



Kew and North Balwyn  
**playcentre**  
OCCASIONAL CHILDCARE

# Information Book

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## Kew and North Balwyn Playcentre

*Kew and North Balwyn Playcentre acknowledges Wurundjeri people  
As the Traditional Owners of the Land of Boroondara and we pay our  
respects to their Elders, Past and Present.*

North Balwyn Playcentre is an independent, not-for-profit centre that provides quality occasional childcare for the local community.

The centre has been operating more than 40 years and we are proud to have provided respite for parents and care for so many local children (now adults!) living in the area.

Children ranging in age from 6 weeks to 5 years are cared for in our mixed-age environment, creating a unique family-feel to their experience at Playcentre. The older and younger children learn to play, share and make friends with each other over time as they attend regular sessions each week. The mixed-age environment allows the older children to act as role models to the younger ones which develops their confidence and self-esteem. The mentoring and friendships that develop often inspire the younger ones to try new things (painting, construction, make-believe dress-ups) by watching how the older ones play.

These early friendships help the children to feel a sense of belonging and they settle very quickly into their weekly routine. Often, they're having so much fun that they don't want to go home at the end of the session! The indoor and outdoor play spaces are filled with toys and activities and, usually, noisy, happy children!

### What Is Occasional Childcare?

Essentially occasional childcare is like a specialized playgroup for your child except you can leave your child to be cared for by professional, qualified staff.

Occasional childcare provides a safe, happy, nurturing place for your child for a few hours while you take a short break to attend to other needs. It's great for pre-school aged children who are cared for in a stimulating early childhood learning environment.

Our centre is run by a committee of management formed by parents of the children who attend our centre. We are a non-profit organisation and provide this community service for local families.

We are also able to offer care for a limited number of school aged children each session if required.

The children play, paint, draw, sing, dance, laugh and learn to socialise with each other while they build their confidence, resilience and skills with each session they attend. Sessions run for 5 hours and are usually booked on a term by term basis. We are also able to take casual bookings depending on availability.

### What Are the Benefits?

The most important benefits of regular attendance at occasional care are that it:

- stimulates the overall gross and fine motor skill development in your pre-schooler;
- builds their confidence, resilience and independence away from home;
- acts as preparation for kindergarten;
- helps with socialisation issues (such as playing together, being in a group and following simple routines);
- teaches your child how to share (this is especially important if you have an only child);
- creates an opportunity to prepare your little one for a new baby by instilling a routine in the soon-to-be older sibling's week, and,
- last but by no means least gives you a short break so you can return refreshed to parenting

Kew and North Balwyn Playcentre aims to give your child the best care possible in a stimulating, fun and friendly environment.



## Playcentre Philosophy

### **In relation to children:**

- All children are unique individuals with their own needs, interests and strengths
- All children are given equal opportunities regardless of their gender, culture and socio-economic background.
- Children learn best through play and staff will support development by providing experiences that are meaningful to the children and most importantly reflect their interests.
- Learning is promoted through experimentation, investigation and role play.
- Staff will follow children's interests and provide open ended play and creative experiences within a comfortable, relaxed and home like environment.
- Children develop and learn at their own pace; therefore, staff will ensure their expectations of children's development are specific to each child and their experiences.
- Staff will ensure children have a positive self-concept, high self-esteem and social competence, as these are the basis for successful learning.
- Staff will ensure children are given meaningful praise for efforts, success and positive reinforcement.
- Staff will consult with parents regarding behaviour management.
- Staff will support each child's background within the environment, using experiences across all learning and curriculum areas.
- Staff will support the inclusion of children with additional needs, working in conjunction with the family and other support services.

### **In relation to families:**

- Families are the most important people in their child's life and have valuable information to share with us.
- We will make parents feel welcome and encourage them to become involved at the centre in whatever way they feel comfortable.
- Individual families have their own parenting and childcare practices which staff will recognise and respect.
- We encourage feedback, suggestions and opinions regarding the centre's procedures, policies and the general running of the centre.
- + Families can complete surveys in relation to the centre's Guidelines and Procedures.
- Families need to feel secure in knowing that their child is in a caring nurturing environment.
- Families have the right to confidentiality and respect for privacy.

