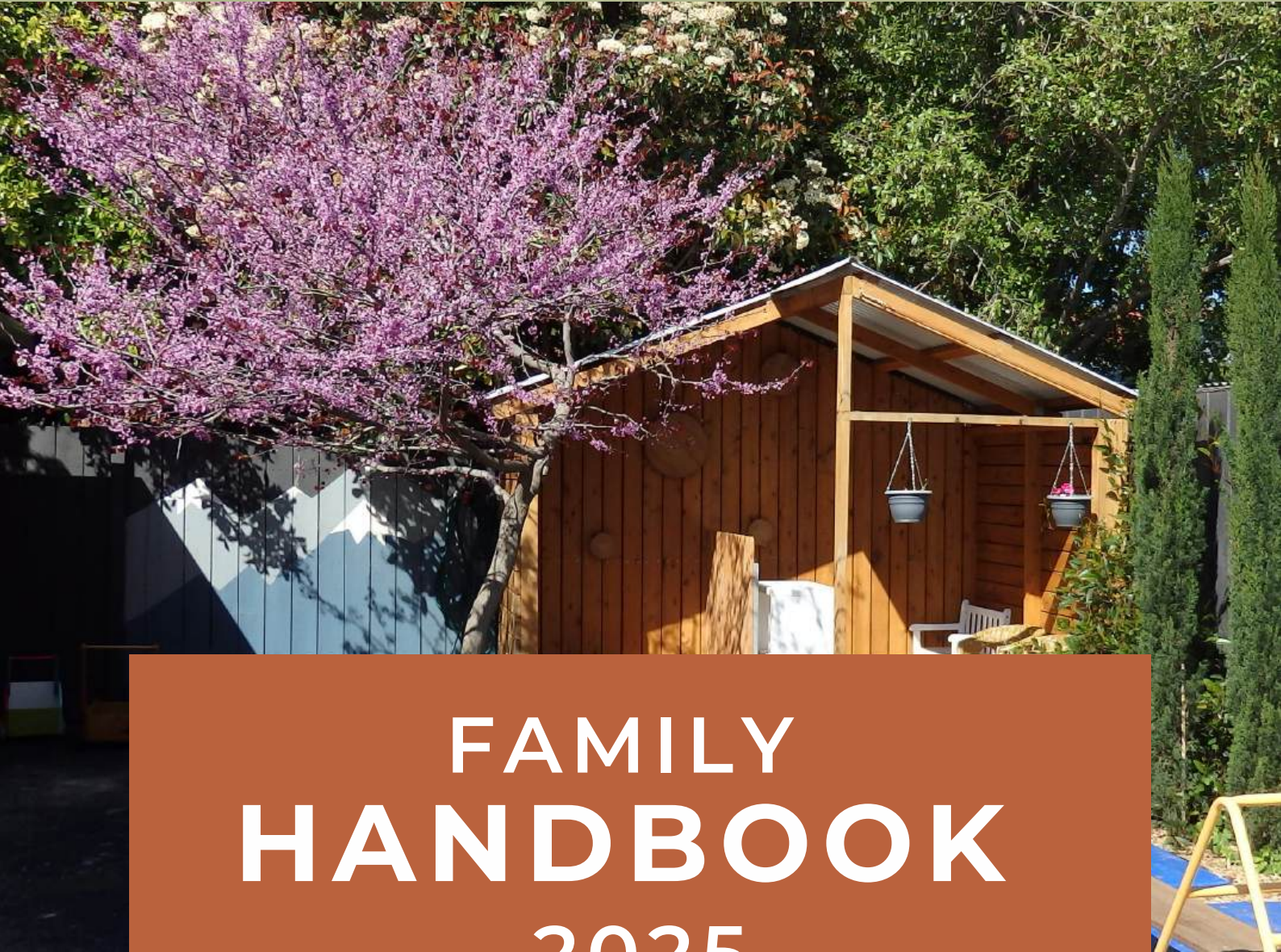




Raleigh Street Community Children's Centre



FAMILY HANDBOOK 2025

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Welcome to Raleigh Street Community Children's Centre (Raleigh St). Established in 1985, Raleigh St is a warm and caring space dedicated to quality education and care for up to 60 children a day across two sites between the ages of 4 months to 6 years.

