



## Family Handbook

Merino Court Childcare Centre is a family run centre that has been running since 2000. The following information should provide you with most of the things you need to know however please feel free to talk to one of our team members if you have any further questions. Thank you.

### **Philosophy**

We at Merino Court Childcare Centre strive to provide a high quality service which meets the needs of the families and children associated with it. We believe in the importance of well trained staff and promote this within the working team.

Merino Court Childcare Centre focuses strongly on providing a home like environment where the relationships that children have with their families are complemented by the relationships the children have with each other and the staff. We achieve this through having a consistent staff base where all staff interacts with all children on a regular basis. We promote family input and encourage families to be involved in any way possible. We have increased one-on-one time with all of our children and know them as individuals.

We recognise the importance of the wider community in exposing children to people from other cultures, belief systems and abilities, understanding that many of these have originated from other countries. We aim to foster equity, tolerance and inclusiveness in our children through regular interactions with our local community.

We believe that children “become” by learning through their play, and therefore we provide time and a mix of experiences that fosters their curiosity, challenges them to explore, promotes independence and develops the skills needed to communicate and socialise well.

We have a strong focus on sustainability and embrace the responsibility to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. To this end, we will implement strategies to reduce, reuse, recycle and turn-it-off so that through our actions the children will develop a desire to embrace environmental responsibilities for themselves.

In order to achieve these goals, the staff at Merino Court Childcare Centre will treat all users of the service with respect and will challenge unfair and /or discriminatory behaviours. We will maintain confidentiality, be professional at all times and monitor our practices to ensure the safety and emotional wellbeing of the children is maintained to the highest standard.

### **Family Involvement**

We believe that fundamental to a successful service is the relationship between families, children, educators and management. Here at Merino Court, we appreciate that your time is precious however we would strongly encourage you to be involved in the life of our centre. Our programming, planning and

policy review is reliant on input from you so if you have any concerns, ideas or suggestions, please speak to a staff member about them.

We have an open door policy should you want to look in to see how your child is going. We look forward to working with you to make your child's time with us a positive experience.

**Times of Opening**

Care is available for children aged 6 weeks to 12 years and is open from 6.30am until 6.30pm, Monday to Friday. We are closed on Public Holidays and usually for half a day on Christmas Eve.

**Contact Information**

The office is attended at random times depending on the staffing needs within centre. Any questions or enquiries should be directed to 94511111.

Alternatively, you can email us at [childcare@merinocourtchildcare.com.au](mailto:childcare@merinocourtchildcare.com.au). These emails will be attended ASAP when leadership staff are in the office.

**Staffing**

Merino Court is licensed for up to 32 children at a time. Staffing will be at the ratio of one educator for every four 0-2 year olds, one educator for every five two year olds and one educator for every ten children three years and older. All staff will be qualified or in the process of becoming qualified.

**Fees**

All new enrolments will have a once off enrolment fee of \$50 which includes the annual \$15 admin fee.

Fees are payable on all booked days regardless of whether your child attends or not. This includes sick days, school holidays, public holidays and family holidays. Failure to pay fees could result in a request by Management to remove your child from the service. If you have any problems paying your fees, please see the Manager.

Accounts for Long Day Care children will be issued by email each fortnight and payment is by Direct Debit on the first Tuesday of the account period. Families are required to set up the Direct Debit on enrolment.

Merino Court Childcare is registered with Centrelink for the purpose of fee assistance. Eligible families will need to register their child with Centrelink for CCS.

Long Day Care fees are:

Daily (all ages)		\$105
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OSH fees are:	Before School	\$55
	After School	\$65
	Before and After Combined (if booked for both)	\$85

Vacation Care fees are:	Daily	\$105
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Children booked in for before or after school will be automatically booked in for the full day during the school holidays. If your child will not be attending at all over the holidays, please let us know two weeks before the school holidays start and their regular term booking will remain for fees purposes. If we do not hear from you, we will assume that your child will be in over the holidays and we will charge accordingly. Thank you.

All children are allowed 42 absences in a financial year which are covered by their regular CCS payments. These include public holidays and sick days. Additional absences after these 42 days will not be covered by Centrelink unless there is a doctor's certificate to support it. This means that any days your child does not attend after the initial 42 allowable absences, that does not have the appropriate documentation, will be charged at full rates to the family.

**Direct Debit**

Direct debit is an arrangement between Merino Court, Quickpay and the family. It is set up on enrolment and is included in the enrolment form. Families are to nominate their desired account and sign the authority. Your account will only be debited the amount owing on the selected date. This is not a set amount and will reflect your usage over the nominated period. The full Agreement can be found at the end of the handbook.

