Samaritans Early Learning Centres are located at:

**Newcastle**
41 Darby Street, Newcastle NSW 2300
Ph: 02 49 292093 | Email: selc@samaritans.org.au

**Woodberry**
11 Lawson Avenue Woodberry NSW 2322
Ph: 02 49 140401 | Email: woodberry@samaritans.org.au

Welcome to the Samaritans Early Learning Centres Newcastle and Woodberry.

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 Early Learning Centres

Samaritans offers services in the Central Coast, Newcastle, Hunter, Mid-North Coast and Central Western regions of NSW. Over 100 services support children, youth, people living with a disability or with mental health concerns, parents, families and those who are homeless throughout these communities. Samaritans encourages people to have a voice and be offered choice as we recognise all people are valued members of their community. Samaritans also engages in advocacy to promote justice, reconciliation, peace and dignity for all in our community no matter what their circumstance.

MISSION
We seek to provide unconditional support to people in their needs and to promote just social and economic policies.

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.

VALUES
Compassion, Integrity, Justice

Samaritans is a:
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 15 children.
• 3 – 5 years are cared for in the Gumnut Room. In this room we have 28 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 8.00 am to 5.30 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 throughout the day.

Meet Our Team
At Samaritans Early Learning Centres we have dedicated and passionate teams of Early Childhood Educators. At our centres we employ a range of qualified educators including:
• Early Childhood Teachers who have completed a 4-year Bachelor Degree through University
• Diploma Educators who have completed a 2-year Diploma
• Certificate Level 3 Educators who have completed a course through TAFE.
Our team of educators provide high quality educational and care to the children and their families. This is achieved through our daily program and through our interactions and relationships with our families and children. Our educators maintain a high level of professionalism and adhere to the Education and Care Service National Regulations 2012; the Education and Care Service National Law Act 2010 and the Samaritans Policies and Procedures.

Our educators are continually updating their knowledge and learning new skills to keep abreast of current information and best practice.

**National Quality Framework**

The National Quality Framework (NQF) provides a national approach to regulation, assessment and quality improvement for early childhood education and care across Australia. The NQF includes:

1. The national Regulations and The National Law Act
2. The National Quality Standards including the assessment and rating process
3. The National Learning Frameworks.

At Samaritans Early learning Centres we are committed to providing a high level of education and care to our children. Research studies have proven that the quality education and care in the early years leads to better outcomes for children later in life.

The National Quality Standards consists of 7 areas:

1. Educational programs and practice
2. Children’s health and safety
3. The Physical environment
4. Staffing Arrangements
5. Relationships with Children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Governance and leadership.
The Daily Program
The daily program outlines the experiences that the children will be involved in during the day and it is developed as a result of observations of individual children and is based on their interests and their strengths.

Our centres follow the approved learning framework: The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). The Learning Framework consists of the following elements:

1. Belonging; Being and Becoming
2. Principles and Practices
3. Learning Outcomes

Your child’s learning will be evaluated against these elements. The EYLF is embedded in all aspects of our program. The EYLF is used to guide curriculum decision making and assist in planning, implementing and evaluating your child’s learning.

We use a digital format called KEPTME for your child’s individual program. By using this format, we are eliminating the use of paper based portfolios. You can simply log into your KEPTME account and view your child’s progress as well as what they did during the day.

What To Expect On Your First Day
Families are encouraged to bring their child to the centre prior to their first day so that they can familiarise themselves with their new surroundings. You will meet the educators who will be educating and caring for your child. This is a good time to talk about your child’s specific needs such as sleep; eating; playing etc. On their first day we suggest that you take some time to settle your child and when it is time to leave, it is recommended you say ‘goodbye’ to your child and let them know you will be back in the afternoon. You are welcome to ring the centre throughout the day at any time.

Arrival and Departure
Our centre has introduced a parent digital sin in/out system with Quikkids called “KIOSK”. You will be required to set this up using your phone number and a unique PIN code. The device is conveniently located in our foyer.

Please read the attached information regarding how to use this system.
Children will only be permitted to leave the centre with either of their natural parents or guardian or any authorised person.

People collecting a child for the first time will be require to produce photo identification before they can take the child. If you need to arrange for a person not previously authorised please contact the centre to arrange.

**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. Breast Feeding is fully supported at the Centre. Please discuss this with our Educators.

**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.

**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 brim hat clearly labelled with your child’s name.

3. Sheets.
   Newcatsle: We ask that you supply a single bed sheet set for your child. These can stay at the centre for the week and be taken home on the last day of attendance for washing.
   Woodberry: Sheets supplied by centre.

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

**Clothing**

We recommend that children wear:

- Clothes which allow them to move freely and fully participate in all activities throughout the day.
- Clothes with cords should be avoided as these can become entangled on climbing equipment and also pose a hazard at rest time.
• Clothing bearing offensive slogans or logos which may offend a particular group or individual should not be worn.
• Safe footwear which does not pose a potential health and safety risk when climbing and running. Footwear should be suitable for climbing and running and protect the children’s feet from the outdoor environment (thongs are not suitable). It is also helpful as the children’s self-help skills develop that the footwear supplied is easy for the child to remove and put back on with minimal assistance. Infants may require socks – depending on the weather conditions.