We offer an Early Learning Program for 0-3's and 3 and 4-year-old Kindergarten Programs that are developed by our Educators and Kindergarten Teachers in accordance with the Early Learning Years Framework and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework.

We provide an inclusive environment where Educators and families are encouraged to work together in a genuine partnership focused on creating an open learning environment to ensure each child reaches their potential. Regardless of culture, gender, ability, or family structure, we ensure each child can participate in all aspects of our programs.

We celebrate our multicultural roots for the wealth of knowledge they bring to our community. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, identities and connections to community and Country are valued here.

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nations as the Traditional Custodians of this land and pay our respects to Elders past and present and recognise that sovereignty was never ceded.

WHO WE ARE



A statement of philosophy reflects the beliefs and values of those who are associated with the service. Together with the Approved Learning Framework it assists all staff in considering the service's approach to learning, development, and wellbeing. It should also underpin policies and procedures and guide all aspects of a service's operations and practices.

CHILDREN

We believe that childhood is a time of wonder, joy, exploration, and discovery. We respect and value children's rights and believe that children are capable and have their own voices and opinions to be heard, respected and acted on.

FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

We recognise the importance of families as their child's first and most influential teacher. We work in partnership with families to collaborate on decision making both for the management of Raleigh Street and in curriculum decisions to best support the learning and development of all children in our care now and in the future.

DIVERSITY IS OUR STRENGTH

We value and celebrate diversity to overcome stereotypes, promote inclusion and understanding, build cultural awareness, and encourage unity. We work to enable all children, staff, and families to feel confident and pride in their uniqueness by embedding culturally safe, body positive and responsive practices.

EMPOWERED TEAM

We are a committed team of early childhood professionals. We work collaboratively to create an inclusive environment where children can play, learn, and grow. We value professional growth and learning and come together to share our knowledge, ideas and commitment to continual improvement.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

We foster relationships that extend into the wider community to provide our children with a sense of place. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are embedded into our everyday practice and pedagogy this is to support children to understand the cultural context of our local area and , to understand and respect the First Nations People on the Land on which we play, learn, work, and grow.

HOLISTIC LEARNING AND CARE

We believe learning is a lifelong process that begins in early childhood. Children learn through play, and we nurture and guide their natural curiosity and wonder in the world around them through a flexible, emergent curriculum guided by a holistic approach that is meaningful and engaging for children. We value the importance of nutrition and support children to develop positive eating habits through a seasonal menu prepared with fresh locally sourced ingredients, growing fresh produce with children and offering cooking experiences.

SUSTAINABILITY

We commit to sustainable practices in our educational programs and operations across the centre. We empower our children to take positive steps to care for and protect the environment now and for future generations by role-modelling and teaching everyday sustainable practices.

WHO WE ARE

OUR COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

The protection of children is a shared responsibility between all Raleigh St Community Children's Centre employees, students, contractors, volunteers, and extended members of the RSCCC community. RSCCC recognises this responsibility and is committed to protecting all children and young people from harm or maltreatment and supporting them to access all opportunities available to them to develop, progress and live life free of trauma and abuse.

Our full commitment to child safety can be accessed via our website.

Raleigh St is committed to creating a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal children and families. We do this by actively creating opportunities for Aboriginal voices to be embedded into our everyday practice.

For our Public Statement of Commitment to Cultural Safety of Aboriginal Children, please visit our website.



OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES



EARLY CHILDHOOD AUSTRALIA CODE OF ETHICS

Designed especially for early childhood education and care environments and based on the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991) the Early Childhood Australia (ECA) Code of Ethics reflects current pedagogical research and practice, providing a framework for reflection about the ethical responsibilities of early childhood professionals who work with or on behalf of children and families in early childhood settings.