### **In relation to staff:**

- Staff recognise and respect that every staff member is an individual with diverse needs, interests, skills, knowledge and experience to contribute to the centre.
- We believe and respect that we are all individuals therefore we all learn at our own pace and individuality will be valued and respected.
- Staff will work as a team by motivating and supporting each other. Staff will help to build an atmosphere of trust and respect through open communications, respecting different points of view, using constructive methods of conflict resolution, and maintaining confidentiality.
- Staff know when to guide and assist a child's play and when to step back and observe.
- Staff will document and record children's development throughout the year using written observations, photographs and work samples.
- We believe that a positive working environment is fundamental to providing quality care. Therefore, we aim to maintain open, honest relationships between all staff members. We also aim to contribute equally to the centre, both professionally and personally, as this will help to form effective cooperative teamwork.
- We recognise and suspect that every staff member brings unique experiences, ideas, customs, values, skills and interests gained from their cultural background.
- We believe that staff need regular opportunities to develop and extend their skills, knowledge and enthusiasm through attending various courses of interests to them.

### **In relation to the program:**

- The program encourages children to make choices and have control of their own learning through individual interests.
- Learning centres are added to and changed according to the children's interests.
- The program provides opportunities for simultaneous indoor/outdoor play that promotes child initiated small group experiences and fosters nurturing and sibling relationships. The program is based on the concept of the emergent curriculum. where the children's interests are the focus and staff work within these interests to assist with the child's development.
- We believe that the role of adults within the centre is to be facilitators that guide and encourage children's learning at their level.
- All staff will be given opportunity to have input into the program with ideas and suggestions.

### **In relation to the environment:**

- We recognise the importance of providing a safe, secure and consistent environment that supports trust and familiarity as well as active exploration of learning.
- Staff provide a calm, friendly and positive atmosphere at the centre always.
- Staff will use positive forms of behaviour guidance to maintain a consistent environment and manage challenging behaviours, with continual consultation with parents.
- Staff recognise and support the importance of maintaining a high standard of hygiene and actively encourage children to become involved in hygiene practices.
- The environment will reflect a 'home like atmosphere incorporating a realistic, natural environment the child can relate to. We do this by providing baskets, home like furnishings such as tablecloths throughout the environment.

### **Playcentre Hours:**

The Playcentre will be open five days per week during all Victorian School Terms on:

Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9am—2pm and

Tuesday and Thursday from 9am – 3pm

PLEASE NOTE: You may notice that the centre is open when you arrive however, Staff use the time before 9am to set up the room for your child. Please understand that we will be unable to care for your child outside the above operating hours.

## Term Dates:

The playcentre terms are divided in a similar way to those of the school system. Please refer to the Department of Education's website at: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/departments/Pages/datesterm.aspx> for details of all current and future term dates.

## School Holiday Care:

Playcentre operates a limited school holiday program in January and during all term breaks. Dates for our holiday child care are announced to our members in the final weeks of each term. Our school holiday sessions are expected to be in high demand and availability is limited. Be sure to book early to secure your spot!

## Public Holidays:

The Playcentre will be closed during all public holidays. Public Holidays are fee free.

## Session Fees:

Fee for each ongoing five (5)-hour session is \$66.50 per session Casual bookings are \$78.50 per 5 hour session.

Fee for each ongoing six (6)-hour session is \$80.00 per session. Casual bookings are \$92.00 per 6 hour session.

Fees are issued prior to the start of the term and are due at the end of the previous term. Session fees are not refundable for non-attendance due to illness or holidays etc.

## Membership Fee and Fundraising Levy:

To cover additional administrative costs, all families will incur a Membership Fee of \$20 per Family at the commencement of their enrolment each year.

Families are also charged a fundraising levy of \$30 per family in terms 2, 3 and 4. This ensures the amount of fundraising is capped at no more than 2 fundraisers per year.

## Child Care Subsidy:

North Balwyn Play Centre is an 'Approved Care' provider and as such fees paid for child care can be reduced by claiming Child Care Subsidy.

