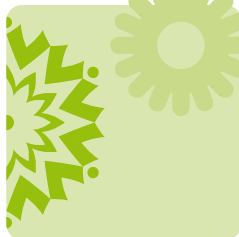
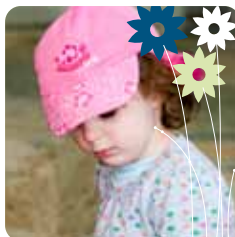




Samaritans

*Compassion Integrity Justice*

## Information booklet



Welcome to *Samaritans Early Learning Centres*

We hope you and your children have a long and enjoyable association with the centre.

**Samaritans Early Learning Centre**

11 Lawson Avenue Woodberry NSW 2322

Telephone: 02 49 140401

[woodberry@samaritans.org.au](mailto:woodberry@samaritans.org.au)

**Samaritans Early Learning Centre**

41 Darby Street, Newcastle NSW 2300

Telephone: 02 49 292093

[selc@samaritans.org.au](mailto:selc@samaritans.org.au)



We are a non-profit community based child care service, sponsored and managed by the *Samaritans Foundation*, Anglican Diocese of Newcastle. We provide high quality care for children aged from 6 weeks to 5 years. We are opened 49 weeks a year, closing for 3 weeks at Christmas.



**Samaritans**

*Compassion Integrity Justice*

## The Samaritans Foundation Mission

- Mission:** We seek to provide unconditional support to people in need and to promote social and economic policies that alleviate human suffering.
- Vision:** For communities where there is love, peace, justice, reconciliation and dignity for all people, where there is care for the vulnerable and their environment and where each individual has the opportunity to contribute and participate fully in community life.
- Core Values:** *Compassion, Integrity, Justice*
- Philosophy:** The Samaritans Foundation believes that people presently experiencing disadvantage have the right, equally with others, to fully participate in and contribute to community life. Samaritans seeks to express care to all people through promoting acceptance, justice, reconciliation, peace and dignity for all.



## SELC Newcastle

We are licensed to care for 53 children per day, which includes the following:

The centre has 3 playrooms:

0 - 2 years are cared for in the Wattle Room. In this room we have 10 children.

2 - 3 years are cared for in the Bottlebrush Room. In this room we have 16 children.

3 – 5 years are cared for in the Gumnut Room. In this we room we have 27 children.

We are open for 49 weeks per year Monday to Friday from 7.45 am to 6.00 pm.

## SELC Woodberry

We are licensed to care for 30 children per day, which includes the following:

0 – 3 years are cared for in the Jarjums Room.

3 – 5 years are cared for in the Booris Room.

We are open for 49 weeks per year, Monday to Friday. Our operating hours are from 8.30 am to 4.30 pm.

At each of our centres we follow a daily routine designed to best meet the needs of the children. We “age” group the children because we believe it allows for a much more flexible environment for the older children, and a safer environment for the younger children. The children have an opportunity to play together in the mornings and afternoons.

## The Staff

The Education and Care Services National Regulations specify a minimum number of staff that must be in the centre each day.

### The ratios they require are:

- One adult to every 4 children aged 0 to 2 years,
- One adult to every 8 children aged 2 to 3 years,
- One adult to every 10 children aged 3 to 5 years.

We are also required to have appropriate qualified staff that has been trained in Early Childhood Education. Our staff members attend training throughout the year to keep abreast with current trends and to refresh skills.

## National Quality Framework

In 2009 the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to a national quality agenda for early childhood education. The Agenda is the name given to the reforms designed to improve the quality of early education and care services. It incorporates the National Quality Standard including the Early Years learning Framework; a new rating system and associated regulatory system.

### The National Quality Standard:

The National Quality Standard sets a new national benchmark for the quality of education and care services. The National Quality Standard is divided into seven 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. Leadership and service management.

## The Daily Programme

One of the ways in which we provide for the care and education of the children is through our daily programme. The programme outlines the activities that the children will be involved in during the day, and it is developed as a result of observations of individual children and a daily evaluation of the indoor and outdoor areas. The children are free to choose from the range of experiences presented each day and are encouraged to follow their own interests. Materials and experiences that are provided are mostly open ended, enabling children to develop creativity and problem solving skills and to construct their own knowledge.

Programmes are reflective of staff training and current trends in Early Childhood Education. We follow the Early Years Learning Framework. This framework embraces an emerging curriculum where we plan for children's individual strengths and interests.