RALEIGH ST CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct establishes the standards for all employees, the Committee of Management, families, students, and visitors of Raleigh St. The values that underpin our conduct include equity, respect, integrity, and responsibility. Families are expected to always conduct themselves according to this Code of Conduct when on the Centre premises or when interacting with staff or families that attend at the Centre; please see Attachments for more details.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

REGULATORY AUTHORITIES

Raleigh St is regulated by the national body for early education and care – the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) and the Victorian Dept of Education and Training (DET).

NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK (NQF)

The goal of the National Quality Framework is to raise quality and drive continuous improvement in education and care services through:

- The Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations
- The National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care (‘National Quality Standard’)
- A national quality rating and assessment process
- A national body jointly governed by the Australian Government and state and territory governments- the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)—to oversee the system.

The National Quality Standard (NQS) sets the benchmark for the quality of education and care services.

Raleigh St is dedicated to exceeding the criteria outlined in the seven key quality areas:

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

Raleigh St has been rated as “Exceeding” in all 7 areas of the NQS each time it has been assessed. Our most recent assessment was in November 2023.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

The Committee of Management (CoM) is responsible for providing leadership and strategy to Raleigh St ensuring the current and future direction is consistent with our aims and the interests and needs of our community. .

The CoM consists of elected members The CoM is made up of family and community members who bring key skills, expertise, and guidance in the management of the service who are usually family members at Raleigh St, and requires people to fill the following executive roles:

- President
- Vice-President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Staff Liaison

In addition to these roles, general members are able to form sub-committees as required, e.g.

- Fundraising
- Grants
- Marketing
- Policies
- Strategic management
- Human Resources



LEARNING AT RALEIGH STREET



Rilly and Friends
Kerry Fitzhugh with Steve Parish

Very little sunlight reaches the forest floor.
It's a dark, damp place.
Rotting leaves and branches
and old stank tree trunks cover the ground.
It is quiet and still.
Only an occasional bird call breaks the silence.

Swiftly and silently the tree snake
glides towards the fallen log.
It is searching for something to eat -
a careless bird, a wandering frog ...
or a small stray lizard looking for some afternoon sunlight.

CHILDREN'S ROOMS

KIRRIP ROOM

With a dedicated age-appropriate yard, the Kirrip room comprises of 11 children a day between the ages of 6mths to 2.5 years and four full-time educators each day.

BULADU ROOM

10 children each day are educated in the Bulladu room aged between 2 and 3 years old. There are three early childhood educators in this room each day.

MURRUP ROOM

The Murrup Room caters for up to 17 children between the ages of 2.5 and 4 years old. With a 3-year-old kindergaren program. We have an ECT (during school term times) alongside two full-time educators in this room.

2A RALEIGH ST

2A Raleigh st is the site of our new 22 place 4-year-old kindergarten. We have an ECT (during school term times) alongside two educators at all times in this room.

** The ages and makeup of each room are subject to change year-by-year depending on the operational needs of the centre and community.*





At Raleigh St we value continuity of care, familiarity, and a sense of trust. Our Educators in our 0-3 rooms are all full-time permanent staff. With a mix of full and part time educators in our Kindergarten Programs. Our pool of regular trusted casual Educators are used to cover the permanent staff's leave

We consider the qualifications, skills, knowledge, and personal attributes of each team member to build a positive culture and professional learning community.

We are an equal opportunity employer and value the diverse, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds of our Educators.

All staff are encouraged and supported to attend professional training and development to further their knowledge and skills. All staff hold valid Working with Children Checks or Victorian Teachers Registration, current ACECQA approved First Aid, Emergency Asthma and Anaphylaxis training, Child Protection/Mandatory Reporting training, Safe Food Handling training, and relevant OHS training.