Fees associated with Direct Debit are passed on to the family. They are:

- Bank Account                      per transaction                      \$1.00
- Visa/Mastercard                      Calculated on transaction value                      1.8% + \$1.00
- Amex                                      Calculated on transaction value                      3.6% + \$1.00

**Late fees**

Merino Court Childcare is licensed until 6.30pm each night. Please make an effort to be at the centre prior to this so the team can pass on any messages and be able to leave on time.

Our team work long hours with your children and have their own families to go home to each night. It is important that their time is respected. Children who are collected after 6.30pm will be charged a fee to cover overtime rates for two staff who have had to stay later than their shift. The fee will be \$25 for each 15 minutes or part thereof. This charge will not be covered by Centrelink.

**Overdue Fees**

Parents/guardians with overdue fees will be encouraged by the nominated supervisor/manager to discuss any difficulties they may have in meeting payments and make suitable arrangements to pay. If this is not done, or the agreed arrangements are not kept, the following procedure will apply:

- after two weeks overdue - a written reminder will be forwarded to the parent/guardian;
- after three weeks overdue - a letter will be sent advising that the place may be cancelled if the account should become four weeks overdue. The letter will include a reminder that parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss payment difficulties and make suitable arrangements to pay with the nominated supervisor/coordinator;
- after four weeks overdue - if no arrangements to pay have been made or kept, the place will be cancelled and family notified.

### **Arrival and Departure**

Families are to enter through the foyer. Once you have entered, please sign your child in, on the iPad, and put their bag in the designated area.

For security reasons the front door has a pincode which is given to families upon enrolment.

If there is a change of routine for your child at pick-up time, please let the team know. Children can become distressed if they are waiting after their friends have gone home and are not prepared. If you are running late, please contact us on 94511111, so that we can reassure your child.

Children will only be released to the people listed on the enrolment form. Should you require someone else to collect your child, you will need to phone and leave their relevant details. Upon arrival, he/she will need to show some form of photo identification.

### **Sign-in and Out**

It is a requirement for legal and safety purposes that every child entering the service is signed in and out each day. This is done digitally through the iPad located in the foyer. Children/siblings under the age of 18 are not permitted to drop off or collect children.

### **Suncare**

Children are required to wear a broad rimmed, bucket or legionnaire hat and sunscreen when outdoors. It is also a requirement that clothing which covers their shoulders and tops of arms are worn. Therefore, singlets and dresses and tops with straps will not be suitable.

Please apply sunscreen to your child before coming each day. We will have sunscreen available next to the iPad in the foyer should you forget at home and we will reapply sunscreen throughout the day as required. Please also observe our UV Index rating on the foyer wall. This will notify of the times throughout the day where sun protection is required. Hats will be worn all year round for continuity purposes.

If your child requires a specific sunscreen due to allergies etc. please let staff know in advance and provide sunscreen for them. This can be kept in their bag and should be labelled with their name.

### **Illness**

It is inevitable that children will pick up colds, coughs etc. when coming into contact with other children in the childcare environment. While this can be upsetting and worrying for parents and children alike, it does help to build up their immune systems!

Children who are unwell or tired need to be kept at home until they are fully recovered. This helps stop the spread of illnesses to other children and staff. Please email, call or text if your child is going to be absent. Children who have not arrived by 10am and we have not heard from the family, will be contacted for safety reasons.

If your child becomes unwell during the day, we will call you to come and collect them. Please collect them promptly. If we are unable to contact you, the person listed as an emergency contact will be called.

If there is an outbreak of an illness (e.g. chicken pox) and your child is not immunised against it, you will be asked to keep them at home for the duration of the outbreak, as per our *Health, hygiene and dealing with infectious diseases policy*, which can be found on the website. Please see the Manager if you would like a copy of this policy.

Illnesses (such as gastro, chickenpox, measles, head lice etc.) will be notified so that families are aware. Please advise us ASAP if your child contracts any contagious illnesses.

### **Grievance Procedure**

Families may make a complaint directly to their child's educator or the Nominated Supervisor.

In order to assist families who wish to contact the Regulatory Authority the contact details are;

Education and Care Regulatory Unit  
111 Wellington St  
East Perth 6004  
Ph. 6551 8333  
Freecall 1800 199 383  
[ecru@communities.wa.gov.au](mailto:ecru@communities.wa.gov.au)

PO Box 6242  
East Perth Business Centre  
East Perth 6892

### **Policies**

Policies are available on the website and are required to be read as part of the enrolment process. Any updates throughout the year will be included in emails or newsletters for family reference.