Observations of children are organised into each child's portfolio and this is available to families throughout the year. We value your input into our programme and you are asked to contribute in the development, implementation and evaluation of the programme. This can be done by writing on the daily programme, talking to the room leader in casual conversation or attending a parent meeting.

During the course of the day, children's identified goals are evaluated and the programme is adjusted to reflect new and advanced developmental levels. Staff use these observations to incorporate children's ideas into the programme. This is done throughout the day and documented on the daily programme which is displayed in each of the play rooms.

If you have any concerns about the development or progress of your child, you can make an appointment to discuss these concerns with your child's teachers at a mutually convenient time.

## What to Bring

**Bottles:** Families are asked to supply bottles for their babies. These can be either formula or breast milk. (Tins of formula can be left at the centre if this is easier for families).

The centre provides cow's milk, soy milk and water for all children.

**Nappies:** Please provide the centre with 6 nappies daily. These can be either cloth or disposable. We ask that you provide more than, enough in case of extra changes. For families using cloth nappies, the Health department recommends that the child's pilchers are changed every time the nappy is changed so you must supply a clean set for each nappy change (i.e. at least 6 pairs of pilchers).

**Comforters:** Please bring in your child's special toy or comforter every day. All items need to be clearly labelled.

### All Children

1. A bag with at least two extra changes of clothes. Please clearly label all items of clothing, shoes and bags.
2. A legionnaire style hat clearly labelled with your child's name.
3. Sheets. We ask that you supply a single bed sheet for your child. These can stay at the centre for the week and be taken home on the last day of attendance for washing.

It is recommended not to send toys as children become upset if they are lost or broken.



## Settling Children into the Centre

Families are encouraged to bring their child to the centre before their first day, so that the child can see the centre and familiarise themselves with their new surroundings. Settling into a new situation takes time and there will be a period of adjustment for both children and families. The amount of time needed to settle children into the centre depends on many factors including; the age of the child, their experiences of being in care, their temperament, the reactions of their families and so on. Visiting also provides the families with an opportunity to meet the staff who will be caring for their child and to share information about the child.

Families are welcome to ring and check on their child throughout the day at any time.



## Nutrition and Meals

The Centre provides children with 50% of their dietary needs. We serve morning tea, afternoon tea, lunch and dessert. The Weekly Menu is displayed in the foyer and all meals are prepared in our kitchen by a qualified cook.

We believe it is important to celebrate special occasions. When your child is having a birthday they can celebrate with us by having an ice cream cake. You may order your child's ice cream cake from the office, please give at least a week's notice.

If your child has an allergy, please provide us with as much information as possible and provide a letter from your doctor clearly stating your child's allergy and the first aid management in the form of an Allergy Emergency Medical Plan.

The Centre also recognises that there are different cultural and religious backgrounds that also play a significant role in diet. We therefore encourage families to notify us in writing of any specific instructions in this regard. This can be recorded on our "Special Dietary Requirement Form" located in the office.

Families are encouraged to provide the centre with recipes of favourite dishes that may be shared with all.

## Arrival and Departure

On arrival at the Centre everybody is required to wash their hands before entering the Children's rooms. By doing this each morning it can assist in prevention of cross infection of germs entering the Children's rooms, helping to keep your children healthy.

It is a legal requirement that all families/caregivers sign their children in and out on the time sheets provided, these are located in the room with your child.

Children will only be permitted to leave the centre with either of their natural parents or guardian, or any other person specified on the child's enrolment form.

People collecting a child for the first time will be required to show photo identification before they can take the child. If you need to arrange for a person not on the enrolment form to collect your child, then you can ring, fax or email the centre during the day.

By law, we are not empowered to refuse access to a child by his/her natural parent unless we have written proof of a custody order advising otherwise. Please let the Authorised Supervisor know if there are likely to be any problems.



## Fees

**SELC/Newcastle:** The current daily fee is \$80.00.  
This is inclusive of all meals.

**SELC/Woodberry:** The current daily fee is \$63.00.  
This is inclusive of all meals.

You may be eligible to claim Child Care Benefit and or Child Care Rebate to assist with the cost of child care. Further information on Child Care Benefit is provided below.

**FULL FEES are payable for ALL absences (e.g. illness, holidays)  
We Do NOT Charge For Public Holidays.**

## Other Costs

**A) Annual Administration Fee:** \$35.00 per child enrolled. This is payable when your child begins care and at the start of every following year.