The educational program at Raleigh Street includes a variety of open-ended, play-based experiences that will encourage your child to explore, investigate, and engage in a rich learning environment.

We understand that every child develops and learns in unique ways and has unique learning dispositions, strengths, abilities and interests. The learning environment is designed to inspire curiosity and engage with the natural world, with a meaningful balance of child-led learning and intentional teaching. We value our community partnerships and regular outings and the educational outcomes these experiences provide. These experiences are implemented across the service where there can be rich connection by children to content that is age and developmentally appropriate.

Days of cultural, educational and environmental significance are acknowledged and celebrated in a manner that is respectful and inclusive of our diverse community, sustainable practices and our children's varying ages and development. We apply a child centred lens to calendar events, ensuring that days of significance are led by children and driven by process rather than product.

All educators take an active role in developing, creating and documenting the educational program and children's learning. Families are encouraged to contribute to, and share feedback on, the educational program.

At Raleigh St we provide a wide variety of seasonal vegetables, grains, proteins, fruits, and dairy sources. We use low salt and sugar options and follow the Victorian Healthy Eating guidelines for children in long day care.

Our meals are freshly prepared onsite each day by our catering officer. The menus follow a rotating four-week Spring/Summer or Autumn/Winter plan. All dietary requirements are catered for.

Please ensure your child's specific needs are added to their enrolment record in Xap.

Families are asked to provide a piece of fruit to share at morning tea. Water is always available. Cows/ soy/rice/oat milk is offered at both morning and afternoon tea.

Raleigh St will not accept any food brought from home other than uncut fruit. If your child is eating when you arrive at Raleigh St, we kindly ask the food to be consumed before entering the building.

For those enrolled in our sessional kindergarten, your child will need clearly named, lunch box containing lunch and afternoon tea. Please ensure your child has a healthy food choice in their lunch box. Please avoid processed and packaged foods (no chocolate or 'junk' foods). We have children with serious allergies to nuts. Please DO NOT provide nut products (including peanut butter and nutella spread).

BIRTHDAY CAKES

Birthday cakes are available to celebrate your child's special day. We offer a choice of 4 cakes: berry-coconut; chocolate; apple; banana or a fresh watermelon and fruit salad cake (summer only). All cakes are made in house. No cakes from home will be accepted.

A small cake fee is payable when submitting your order form and goes towards fundraising projects. Birthday cake request forms are available near the sign in iPad in the foyer – a minimum of two working days' notice is appreciated.

**STARTING AT
RALEIGH ST**



STARTING AT RALEIGH ST

ORIENTATION & STARTING CARE

Introducing your child to care can be an emotional time. It is fair to expect some tearful goodbyes in the early days; however, there are many ways to assist your child with this transition.

In the lead up to commencing care, families and their child will be invited to visit the service for an orientation visit to ensure a successful transition from home to care, this will be organised at a time that is agreeable to you and the room. All families and children are encouraged to attend orientation prior to the child's first day. Please note, a parent is required to stay on premises during orientation visits.

Educators will work with you to help your child settle confidently and happily into care. All children need a chance to settle in as they all react differently to new situations. It is important when the time comes to say "goodbye" that you do so promptly and confidently. Reassure your children that you will return - never slip away without saying goodbye. When you drop your child off, do it in a way that your child can become familiar with.

Please feel free to phone or email us anytime during the day to check on your child's progress.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Each day, you must sign your child in upon arrival and sign out upon departure using the tablet in the foyer. We are required by legislation to always maintain our attendance records.

Our staff have a duty of care to your child and will only allow your child to be released into the care of either a parent, guardian or an authorised nominee as listed on your child's enrolment record.

If your child needs to be collected by another person for any reason, an authority to collect must be provided in writing (email) to the Director. Our staff will ask to view photo identification of the adult collecting your child from care to confirm their identity.

If someone will be collecting your child on your behalf regularly, you can add them as a nominee (persons with authority to collect your child) into Xap and this will act to let staff know that you authorise alternative pick-up arrangements.

