



BALC Children's Centre

Parent Information Guide

Prince of Wales Park, Gillies St North.

Phone: 5334 2499

Email: balc@ballarat.vic.gov.au

Web: www.ballarataquaticcentre.com

Facebook - @BallaratAquaticandLifestyleCentre

The Ballarat Aquatic & Lifestyle Centre (“BALC”) is proud to be a City of Ballarat managed Children’s Centre. This handbook is designed to provide relevant information regarding the childcare services offered within the BALC Children’s Centre (“the Children’s Centre”).

Philosophy	Page 3
Introduction	Page 3
Contact details	Page 3
Operating hours	Page 3
Ratios	Page 4
Bookings & Payment	Page 4
Late collection	Page 4
Cancellations	Page 4
No shows	Page 4
Enrolment Information	Page 5
Immunisation requirements	Page 5
Program Information	Page 5
What to bring	Page 6
Important Information	Page 6
Food guidelines	Page 6
Food Exclusion Policy	Page 6
Signing in and out	Page 7
Confidentiality	Page 7
Child protection	Page 7
Access and inclusion	Page 8
Accidents, illness and trauma	Page 9
Emergency evacuation	Page 9
Infectious disease exclusion	Page 9
Behaviour guidance	Page 12
Feedback	Page 12

Philosophy

The Children's Centre is committed to providing our members and patrons with high quality childcare. In a safe, inviting and caring learning environment children are stimulated and challenged in all aspects of their growth, through the provision of experiences based on age/stage of development with a strong emphasis on play-based learning and the Early Years Learning Framework.

BALC strives to develop and encourage a supportive relationship between staff and families based on mutual trust and respect. Qualified Educators provide high quality care and strive to meet the individual needs of all children by providing learning and developmental opportunities for all children. Books, pasting, building construction, games and puzzles are some of the activities provided to keep children busy during their time at the Children's Centre.

Introduction

The Children's Centre provides a caring, welcoming and culturally diverse environment. As earlier outlined, the program is based on the Victorian Early Years Framework fostering all learning outcomes for children and their development on an individual basis. All children are encouraged, accepted, valued and gain a sense of belonging. Each family is supported and encouraged to be involved in their children's learning and development and to contribute to the Children's Centre's childcare program.

The Children's Centre is licensed with The Department of Education and Training (DET) and operates under The Children's Services Act 1996 and The Children's Services Regulations 2009.

The Children's Centre is licensed as a Limited Hours Type 2 Service, indicating that children may attend the service for a maximum of three hours per day, not exceeding 15 hours care per week. Childcare services are available for parents who remain onsite at BALC whilst the children are in care at the Children's Centre.

CONTACT DETAILS

Ballarat Aquatic & Lifestyle Centre	Ph: 5334 2499	Gillies Street Nth, Ballarat.
BALC Children's Centre	Ph: 5330 4109	Gillies Street Nth, Ballarat
City of Ballarat Family & Children's Services	Ph: 5320 5720	The Pheonix Building,
City of Ballarat Children's Services	Ph: 5320 5713	Armstrong Street Sth, Ballarat
Department of Education & Training	Ph: 5330 8606	109 Armstrong Street, Ballarat

OPERATING HOURS

The Children's Centre operates 8.45am to 12pm, Monday to Friday. The Children's Centre does not operate on public holidays. Bookings are available for 90 minute, two hour or three hour blocks.

RATIOS

The Department of Education and Training (DET) stipulate ratios as follows:

1:15 for children over 3 years and 1:5 for children under 3 years.

All BALC staff members in the Children's Centre hold relevant qualifications in accordance with the Children's Services Act and Regulations.

The allocated staff member acting as the Person in Charge is displayed on the door of the Children's Centre

Bookings and Payment

Bookings are required in order to maintain staff/child ratios (outlined above) and can be made up to 14 days in advance. All bookings must be made by the parent/guardian of the child who will remain at BALC whilst the child is in care. No permanent bookings are available.

The pricing structure is set as per the below table. Please note that the price indicates price per child and that no further discounts apply.

90 minutes	2 hours	3 hours
\$7.50	\$10.00	\$15.00

Payment for the session is to be made with the BALC Customer Service team and is required at the time of booking. Payment will act as confirmation of your booking and confirm the child's place. Phone bookings will be permitted where a multi visit pass or prepaid crèche voucher has been purchased.