**B) Bed Sheet Fee:** Infants only - \$10 per day per year (i.e. if your child comes 5 days per week it will cost \$50 for the year).

**C) Late Fee:** \$10.00 for every 5 minutes a child is collected after closing, (ie: if you are 15 minutes late it will cost \$30.00).

**Payment of Fees:** We have partnered with EziDebit to provide a fully compliant direct debit service to our families. This is one of the safest ways to pay your bills. EziDebit is licensed by the Australian Securities Investment Commission (ASIC) as an Australian Financial Services licensee (AFSL No: 315388). EziDebit has service sponsorship agreements with Commonwealth, Westpac & Suncorp banks for its provision of direct debit, merchant and Bpay services. EziDebit has membership of the Australian Processing & Clearing Association (APCA) and complies with Bulk Electronic Clearing System (BECS) rules and regulations. EziDebit is fully compliant, incorporating the latest technology in data storage and encryption.



Statements are produced fortnightly and are placed in your parent files. Fees are to be paid every fortnight using the EziDebit system. Families are asked to check these files and collect any information which has been placed inside each visit.

Samaritans has a very strict policy regarding overdue fees. If you are having difficulty paying your fees please see the Authorised Supervisor.

## Child Care Benefit CCB

### Applying for Benefit

Child Care Benefit is provided by the Federal Government to help families with the cost of care. An income and assets test is conducted by the Family Assistance Office to assess a family's entitlement. Families should contact the Family Assistance Office on 13 61 50 to discuss their Child Care Benefit entitlements. In order to receive your entitlements we ask that you:

1. Provide our Service with your Customer Reference Number and copy of current CCB notice.
2. Provide our service with the primary claiming parent's Date of Birth.

We suggest that this is completed prior to commencement.

### Child Care Benefit and Immunisation

Child Care Benefit is only payable if your child is appropriately immunised or you have lodged objection forms with the Health Commission/Centrelink. If immunisations fall behind, your CCB may be cancelled. Contact Family Assistance Office immediately if you receive notice your CCB has been cancelled and you are still in care.

## Other Benefits

The Family Assistance Office provides a range of benefits that assist families with the cost of child care.

**These include:** Child Care Rebate, Special Child Care Benefit, Grandparent Child Care Benefit and Jobs Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance.

If you would like further information on these services or to discuss your personal circumstances please contact the Family Assistance Office on 13 61 50 or visit [www.familyassist.gov.au](http://www.familyassist.gov.au).

## Withdrawal from the Centre

When a child is to be withdrawn from care we require two weeks' notice in writing. This notice is required in order to provide the centre with time to fill the vacancy. Please note that if the child does not attend the centre during this period the family is not entitled to any Child Care Benefit reductions and must pay full fees.

If you wish to cancel one or more of your days, but have your child continue to attend the centre on other days, we ask that you give us two weeks' notice in writing of your intention to change your child's enrolment. If you have any queries about this, please see the office or the Authorised Supervisor.

## Care types SELC/Newcastle

**Our 53 child care places consist of the following types of care:**

28 places per day for Federally Funded Occasional Care places.

25 places per day for Long Day Care.

Including five places per day for Long Day Care, Work Based Care (these places are set aside for employees of Newcastle City Council and Samaritans Employees).

## types of Care

**Long Day Care:** Long day care provides quality all-day 5 days per week or part there of and is for the care of children of working families and the general community. (Child Care Services Handbook 2008/09).

**Occasional Care:** Occasional Care supports families in providing flexible care for children. Bookings can be made on a regular or irregular basis. Occasional care can only be used a maximum of four days per week, nine hours a day for those that are eligible for child care benefit.

Regular bookings ensure that your child's position in the centre is given a priority at all times. This type of booking will require families to re-book every four weeks. This can be done verbally either to the administration assistant or the Authorised Supervisor.

Please note that these bookings are also subject to fee payment on periods of absence and notice of two weeks in writing if you do not require care.

Irregular bookings can be made four weeks in advance and are available to meet the needs of the families. These bookings must be cancelled in advance (i.e. by 9am of the day before the booking) or fees will be charged.

Permanent care users can make occasional care bookings whenever they wish and occasional care users are eligible to become permanent care users if they are on the waiting list and are next in line for a permanent position.