To claim Child Care Subsidy, you must first register with Centrelink by completing and lodging the Claim for Child Care Subsidy. Following lodgement, your family will be assessed for the applicable rate of Child Care Subsidy. Please refer to

[https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/1.\\_what\\_is\\_the\\_child\\_care\\_subsidy.pdf](https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/1._what_is_the_child_care_subsidy.pdf) for further details. The Playcentre can only provide your fee reduction for child care once Centrelink has assessed your rate and all relevant details have been supplied to us. It is recommended that all families contact the Department of Human Services on 136150 prior to enrolment to determine their eligibility.

## What information is required for enrolment?

You will be asked to complete an enrolment form prior to commencement each year with the following information:

- Name and address and a contact number in case of emergencies.



- Name and address of another adult responsible for your child in case you cannot be contacted in an emergency
- Allergies or any health issues the carers should be aware of, especially food allergies.
- Any additional needs your child may have
- Name of family doctor.
- Authorization to administer prescription medication and to seek medical, hospital or ambulance care.
- Languages known and languages spoken at home.
- Parent Occupation details
- Details of any court orders in relation to your child.
- Immunisation record for your child. Families are required to provide an immunisation status certificate from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register. This certificate should outline that all immunisations are up to date.

#### **How do I obtain an immunisation status certificate?**

##### **This can be obtained from**

- **the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register phone 1800 653 809 or**
- **email [acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au](mailto:acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au) or go to**
- **[www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/online](http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/online) Or**
- **visit your local Medicare Office.**

Please ensure you complete a separate enrolment form for each of your children in care.

#### **Signing In and Out Procedure:**

We ask parents to ensure that children are brought into the CARE OF THE STAFF by a responsible person (at least 15 years of age) and similarly collected after the session. Upon entering the playcentre, please sign your child in at the electronic signing in kiosk in the foyer **before** entering the playroom. Children should remain with parents until this process has occurred. At the end of each session, children must be again signed out by an authorised adult immediately **prior** to entering the room to pick up the child

#### **Safety:**

Children should be brought to the Playcentre and collected at the end of the session by an adult. All adults must ensure that ONLY their child is escorted out of the gate at the end of the session.

**\*\*\*PLEASE MAKE SURE THE PLAYCENTRE GATE AND DOOR IS SECURELY CLOSED AT ALL TIMES\*\*\***

A doorbell is located at the gate for parents and other authorised people to seek access whenever they require this. All current families will also be given a code to gain access through the locked gate at arrival and pick up times. To maximise safety for our children we ask that you do not provide entry to any other adult when arriving and departing the centre. Anyone who does not know the entry code will be required to ring the doorbell and wait for staff assistance

#### **Playcentre Parking:**

Parallel parking is available in the streets surrounding the centre. Please check parking signs for details.

## Absences (Holidays and Ill Health)

If your child is going to be absent from Playcentre, or has an infectious disease, we require you to notify us promptly.

Please keep your child at home if he/she is not well, even if your child wants to come to Playcentre

Infection spreads rapidly amongst young children.

In fairness to others, a child should not attend if they have:

- \* a heavy nasal discharge
- \* sore throat
- \* vomited, or had diarrhoea or a fever within previous 24 hours

Children should only come to playcentre if they are well enough to participate fully. i.e. play outside, eat their snack, lunch, etc.

Please refer to our *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy* for further details.

## Medication

### Medication Procedure

If children require medication while at the centre, parents must

- Advise staff of their child's needs in relation to the medication
- Provide the medicine in the original container with the child's name printed clearly on the container
- Personally hand the medicine to a staff member for safe keeping out of the reach of children. **Under no circumstances is medication to be left in your child's bag.**
- Fill in the details of dosage, time of administration, etc on the Medication form and sign. Please make sure that each dose to be administered is entered individually and signed.
- NOTE: Staff will only administer dose as defined on the bottle. On collection of children, parents must check the Medication form, sign and ask staff for the medication.