LATE COLLECTION

A late fee of \$5.00 per child is incurred if the child is not collected from the Children's Centre on time. In the event of late arrival to the Children's Centre, please note that the collection time does not change. The original collection time remains as per the booking.

CANCELLATIONS

If the child is unable to attend a booked session please call the Children's Centre on 5330 4109. Bookings must be cancelled within two hours of the booking or it may be deemed a 'late cancellation' and may be subject to a cancellation fee of \$7.50 per child. Suspension from booking into the Children Centre may occur until the fee has been paid.

NO SHOW

Non-attendance and failure to cancel a booking may result in a no-show fee of \$7.50 per child or suspension from booking into the Children's Centre. The suspension will be applied until the no show fee has been paid and receipt of payment has been presented to Children's Centre staff.

Enrolment Information

All children attending the BALC Children's Centre must have a completed enrolment form, signed by the child's parent/guardian. Under no circumstances will a booking be taken until this form has been completed and returned to the Children's Centre. **IMPORTANT:** Any supporting documentation must be attached to the enrolment form, including medical action management plans, current Court orders etc. All documents are kept securely and confidentially.

PLEASE NOTE: Any new enrolments will take a minimum of 48 business hours to complete before booking will be made. Any family attending the Children's Centre for the first time will receive an induction and introduction to the facilities and procedures, presenting an ideal opportunity for families to raise any queries they may have.

IMMUNISATION REQUIREMENTS

Under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008, as of 1 January 2016 the Children's Centre is required to have a copy of each child's Immunisation Status Certificate ("ISC") on file. **PLEASE NOTE:** A copy of the child's Health Record Book is insufficient, a copy of the ISC must be provided. Once on file, it is the parent/guardians responsibility to update BALC with any new immunisation details. As the ISC forms part of the enrolment form and supporting documentation, no booking will be confirmed until the ISC has been provided.

For further information regarding immunisations visit www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation or www.immunise.health.gov.au

Program Information

For the greater part of the session children are organised into age/development based groups. A program designed by the qualified Children's Centre staff (with significant input from the information provided by the child's parent/guardian) is developed for each group, offering a range of experiences to meet the needs of both the group and the individual child. Participation is actively encouraged but never demanded; educators would rather rely on arousing the child's curiosity and individual interests to decide their level of involvement.

Educators observe the children in care regularly and plan experiences designed to meet the individual needs of each child. The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework is incorporated into planning, which is adapted to suit the individual needs and requirements.

Experiences provided build on the child's current abilities and interests and will contribute to the following outcomes for each child:

- ✓ Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity.
- ✓ Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world.
- ✓ Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.
- ✓ Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners.
- ✓ Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators.

All programs are available to view at request.

WHAT TO BRING

It's important and highly recommended that each child attend the Children's Centre with the following:

- A snack/lunch and water bottle. Please read the guidelines on the following page regarding the Children's Centre food exclusion policy.
- A pram is essential for children under 2 years of age. The pram offers the child a secure place to go if they become upset and can provide comfort.
- All nappies and wipes clearly named.
- A change of clothes is required as children often participate in messy activities.
- Warm clothing and/or rain coat in winter or wet weather days.
- Please inform staff if the child is in the process of toilet training, along with procedures that have been adopted at home. A change of clothing including underwear, pants, socks and spare pair of shoes is also required.
- We recommend that toys are left at home, however blankets/toys of comfort are permitted and should be clearly labelled. The Children's Centre will not accept any responsibility for lost, damaged or stolen valuable personal possessions.
- Between Friday 1 September 2017 and Sunday 30 April 2018: A hat and sunscreen for is required for outside play. The Children's Centre is a registered Sun Smart Centre and complies with Sun Smart regulations. Any child without a hat will not be allowed to play outdoors.

Important Information

FOOD GUIDELINES

- It's important that parents/guardians notify an educator of any child who develops a special diet or allergy after enrolment, so that the necessary files can be updated.
- As previously outlined, please provide children with snacks/lunch and a water bottle. Please clearly name all possessions and food bought to the Children's Centre.
- The Children's Centre encourages healthy food options for children, and discourages items such as chips, lollies, cordial and soft drink. Please visit www.heartfoundation.com.au for healthy snack suggestions. Suggested items include cheese, celery/carrot sticks, sandwiches, fruit, sultanas etc.