We also have wide brim hats and children’s t-shirts with Samaritans logo on them for sale. They both come in a variety of colours.

**Nutrition and Meals**
The centre provides children 50% of their dietary needs throughout the day. We serve:
• Morning Tea
• Lunch
• Afternoon Tea
• Supper.

Our meals are prepared daily on the premises by a qualified cook. We follow the Good for Kids Good for Life Program which aims to install lifelong good nutritional habits.

The weekly menu is displayed at the centre and is also displayed via our Facebook page.

The weekly menu is planned to ensure that all 5 food groups are catered for and children are receiving the recommended serving size. This information is also placed on the menu.

We cater for any specific dietary needs for example: cultural and religious beliefs; allergies; celiac; vegetarians.

We believe it is important to celebrate special occasions. So when your child is having a birthday they can have an ice-cream cake which is ordered via the office.

**Allergies**
If your child has an allergy please provide us with as much information as possible. An allergy emergency medical plan letter from the doctor clearly stating your child’s allergy and the first aid management is required. This will need to be updated yearly.
Fees
SELC/Newcastle: The current daily fee is $110.00 per day which includes all your child’s meals and beverages; lotions e.g. sunscreen, nappy cream etc.
SELC/Woodberry: The current daily fee is $100 per day which includes all your child’s meals and beverages; lotions e.g. sunscreen, nappy cream etc.
Fees are payable for all absences (e.g. illness, holidays. Please note: we do not charge for public holidays

Other Costs
A) Annual Administration Enrolment Fee: $100.00 per child enrolled. This is payable when your child begins care and at the start of every following year.
B) Cot Sheet Fee: Infants only - $15 per day per year (i.e. if your child comes 5 days per week it will cost $75 for the year).
C) Late Fee: $10.00 for every 5 minutes a child is collected after closing, (i.e. if you are 15 minutes late it will cost $30.00).
Payment of Fees: Fees are paid fortnightly using our system. Statements are produced fortnightly either by email or hard copy.

The Child Care Subsidy:
This new child care subsidy has replaced the child care benefit and the child care rebate. The government has combined both of these payments into one now called the Child Care subsidy.
Prior to starting we strongly advise that you:
1. Set up a MYGOV account
2. Get in touch with Centrelink to let them know your child is starting childcare
3. Provide the centre with your customer reference number and your child’s customer reference number
4. visit education.gov.au/childcare for more information.

Cancelling your Child’s Care Arrangement
If you wish to cancel one or more of your days we require 2 weeks’ notice. If you are leaving the centre and do not attend during these 2 weeks the child care subsidy will not be paid by the government therefore full fees will be charged.
Behaviour Guidance
At the Samaritans Early Learning Centres, we use the “Circle of Security” as a road map to guide children’s behaviour. The educators are trained in this unique approach. By using circle of security, we are offering the children a safe and secure base for which children can explore their environment. 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. Redirection and constructive solutions are the techniques used by the educators. Educators will build on the positive, providing attention and encouragement when positive interactions are taking place.

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 & Law and Samaritans Policy. All written documentation will be stored in a locked cupboard that will only be accessible to staff.

Excursions/Incursion
Throughout the year the children are given the opportunity to attend incursions in which people come to the centre for example; science on the move; storytellers; musicians etc. There will be a small fee for such an event.

All excursions will be conducted using the Education and Care Services National Regulation as the minimum standards to be maintained at all times. Families are welcome to and encouraged to attend excursions.

Smoking and Alcohol
In accordance with Education and Care Services National Regulations & Law 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.

Health and Safety

Sun Protection:
We ask that the following is adhered to:
• Wearing sunsmart clothing e.g. sleeves that cover the shoulders
• Wearing a sun hat
• Applying sunscreen first thing in the morning.

We follow the cancer council’s guidelines in relation to sunsmart play.

**Immunisations:**
Your child must be fully immunised and a copy of the immunisation schedule must be given to the office after every immunisation.

**Sickness:**
We ask that you do not send your child to the centre if they are sick.

The responsible person in charge of the service are authorised to refuse a child’s admission to the centre if they feel it is in the best interests of the child and other children at 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.

We have many practices and procedures in place to reduce cross infection. This includes the following:

- Washing hands entering and leaving the building
- Educators washing hands throughout the day
- Educators wearing gloves when handling food; changing nappies and wiping noses.
- Washing toys daily
- Daily cleaning of the centre
- Notifying families of any infectious diseases

**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.

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.

Accident Forms
If your child sustains an injury whilst at the centre we will firstly administer first aid to ensure their safety. An accident form will be completed by the educator and you will be asked to sign this on collection.

If a child sustains a more serious injury while at the centre the family will be contacted immediately and asked to come and collect their child. An ambulance will be called if needed.

Grievances Procedures
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.

If you are still concerned you can contact the Central Licensing & Regulatory Support on 1800 619 113.

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

Polices and Procedures
A copy of the services policy manual is available for you to look at any time. Please ask one of our team to assist you.
Notes:
Thank you for choosing

Samaritans Early Learning Centres

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