Please be aware that acceptance of your enrolment is subject to your agreement to abide by the guidelines and policies set by Merino Court Childcare Centre. Please feel free to approach the staff if you have any questions and we will do all we can to assist you.

### **Programming**

Programs are based on child interests and experiences from home. Please make an effort to let the staff know what has been happening for your child so we can involve them in the program.

### **Toys from home**

Please do not allow your child to bring personal items, jewellery and toys to the service. Items can be lost or broken and this can be upsetting to children so we ask that these be left at home. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

### **Communication**

We believe that communication is the key to building strong relationships and welcoming you into our centre. We endeavour to talk to all families on a regular basis and are available at different times of the

day for you to call and have a chat. We also rely heavily on emails to ensure that important information is conveyed to all families that require it. Please check your emails regularly for any correspondence. Please check your junk mail if you have not received anything from us within a few weeks and let us know in case we have made an error somewhere. If you have not yet provided us with an email address, please do so if you have one. Our email address is [childcare@merinocourtchildcare.com.au](mailto:childcare@merinocourtchildcare.com.au). We are working towards a paperless and sustainable service in terms of parent letters and newsletters. However, if you do not have an email address, we are more than happy to provide you with a paper copy.

For day-to-day communication with your child's room we use an App called OWNA. Your educators will assist you to set this up upon enrolment and give you more information about its uses and purpose.

### **What to bring**

- A bag for childcare; a small backpack is ideal. Please label it with your child's name.
- A broad rimmed, bucket or legionnaire hat labelled with your child's name. Caps are not suitable.
- A full change of clothing (including underwear), labelled and kept in their bag.
- A wet bag for dirty/wet clothing.
- Nappies and wipes if required.
- A drink bottle with water only.
- One piece of fruit to share.
- Bottles if required. We will provide cow's milk but if your child uses formula or some other milk, please provide. Thank you.

### **Food and Drink**

Whilst at the centre, we will provide morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea for the children present. We have a balanced menu which follows the Start Right Eat Right guidelines. While every effort is made to cater for allergies, health or religious restrictions, we are unable to provide alternative food based on particular likes/dislikes. Children are encouraged but not forced to eat the meals provided.

If you would like to bring a cake in for your child's birthday, you are welcome to. Please provide individual cupcakes or biscuits only so that the birthday child can blow out a candle without spreading germs to the other children. All cakes must be free from nuts. If your child cannot eat cake, please provide something special for your child to eat when we are celebrating birthdays. (e.g. Freddo, muesli bar...). We can keep them locked in the cupboard if you would like to bring in a supply.

### **Clothing**

It is best to send children in play clothes rather than their 'best' clothes as there will be activities such as painting and water play. While we will make every effort to keep their clothes free from paint, accidents do regularly occur while the children are being creative!

Clothing that is easily managed for toileting etc. is encouraged. Please do not put your child in overalls or belts if they are unable to undo them or do them up themselves. The children will be encouraged to take themselves to the toilet as needed.



**Quickpay Pty. Ltd.**  
Level 2, Suite 6, 58 – 60 Victor Crescent  
Narre Warren VIC 3805  
Tel: 1300 659 537  
Fax: 1300 659 538

Date:

## Direct Debit Request Service Agreement

### DEFINITIONS

- **Account** means the account held at your financial institution, from which we are authorised to arrange for funds to be debited
- **Agreement** means this Direct Debit Request Service Agreement between you and us.
- **Business Day** means a day other than a Saturday or a Sunday or a public holiday listed throughout Australia
- **Debit Day** means the day that payment by you to us is due
- **Debit Payment** means a particular transaction where a debit is made
- **Direct Debit Request or (DDR)** means the Direct Debit Request between you and us (and includes any Form PD – C approved by us in the transitional period)
- **Us or We** means Quickpay Pty Ltd, you have authorised by signing a *Direct Debit Request*
- **You** mean the customer who signed the Direct Debit Request
- **Your Financial Institution** is the financial institution where you hold the account that you have authorised us to debit

### 1. DEBITING YOUR ACCOUNT

- 1.1 By signing a DDR, you have authorised us to arrange for funds to be debited from your account. You should refer to the DDR and this agreement for the terms of the arrangement between you and us.
- 1.2 We will only arrange for funds to be debited from your account as authorised in the DDR OR
- 1.3 We will only arrange for funds to be debited from your account if we have sent to the address nominated by you in the DDR, a billing advice which specifies the amount payable by you to us and when it is due
- 1.4 If the debit day falls on a day that is not a business day, we may direct your financial institution to debit your account on the following business day. If you are unsure about which day your account has or will be debited you should ask your financial institution.
- 1.5 By signing this document you hereby accept that Quickpay or its associated entities are not liable for any prepayment made on products or services that yet to be rendered. Any prepayments made are the responsibility of your provider and not Quickpay. If the provider is for any reason is unable to refund any payments you hereby notified that Quickpay will not be liable for your prepaid funds.