## Clothing:

We provide smocks to protect children's clothing, however, it is wise to dress children in clothing that can be easily laundered. Children should also wear clothes which they can manage with minimal assistance, when going to the toilet. Children should also be dressed appropriately for outside play all year around. **Children always require a change (or two) of clothing to be kept in their bag.**

## What Does Your Child Need To Bring?

Your child needs to bring with him/her each session:

- A drink bottle – **WATER ONLY PLEASE**. No milk or juice boxes please.
- A snack and lunch, *(both meals must be packaged separately). Please also provide any cutlery your child may need for their meal.*
- Nappies and Nappy rash cream (if applicable)- Please name your nappy and place in our nappy tub on arrival
- Any items required for sleep if applicable
- TWO changes of clothing



- A warm coat for outside play in cooler months
- A protective sun hat from September 1<sup>st</sup> to May 1st
- If your child requires a bottle of milk, please ensure this is prepared at home and provided to staff on arrival for refrigeration.
- A pram if your child is under two years of age

***(No nuts, nut products, or nut spread please)***

**ALL YOUR CHILD'S BELONGINGS, e.g. bag, food container, drink bottle, nappy, hat, coat, pram etc MUST be clearly labelled with your child's name.**

**Child's Bag must also be large enough to hold all your child's belongings including their snack and lunch boxes, coats etc.**

Where your child requires the use of a dummy for comfort, please ensure it is also clearly labelled.

### Essential Sun Protection

A sunhat is required for outdoor play every day until May 1st and then again from September 1st each year.

Parents are required to apply sunscreen to their child prior to the start of each session during the above dates. Sunscreen is also available at the centre for your use. If you have not applied sunscreen to your child please inform staff on arrival. Please refer to our Sun Protection Policy for further details.

### Birthdays and Celebrations at Playcentre

We are happy to celebrate your child's birthday or other special event at the centre. We request however that you only bring non-food related products to assist with this celebration. This could be a balloon, a whistle, a party hat etc. This is limited only by your imagination. Unfortunately, we are unable to accept food items due to food related health concerns. Please also ensure that your items are safe for children under three years.

### Children Under 2

Younger children find five hours of care very tiring and often need a quiet place to sit for rest and respite during part of the session. We therefore ask you to provide a pram and a comfort toy or blanket for your child if they are under two years of age.

Please ensure that this pram is labelled. Tags are available in the foyer for parent's use

### Sleep and Rest at Playcentre

Families will be provided with a link to our sleep form on enrolment for all children who may require a sleep during our 5 hour sessions. We have a designated sleep/ cot room for this purpose and aim to accommodate children's sleep needs in line with their current sleep patterns.

In addition to this, all children who attend for a 6 our session will participate in a rest period. All children attending on these days will need to bring a cot sheet and blanket, (in a clearly labelled bag) with them to Playcentre on these days. Children who do not want to sleep during this period will participate in quiet, restful activities in their cosy rest area during these rest periods.

## Baby Bottles

If your child requires a bottle of milk during the session. Please hand this to staff on arrival for storage in the centre refrigerator. Bottles must be pre-prepared and clearly labelled with child's name. Please also ensure that you provide instructions regarding when you would like your child to have this.

## Children's Toys from Home

Children should not bring toys, etc. to Playcentre as they will invariably be lost or broken or may be the cause of conflict with others. However, if your child is dependent on a certain toy, blanket etc for sleeping or in times of distress, please pack this safely in their bag and alert staff that this is available if needed.

## Committee of Management

The Playcentre is a community run program that relies on parent involvement. Any assistance you can provide or suggestions you may wish to make are appreciated. The Playcentre is run by a committee of parents who are elected at each AGM (held early each year). If you are interested in joining the committee, or if you do not have time to be on the Committee but would like to help in specialty areas, please advise staff or contact a current Committee member. See staff for details.