FOOD EXCLUSION POLICY

The Children's Centre's Food Exclusion Policy aims to provide and maintain a safe environment for all children, staff and visitor, avoiding any potential life threatening situation arising from contact with allergens that cause Anaphylaxis.

We strongly seek that the following products are refrained from being included in any child's snack/lunch box:

- Loose nuts of any kind. Eg: peanuts, cashews, hazelnut, walnut, almond, pistachio.
- Peanut butter, Nutella and other nut spreads.

- Chocolate/chocolate chips.
- Biscuits/cookies containing chocolate and/or nuts.
- Cakes/muffins containing chocolate and/or nuts.
- Dried fruits with nuts.
- Muesli bars containing nuts.
- Eggs either in whole form or in sandwiches/salads.

SIGNING IN AND OUT

Parents/Guardians are required to sign each child in and out per visit. Children must be collected at booked departure time by the nominated collector at time of arrival; otherwise the child will not be permitted to leave.

Any person collecting the child (other than a parent/guardian) must be registered on the enrolment form. Where the nominated collector is not registered in writing on the enrolment form the child will not be permitted to leave.

It is advised that parents/guardians do not re-enter the Children's Centre after leaving the child as this can be unsettling, confusing and cause unnecessary stress for children. Parents/Guardians are welcome to phone at any time during the child's attendance to check how they are going. Should the call divert to voice message please leave a message and an educator will return the call at the earliest convenience. Caring for the children is the main priority; if the phone is not answered it's because educators are attending to the children.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information provided by parents/guardians is treated as private and confidential as per the BALC Privacy Policy. One exception to the rule is where another BALC staff member may be informed of details to ensure best care of the child. Please note that children will not be discussed with individuals outside the parent/guardian/nominated collector. In the event a parent/guardian wishes to discuss a confidential matter, please speak to an educator to arrange a suitable time and venue.

All documents relating to any child in care can be made available upon request to a Children's Centre educator, where the request is made by the parent or legal guardian of the child. Any document containing confidential information is stored in secured filing cabinets on site, and BALC will not disclose this information without consent from relevant parties.

CHILD PROTECTION

Suspected incidents of child abuse and/or neglect.

Should any educator form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection, the educator should make a report to Child Protection agencies. In the event that an educator has general concerns for the wellbeing of a child but has assessed that the child is not at immediate risk of harm, a referral to Child First should be made.

Licensed Children's Centre educators have a duty of care to protect and preserve the safety and wellbeing of children in their care, and must always act in the child's best interests. If an educator has any concerns regarding the health, safety or wellbeing of a child it is important to take immediate action.

Custody issues

It is important that if there are custody issues and/or court orders relating to any child that the educators are informed. All information is kept in the strictest of confidence. A copy of any court related/custody documentation is required to be attached to your child's enrolment form.

ACCESS AND INCLUSION

The Children's Centre aims to ensure that all children feel valued as individuals and have access to a non-biased, inclusive care environment. BALC believes that all children, regardless of their race, gender, cultural background or additional needs, have the right to an early childhood program that accepts, respects and reflects the relevance of their specific background or abilities. The Children's Centre positively acknowledges the diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds of attending children and families. Each educator will implement a cross-cultural, anti-discriminatory perspective to the curriculum, encouraging positive attitudes towards gender-equality and the provision of equal opportunity for all, thus reducing bias.

PLEASE NOTE: If English is a second language and assistance is required please contact our Children's Centre educators for further resources.

Please discuss any additional needs required for a child with an educator.

MEDICATION

If a child requires medication on the day of attendance at the Children's Centre, it is a mandatory requirement that the parent/guardian completes the medication administration record. This includes nappy or topical/barrier creams and asthma medication. The following information must be clearly labelled on original packaging of the medication:

- Dosage/s including time
- Recipients name
- Doctors name
- Expiration date

No medication will be administered if child's name is not on product or if any details are incorrect. The medication register can be found when signing children in/out with educators available to discuss any queries. Where asthma, diabetes and/or anaphylaxis medication is required the parent/guardian must provide a full copy of the management plan. Any child who arrives without the management plan and/or medication will not be permitted to remain in care.

A qualified educator will measure and administer the medication which will be checked by a second educator. Both educators will sign the medication record following administration.

Parents/Guardians are required to sign the medication record when collecting the child at the end of the session. It's recommended that no medication is kept in a child's pram/bag as the Children's Centre will store medication out of reach of children.