### 2. CHANGES BY US

- 2.1 We may vary any details of this agreement or DDR at any time by giving you at least fourteen (14) days written notice.

### 3. CHANGES BY YOU

- 3.1 Subject to 3.2, 3.3, or 3.4 you may change the arrangements under a direct debit request by contacting us on 1300 659 537
- 3.2 Deferment, cancellation or alteration to the debiting schedule outlined over the page will be considered subject to the terms and conditions of any contract/agreement between you and the payee named over the page.
- 3.3 If you wish to defer a payment you must notify us in writing at least fourteen (14) days before the next debit day
- 3.4 Any cancellations made directly with Quickpay do not affect or terminate any contracts, agreements and/or payment obligations you have with the payee named over the page.

### 4. YOUR OBLIGATIONS

- 4.1 It is your responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient clear funds available in your account to allow a debit payment to be made in accordance with the direct debit request (DDR)
- 4.2 If there are insufficient clear funds in your account to meet a direct debit payment:
- a) You may be charged a fee and/or interest by your financial institution
  - b) You may also incur fees or charges payable to Quickpay; and
  - c) You must arrange for the debit payment to be made by another method or arrange for sufficient clear funds to be available by an agreed time so that we can process the debit payment
- 4.3 You should check your account statement to verify that the amounts debited to your account are correct

### 5. DISPUTE

- 5.1 If you believe there has been an error in debiting your account, you should notify us directly on 1300 659 537. Confirm the notice in writing to us as soon as possible so that we may resolve your query quickly
- 5.2 If we conclude as a result of our investigations that your account has been incorrectly debited we will arrange with your financial institution to adjust your account (including interest and charges) accordingly. We will also notify you in writing of the amount by which your account has been adjusted
- 5.3 If we conclude as a result of our investigations that your account has not been incorrectly debited we will respond to your query by providing you with reasons and any evidence for this finding
- 5.4 Any queries you have about an error made in debiting your account should be directed to us in the first instance so that we may attempt to resolve the matter between you and us. If we cannot resolve the matter you may still refer it to your financial institution which will obtain details from you of the disputed transaction and may lodge a claim on your behalf

### 6. ACCOUNTS

You should check

- a) With your financial institution whether direct debiting is available from your nominated account as direct debiting is not available on all account types
- b) Your account details are correct by checking them against your bank statement; and
- c) With your financial institution before completing the DDR if you have any queries on how to complete the DDR

### 7. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 7.1 We will keep any information (including your account details) in your DDR confidential. We will make reasonable effort to keep any such information we have about you secure and to ensure that any of our employees or agents who have access to information about you do not make any unauthorised use, modification, reproduction or disclosure of that information
- 7.2 We will only disclose information we have about you:
- a) To the extent specified by law; or
  - b) For the purpose of this agreement (including disclosing information in connection with any query or claim)

### 8. NOTICE

- 8.1 If you wish to notify us in writing about anything relating to this agreement, you should write to the address at the top of the page
- 8.2 We will notify you by sending a notice in the ordinary post to the address you have given us in the DDR
- 8.3 Any notice will be deemed to have been received two (2) business days after it has been posted

### 9. NOTICE OF DISCLOSURE (Privacy Act 1988)

- 9.1 We may give information about you to a credit reporting agency for the following purposes:
- a) To obtain a consumer and commercial credit report about you, and/or
  - b) Allow the credit reporting agency to create or maintain a credit information file containing information about you.
- 9.2 This information is limited to:
- a) Identity particulars - your name, sex, address (and the previous two addresses), date of birth, name of employer, and drivers license number
  - b) Your application for credit or commercial credit - the fact that you have applied for credit and the amount
  - c) The fact that we are a current credit provider to you.
  - d) Repayments which are overdue by more than 60 days, and for which debt collection action has started
  - e) Advice that your repayments are no longer overdue in respect of any default that has been listed
  - f) Information that, in the opinion of us, you have committed a serious credit infringement (that is, acted fraudulently or shown an intention not to comply with your credit obligations)