FEE STRUCTURE

Please refer to our Fee's policy for details of our current daily fee.

The Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is the main way the Government assists families with their childcare fees. The subsidy is paid to childcare providers as a co-payment to reduce the fees charged to families. It is the families' responsibility to apply for CCS and keep all details up to date with Centrelink to continue to be eligible for this co-payment.

FEE PAYMENT

Fees will be invoiced to families directly on a fortnightly basis and must be paid by direct debit on the date indicated on the invoice. It is the responsibility of the nominated account holder to ensure that funds are available in the nominated direct debit account as an \$8.80 dishonour fee is incurred otherwise.

Fees are payable for booked care which includes days when:

- A child is absent from Raleigh St
- A child is sick and absent
- A child is on holidays
- Public holidays

Families having trouble paying fees are requested to contact the Director who will arrange a suitable alternative payment plan. Any family that falls more than 2 weeks in arrears in their account may be requested to cease their child's enrolment and a debt recovery service may be engaged.

Raleigh St's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy will always be complied with in relation to a family's financial/personal circumstances.

STARTING AT RALEIGH ST

MANAGING CHILDREN'S ILLNESS

Children will need to stay away from Raleigh St if they are unwell or have a contagious illness/infectious disease and can only return to the service if they are completely well. The service will not accept a child into care if they are unwell and unable to fully participate in the program. All families will be notified if there has been an infectious disease notification within the service. If your child has been suffering from diarrhoea and/or vomiting or other contagious illness/ infectious disease, they are required to stay away for at least 24 hours after the symptoms have ceased. The service does not accept paracetamol / ibuprofen for children who have been unwell.

Children may not remain at the Raleigh St if they:

- Have had more than two episodes of diarrhoea and/or vomiting within the 24-hour period.
- Require dedicated one-to-one attention or cannot fully participate in the program due to illness.
- Have an unexplained rash that impacts the health and wellbeing of themselves and others.
- Have a high temperature/fever that is continuous and cannot be brought down (other signs of fever include sweating/chills/shivering).
- Cold or flu like symptoms (persistent runny nose, sore throat, coughing, sneezing, lethargy).
- Any other suspected illness/infectious disease.

Children who become ill while at Raleigh St

If your child is unwell while at the service, you will be contacted to collect them as soon as possible. Families will be asked to collect their child as soon as practical or arrange for an authorised nominee to collect. If there is no one able to collect the child within this time the child's condition will be monitored and if worsens an ambulance will be called. An illness record will be completed when children are collected due to illness.

MANAGING CHILDREN'S ILLNESS

Children returning to the Centre after illness:

- May return if they have not had an episode of vomiting/diarrhoea for a minimum of 24 hours.
- Suspected symptoms have lessened, and child appears to be themselves.
- Child has not had Paracetamol/Ibuprofen before arrival. The service does not accept Paracetamol/Ibuprofen for children who have been unwell.
- Families may need to provide a medical certificate for their child to return to the service if they have been unwell.

Please refer to our Dealing with Illness and Infectious Diseases policy for further information. All service policies are available on our website.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

It is vital that we are aware of any medical conditions including diabetes, epilepsy, allergies, food intolerance, eczema, asthma, and/or risks of anaphylaxis of your child including any potential triggers.

Raleigh St requires a Medical Management Plan or Asthma/Anaphylaxis Action Plan to be completed and signed by a Doctor to assist in managing your child's needs. This needs to be provided prior to your child's commencement at Raleigh St, and reviewed on a yearly basis.

In consultation with your child's Educators, you will be asked to develop a Risk Minimisation Plan to assist all Educators with understanding the condition and how to minimise the risks associated.

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of your child, please update your child's Medical Management Plan/Action Plan every 12 months.

STARTING AT RALEIGH ST

SUN SMART

Raleigh St has developed a SunSmart policy to ensure all children in attendance are protected from the harmful ultraviolet radiation rays of the sun.