## Smoking and Alcohol

In accordance with Education and Care Services National Regulations the Centre is a smoking and alcohol free zone at all times. Under no circumstance are families or staff allowed to smoke or consume alcohol.

## Positive Guidance

The behaviour management techniques utilised in our Early Learning Centre help children to develop safe and appropriate ways of interacting with others and with the environment. The strategies used promote each child's ability to self-regulate their behaviour as they develop, leading to increased self discipline. Children are presented with positive models of acceptable behaviour. We believe that it is important to provide a peaceful and co-operative environment in which the children can grow and learn, and we attempt to demonstrate this in our actions, voices and the way we treat each other. Young children learn by experimenting, testing limits and experiencing the consequences of their behaviour. By setting and enforcing limits, staff are assisting children to develop self control and respecting the rights of others. Redirection and constructive solutions are the techniques used by staff. Staff will build on the positive, providing attention and encouragement when positive interactions are taking place.

## Safety and Emergency Procedures

Emergency evacuations are practised with the children and staff four times a year. Evacuations may be necessary in the event of a fire, chemical spill, bomb scare, earthquake, gas leak, siege or other emergency. Emergency procedures are displayed in all the play rooms.

## Confidentiality

All information that is shared between families and staff is considered confidential and will not be released to any other parties as per Education and Care Services National Regulations and Samaritans Policy. All written documentation will be stored in a locked cupboard that will only be accessible to staff.

## Excursions

All excursions will be conducted using the Education and Care Services National Regulation guidelines as the minimum standards to be maintained at all times. Families are welcomed and encouraged to attend excursions. For more information about excursions please see our Excursion Policy.

## Parking SFLC Newcastle

Our inner city location means we have the disadvantage of limited parking available near the centre. There are four 15-minute parking spaces available in front of the building in Darby Street and three 15 minute parking spaces in front of the buildings next to us, (only available until 9am each day).

Under no circumstances are families allowed to park in the DRIVEWAY at the side of the building. This lane is used as a walk-way by families dropping off and collecting their children and children's lives could be endangered if families use this area for parking.

## Accident Forms

If your child sustains an injury during the day and first aid is given, the staff member is required to fill in an accident form. If first aid is not given, the staff member is also required to fill out an incident form.

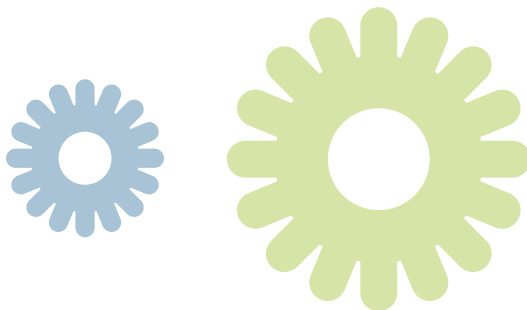
The accident and incident forms are kept in a folder in each playroom and families must read and sign the form when they collect their child. By law we must keep these forms for 24 years. Staff will write "Please see staff", next to the child's name on the sign in/out sheets if an accident or incident form has been filled out. When you see this written next to your child's name, please speak to a staff member, who will assist you by getting the form from the appropriate folder, and asking you to read and sign it before you leave the centre. In line with Regulations, a photocopy will be attached for you to take home.

If a child sustains a serious injury while at the centre, the families will be contacted immediately and asked to come and collect their child. If there is a very serious injury and an ambulance is called, the families will be contacted immediately to inform them what is happening.

## Child Protection

Children and young people have a right to grow up in healthy communities, which offer safety from abuse, protection from harm, security of accommodation and stability of care.

We are mandatory reporters and have a responsibility to promote safety, welfare and wellbeing of every child and young person having contact with the organisation and to work in a co-ordinated and co-operative manner to ensure protection and timely intervention where children and young people are at risk of harm.



## Family Participation

Family participation in the running of a child care centre is vitally important if we are to truly meet the needs of our families and the local community. Every family will want to participate in a different way, and we have a number of ways for families to contribute, so that we can hopefully receive some input from every family during the year.

Among the ways we encourage input from families are:

- we encourage staff to talk to families at arrival and departure times so that they can get a sense of how the families are feeling and then bring any serious issues to their room Supervisor or the Authorised Supervisor;
- we have feedback forms available in the foyer for families to fill out whenever they wish;
- We encourage families to ring during the day if they wish to discuss any problems or check on their child.

