigo Bank), A/c 152 992 657, Name of Account - Sorrento Community Centre.

## For Families receiving Child Care Subsidy:



Xplor | Care  
MyXplor Education  
Add to Wishlist

Payment of the 'gap' fee is required **2 weeks in advance**. Check on the **Xplor | Care app** to find out the amount due.

**For Families not receiving Child Care Subsidy:** An invoice will be issued at the beginning of term.

## Enrolment Process

Complete a **Sorrento Early Learning Registration** form, (blue) **'Confidential Enrolment Form'** and lodge with the Centre together with payment of \$85.\*

**Sorrento Early Learning Administrator Deb is on Reception** each day (9am to 2pm) and is able to answer your enquiries, arrange a tour with the Team Leader if you wish, and help with the process.

When a place becomes available, your child's enrolment will be confirmed in writing, an Orientation Session arranged, and your child will commence. On becoming part of the Community Centre, families also become Registered Users of the Centre, which provides access to all of the Centre's activities. This annual fee of \$15 per family is included in the above fee of \$85.\*



## Am I entitled to Government Assistance?

The Commonwealth Government's Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is a payment (up to 85% of the cost of Child Care, depending on families' individual circumstances) to help families with the cost of quality child care and early education. Refer: *The New Child Care Package brochure*. Various elements will determine your family's level of Child Care Subsidy, including

1. A family's combined income will determine the percentage of subsidy they are eligible to receive
2. An activity test will determine how many hours of subsidised care families can access, up to a maximum of 100 hours per fortnight
3. The type of child care service will determine the hourly rate cap.



Some basic requirements must be satisfied such as the child meeting immunisation requirements, and the individual or their partner meeting residency requirements.

To check your Child Care Subsidy eligibility, you need to sign into your Centrelink online account through **myGov**. Select **Complete your Child Care Subsidy** assessment task. Work through the steps to **provide new information**, and **confirm your current details**.

Under the Child Care Subsidy, you will be asked about the activities that you do, e.g. paid work, being self-employed, unpaid work in a family business, looking for work, volunteering or studying. Find out more: [www.education.gov.au/child-care-subsidy-activity-test](http://www.education.gov.au/child-care-subsidy-activity-test)

## Feedback, Complaints and Grievances

We **welcome** your feedback and suggestions; through these, we are able to continue to make the improvements that enable us to provide the quality service we aim for.

In the first instance, speak with the Early Learning Team Leader. If you are still not satisfied that your complaint has been attended to, then please speak with Centre Manager Heather Barton in person, by phone 5984 3360 or email:

[manager@sorrentocommunitycentre.com](mailto:manager@sorrentocommunitycentre.com)

If you wish to take a matter further, you may refer the matter in writing to the Board Chairperson, Sorrento Community Centre, 860 Melbourne Road, Sorrento.

Alternatively, you have the option to refer the matter to the Department of Education and Training, Level 5, 165-169 Thomas Street, Dandenong 3175 (P O Box 5, Dandenong 3175). Phone number 8765 5787 or email: [smr.qar@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:smr.qar@education.vic.gov.au)

**We look forward to welcoming your family into our Sorrento Early Learning community.**