## Fundraising

The centre relies on fundraising to provide funds for the purchase of new equipment and upgrades to our facilities. We realise that all our families lead very busy lives therefore it is our intention to keep fundraising to an absolute minimum. For us to do this a fundraising levy will be applied to each families account in terms 2, 3 and 4. This allows us to minimise all fundraising to a maximum of 2 activities per calendar year. It is an expectation that all families participate in assisting with our fundraising activities. Please refer to our Fee and Debt Management Policy for further details

## Questions, Concerns and Complaints

We are happy to assist you with any concern that you may have regarding the running of the Playcentre or your child's involvement. If you have a problem or difficulty, please raise it with the Director, or a member of the committee. However, if your problem remains unresolved, all complaints must be in writing to the President, who will then refer the matter to the complaints Sub-Committee. Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns with the Director in the first instance. She is available during the session or by telephone during session time, or via email. All discussions will of course be confidential. Please refer to our Complaints and Grievances Policy for further details.

We look forward to welcoming you and your child to Playcentre soon!

## School Exclusion Table

Table: Minimum period of exclusion from primary schools and children's services for infectious diseases cases and contacts (Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2010, Schedule 7)

Number	Conditions	Exclusion of cases	Exclusion of contacts
1	Chickenpox	Exclude until all blisters have dried. This is usually at least 5 days after the rash appears in unimmunised children, but may be less in previously immunised children	Any child with an immune deficiency (for example, leukaemia) or receiving chemotherapy should be excluded for their own protection. Otherwise not excluded
2	Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased	Not excluded
3	Cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
4	Diarrhoeal illness	Exclude until there has not been vomiting or a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
5	Diphtheria	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received following at least two negative throat swabs, the first not less than 24 hours after finishing a course of antibiotics and the other 48 hours later	Exclude family/household contacts until cleared to return by the Chief Health Officer
6	Glandular fever (Epstein-Barr Virus infection)	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
7	Hand, Foot and Mouth disease	Exclude until all blisters have dried	Not excluded
8	Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)	Exclude until 48 hours after initiation of effective therapy	Not excluded
9	Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness	Not excluded
10	Hepatitis B	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
11	Hepatitis C	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
12	Herpes (cold sores)	Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing, where possible	Not excluded
13	Human immunodeficiency virus infection (HIV)	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
14	Impetigo	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing	Not excluded
15	Influenza and influenza like illnesses	Exclude until well	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer
16	Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has	Not excluded

Number	Conditions	Exclusion of cases been given by the Chief Health Officer	Exclusion of contacts
17	Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash	Immunised contacts not excluded. Unimmunised contacts should be excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case. If unimmunised contacts are vaccinated within 72 hours of exposure with any infectious case, or received Normal Human Immunoglobulin (NHIG) within 144 hours of exposure of any infectious case, they may return to the facility
18	Meningitis (bacterial other than meningococcal meningitis)	Exclude until well	Not excluded
19	Meningococcal infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed	Not excluded if receiving carrier eradication therapy
20	Mumps	Exclude for 5 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner)	Not excluded
21	Molluscum contagiosum	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
22	Pertussis (Whooping cough)	Exclude the child for 21 days after the onset of cough or until they have completed 5 days of a course of antibiotic treatment	Contacts aged less than 7 years in the same room as the case who have not received three effective doses of pertussis vaccine should be excluded for 14 days after the last exposure to the infectious case, or until they have taken 5 days of a course of effective antibiotic treatment
23	Poliovirus infection	Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Re admit after receiving medical certificate of recovery	Not excluded
24	Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (head lice)	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced	Not excluded
25	Rubella (German measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of rash	Not excluded
26	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is produced	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer
27	Shiga toxin or Verotoxin producing Escherichia coli (STEC or VTEC)	Exclude if required by the Chief Health Officer and only for the period specified by the Chief Health Officer	Not excluded
28	Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well	Not excluded
29	Tuberculosis (excluding latent tuberculosis)	Exclude until receipt of a medical certificate from the treating physician stating that the child is not considered to be infectious	Not excluded
30	Typhoid fever (including paratyphoid fever)	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer

Explanatory notes:

- Diarrhoeal illness includes instances where certain pathogens are identified including Amebiasis (*Entamoeba histolytica*), *Campylobacter* spp., *Salmonella* spp., *Shigella* spp. and intestinal worms, but is not limited to infection with these pathogens.
- 'Medical certificate' means a certificate of a registered medical practitioner.
- Exclusion of cases and contacts is not necessary for latent tuberculosis.