Parent meetings are held on a regular basis throughout the year and all families are welcome to attend these meetings. The dates for the meetings are advertised through the monthly newsletter and there is also a reminder and an agenda placed on the noticeboard in the foyer. Families can place items on the agenda if they wish. The meetings provide families with an opportunity to find out more about what is happening in the centre, to air any general grievances/ concerns that they may have, to contribute to the development of policies and procedures and to assist in the establishment of long term goals.

## Sun Protection

We recognise the importance of ensuring that staff and children are protected throughout the year from skin damage caused by the sun's harmful radiation. We ask that children and staff wear sun protective hats and clothing that covers the shoulders e.g. T shirts not singlets. Families are asked to provide a broad brimmed or legionnaire style hat for their child to wear each day. In the summer months, we ask that families apply sunscreen to their child in the morning and in the winter months, staff will apply sunscreen to children before going outside. The staff will re-apply sunscreen before the commencement of afternoon play.

## Grievance Procedures-Complaints

Families who are unhappy about any aspect of the care their child is receiving, or has received while at the centre, are asked to discuss their concerns with the Nominated Supervisor. If they still feel the matter has not been resolved, then they should take the matter to the Centre's Area Coordinator Children's Services. The telephone number at Samaritans is [4960 7100](tel:49607100).

If you are still concerned you can contact the Central Licensing & Regulatory Support on [1800 619 113](tel:1800619113).

We would ask you to raise any concerns you may have sooner rather than later, because unresolved issues can quickly get out of hand.

## Children's Health

When children who have not been in group care before start attending a child care centre, it is quite normal for them to experience more minor illnesses than they have previously, particularly runny noses, coughs and colds. We have many practices and procedures in place, which are aimed at minimising the chances of children cross infecting each other. However, there is very little that can be done about the transmission of airborne diseases.

Families are asked not to send a sick child to the centre as they can become quite distressed and run the risk of infecting other children and the staff.

The Nominated Supervisor and the Room Leader are authorised to refuse a child's admission to the centre if they feel it is in the best interests of the child and the centre.

(A child starting a course of antibiotics must be kept at home for at least 24 hours from the start of the first day of the course).

### Medication will only be given under the following circumstances:

1. A medication form (please see the Medication Folder in each playroom) must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian for all medication. The staff member receiving the medication will also sign the medication form once they have checked the details. The staff member giving the medication to the child will also sign the form after the medication has been administered. A staff member who witnesses the dose will also sign the medication form.
2. Prescribed medication will ONLY be given if it is in its original container with the label clearly showing the child's name, the name of the medication, the administration instructions and the expiry date.

3. Children on long-term medication e.g. asthma medication, must have a letter and an Action Plan from their doctor stating the reasons for the medication. These must be updated every 12 months for staff to continue giving the medication. In addition, a medication form must be filled out every day.
4. Over the counter medication such as cough and cold mixtures will only be administered by staff if, the medication is accompanied by a letter from the Doctor authorising it. Medication will be given for two days only. Medication forms must be filled in for the administration of these medicines.
5. Paracetamol may be given if we have authorisation from a Doctor. However, only one dose of paracetamol will be administered during the course of the child's day and it will only be given for one day. Under no circumstance will paracetamol be administered without written consent by a family member and Doctor.
6. Herbal medications will only be given if they are accompanied by a letter from a person qualified to administer such medications. This letter must state the name of the child, the reason for the medication and the dosage. The name of the medication and the dosage must also appear on the bottle.
7. Medications must be handed to a staff member after completing a medication form, and under no circumstances is medication to be left in a child's bag or locker. Staff will place medication in the refrigerator or medicine container.

If a child becomes ill whilst at the centre, we will endeavour to contact you or your emergency contact people. In the event that your child has a temperature we will endeavour to bring the temperature under control through sponging and giving water. We will NOT administer paracetamol as we have been informed that this can mask serious illness. You will be contacted immediately to collect your child.

## Immunisations

We strongly advise and recommend that your child be fully immunised in accordance with the current Australian Standard Vaccinations Schedule. Immunisation significantly reduces the risk and complication associated with vaccine preventable diseases. Information on immunisation is available at the centre.

## Policies

The Centre has a policy manual which is available for you to read at any time. A copy of this manual is available in any language. Please see staff for assistance.







Thank you for choosing  
*Samaritans Children's Services*

We hope you and your children have a long and enjoyable association with the centre.