ACCIDENTS/ILLNESS/TRAUMA

In the event of accident/illness whilst in care and first aid assistance/treatment is provided, full documentation of care procedures will be recorded in the Children's Centres Accident, Illness and Medication Register. Parents/Guardians may be asked to co-sign the Register upon collection of the child.

In the case of an emergency where medical assistance is required and the child's well-being is at risk, an ambulance will be called with the parent/guardian contacted immediately. Where attendance at hospital is required an educator will accompany the child and remain until a parent/guardian/emergency contact arrives. Please note: It's important that emergency details are kept up to date and correct at all times.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

In the event of an evacuation all children will be taken to the designated assembly area where they can be collected. During an emergency evacuation parents/guardians are NOT permitted to collect the child from the Children's Centre.

All educators and children participate in Centre wide evacuation drills on a quarterly basis.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE EXCLUSION

If any infectious diseases occur at the Service, the infected child/children will be **excluded** for the communicable period of the disease, or until they have satisfied conditions to return to the service. This exclusion is necessary for the protection of all children and to reduce the risk of further infection. If a parent/guardian reports that their child has contracted a contagious disease a notice will be placed at the door of the Children's Centre. Please see below the school exclusion table as per the Public Health & Wellbeing Regulations 2009:

Condition	Exclusion of cases	Exclusion of contacts
Amoebiasis (<i>Entamoeba histolytica</i>)	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
Campylobacter	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
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
Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased	Not excluded
Diarrhoea	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
Diphtheria	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received following at least two	Exclude family/household contacts until cleared to

	negative throat swabs, the first not less than 24 hours after finishing a course of antibiotics and the other 48 hours later	return by the Secretary
Hand, foot and mouth disease	Exclude until all blisters have dried	Not excluded
<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b (Hib)	Exclude until at least 4 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed	Not excluded
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
Hepatitis B	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
Hepatitis C	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
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 a dressing, where possible	Not excluded
Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
Impetigo	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing	Not excluded
Influenza and influenza-like illnesses	Exclude until well	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary
Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Secretary	Not excluded
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 their first contact with the first case, or received normal human immunoglobulin within 6 days of exposure, they may return to the facility
Meningitis (bacteria, other than meningococcal	Exclude until well	Not excluded

meningitis)		
Meningococcal infection*	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed	Not excluded if receiving carrier eradication therapy
Mumps*	Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner)	Not excluded
Pertussis (whooping cough)*	Exclude 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
Poliomyelitis*	Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Re-admit after receiving medical certificate of recovery	Not excluded
Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (head lice)	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced	Not excluded
Rubella* (German measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least 4 days after the onset of rash	Not excluded
<i>Salmonella</i> or <i>Shigella</i> infection	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
Severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is produced	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary
Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and feels well	Not excluded
Tuberculosis	Exclude until a medical certificate is received from the treating physician stating that the child is not considered to be infectious	Not excluded
Typhoid fever (including paratyphoid fever)	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Secretary	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary
Verotoxin-producing <i>E. coli</i> (VTEC)	Exclude if required by the Secretary and only for the period specified by the Secretary	Not excluded
Worms (intestinal)	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded

* Vaccine-preventable disease. Further information about infectious disease is available at www.ideas.health.vic.gov.au

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE

The Children's Centre aims to encourage personal development in each child through awareness of their feelings and their actions within a developmental framework. All children need a safe and secure environment, and positive interaction with adults and other children to develop into competent individuals. The Children's Centre is committed to ensuring that each child's experience is consistent and includes positive approaches to behaviour guidance.

In order for children to understand the limits of behavior and to feel secure, educators will use consistent strategies, enhancing self-esteem and encouraging self-control appropriate to the child's developmental stage. These guidelines apply to all educators working within the Children's Centre, including relief and casual staff and any students who may be placed in the program.

FEEDBACK

The Children's Centre value feedback in relation to the education and care provided and strongly encourage all families offer feedback to enable continual improvement within the programs and services.

Complaints, grievances and appeals

All participants, families and educators have the right to a harmonious and responsive program environment. Solutions are sought to all disputes, issues or concerns that affect the operation of the program in a fair and prompt manner.

- Parents/Guardians are provided with information about the service's philosophy, policies and procedures.
- All confidential discussions with parents/guardians will take place in a quiet area away from others.
- Parents/Guardians names remain confidential with the option of remaining anonymous in written information if required.