SPF 30+, broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen will be provided by Raleigh St for all children and staff. If children are known to suffer skin reactions to sunscreen, families are asked to provide sunscreen that is appropriate for their child. Sunscreen provided by families must be clearly labelled with the child's name.

All children are required to wear hats to protect their face, neck, and ears whenever they are outside. We prefer children wear legionnaire or broadbrimmed hats. Children (and staff) are to wear Sun Safe clothing which means shoulders are fully covered and hats are worn during outdoor play.

FAMILY PARTICIPATION

Contribution and participation of families plays a crucial role in the success of Raleigh St. Family participation not only helps to maintain a community environment, but also assists in reducing centre costs.

To encourage family participation, Raleigh St has an annual participation payment of \$180 per family. Each family will be required to contribute a minimum of 9 hours of time to Raleigh St during the year (4.5 hrs if a single parent/guardian family).

If a family does not meet the minimum 9-hour requirement, they will be billed the sum of the participation payment at the end of the year. The list of tasks will range from jobs such as general centre maintenance, sewing, mending equipment, administration jobs, organising social events, joining the committee or a subcommittee or running an activity for the children such as music, craft, or language. You will be able to choose which tasks you undertake and when you do them. In addition to this, there will be at least three working bees per year, each being two hours long.

As an example, if two family members attend one working bee, this will equate to four hours of participation for that family.

Do we need to let the service know if my child will be absent from care?

We appreciate families letting us know that they will be absent from the service. It helps us to keep track of our daily numbers. Families can mark their child absent in advance, or on the day, via the XAP Smile parent app

Can we request additional days of care?

Yes, families can request both casual and permanent days once enrolled. Permanent day requests are logged on our internal waitlist and allocated to current families when permanent vacancies become available. Casual booking requests can be made for any extra days you may need every now and then. Casual booking requests are subject to available places should families be away unwell or on holidays. We may know casual vacancies in advance and be able to book you at first instance. Requests remain pending until we can determine if a place is available. Permanent and casual requests are allocated to families based on their date of request and the service will follow this priority of access to fill all vacancies.

How Can I Change or Cancel My Enrolment?

We require four (4) weeks notice for any cancellation of an enrolment and four (4) weeks notice for changes to enrolments in writing. This is required to cover the time it may take us to fill a vacant position.

When will our fees be charged?

Fees are charged fortnightly. This will allow us to ensure that Centrelink entitlements are calculated more accurately and will ensure your statements accurately reflect your current fee balance.

Are half day fees and day swaps available?

Due to the high demand for childcare places, we only offer full day fees. Day swaps are not permitted. Families can request casual days of care week to week however these days will be an additional charge on their account.

How does Orientation work? Do I need to stay on-site for orientation?

All families are required to have at least one orientation session prior to the child's first day. This is usually about an hour and you are required to stay on-site. Following this orientations may look different for each child based on age and development. This will be decided on an individual basis in consultation between room educators and families.

OPERATIONAL DETAILS

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Open Monday - Friday 7:30am - 6:00pm

Open 49 weeks of the year

Closed all public holidays

Closed first and last days of the year for staff set up and pack up days (No Fees)

Closed for one full professional development day each year (No Fees)

CONTACT DETAILS

Postal Address

28 Raleigh Street, Thornbury. VIC 3071

Phone

03 9484 2440

Website

<http://raleighst.org>

Director - director@raleighst.org

03 9957 8817

Assistant Director/Ed Leader - assistantdirector@raleighst.org

03 9957 8817

Kirrip Room - kirrip@raleighst.org

03 9957 8818

Buladu Room - buladu@raleighst.org

03 9957 8819

Murrup Room - murrup@raleighst.org

03 9957 8820

Kindergarten at 2A Raleigh St - 2a@raleighst.org

0494 345 718

Catering Officer - cateringofficer@raleighst.org