

VISION

STEWART CHILD CARE SERVICES IS AN ORGANISATION THAT PROVIDES THE OPPORTUNITY AND SUPPORT FOR THE FULL DEVELOPMENT OF ITS CHILDREN, STAFF AND BOARD.

MISSION

THE IDENTIFICATION, DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OF EARLY LEARNING SERVICES MEETING BEST PRACTICE STANDARDS THAT ARE SUSTAINABLE AND CONTINUALLY MEET COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS.

Stewart Child Care Services Philosophy

In partnerships with families we are working to maintain the National Quality Standards and will offer continuously improving programmes, through the use of best practice in the provision of education and care.

We aspire to having a service that is happy, safe, caring and stimulating. A place where children have the opportunity to learn about their world and can grow in their own unique way.

Service Goals

Educators will support the inclusion of all children and provide a range of opportunities, along with an environment that encourages enquiry to enable children to make their own decisions to initiate and lead their own play.

Maintain a safe and hygienic environment with clear expectations for staff, families and children.

Provide a nutritious menu with healthy eating being consistently promoted and discussed.

Opportunity for planned and spontaneous physical activity will be built on the children interests and developmental needs for the extension of their learning.

We have an ongoing commitment to Sustainable practice and children will be supported to value and respect their environment.

Develop a culture of professionalism to ensure longevity of staff, maintaining consistent and secure relationships with families and children.

Educators will collaborate with each other to facilitate reflection on current practice to ensure consistent expectations for children.

Educators have established consistently respectful and caring relationships with children and their families. They provide a foundation on which to build relationships and promote children's sense of security.

Foster a sense of belonging for all children and their families. Family expertise is acknowledged and respected by all educators.

Ensure that each child is considered an individual by recognising their rights to be leaders in their own learning.

Whilst working with families, ensure curriculum decisions relating to their child's individual learning are discussed to make sure outcomes are meaningful and achievable.

Ensure each child's language, interaction style and ways of communicating are valued while promoting communication between families, children and educators.

Link our educational programmes with the Early Years Learning Framework, ensuring each child is Belonging, Being and Becoming.

HANDBOOK FOR FAMILIES

Brief History

On November 25th 1948 Lady Binney, in two small rooms at the Albert Hall, opened a temporary Creche. The Official Opening of the Cameron Street Creche took place in June 1956 – with the greatest number of children in care on any one day being 107. By 1970 the demand was such that a second Centre was opened in the old Queen Victoria Hospital building.

The Dame Marjorie Parker Creche was opened in 1977 to replace the Cameron Street Creche. The Stewart Street Creche was renovated and replaced the Centre at the Queen Victoria Hospital in 1979. In May 1998 Stewart Street Creche opened a 15-place annex at Newstead College.

On January 1st 2000 Stewart Street Creche took over the lease of the Watchorn Street Centre, formerly part of the Pedder Patter Service. Extensive renovation converted Watchorn Street into an 85 place service. On May 1st 2000 Stewart Child Care Services opened for business in the Watchorn Street building, leaving the Stewart Street Creche campus behind forever.

A great deal of credit must go to Dame Marjorie Parker and her small group of workers who had the foresight to see the need for good quality childcare facilities. Dame Marjorie Parker was President of the Management Committee for 27 years. At the 1999 Annual General Meeting The Launceston Creche Committee Inc was renamed Launceston Childhood Learning Centres (LCLC).

After 9 years, our Newstead Service at the Newstead College closed on the 30th June 2007. This was very sad for us, but economically necessary.

After the September 2010 school holidays we closed our School Vacation Care Program. This will allow all staff to concentrate on improving our core business-long day care for 0-5 year olds.

We are very privileged to have a separate art studio which was officially opened in May 2011. It is available for all groups as a place to participate in all art forms. Community members with a particular skill are invited to share this facility with the children. Examples of guests sharing include a ceramicist, a story teller, a musician, puppeteers and aboriginal performers. It is also a lovely retreat for programme variety during the long wet winter months. The Art Studio is now a functioning Unit. This Unit is called the Emus.

In September 2012 a team of educators and families spent a Saturday up grading the Early Learning playground. Our dream was to make it a nature inspired learning environment for our 3-5 year old child to explore and discover.

We have had small editions to our play space in the toddler age group in June 2013. Adding garden beds and a digging patch.

In 2015 Kerrie's Corner was made a reality.... A child friendly play space for our youngest group dedicated to Kerrie a much loved team member who passed away in 2014.

After the 2002 AGM the LCLC Committee was disbanded, with the two Centres opting to operate under separate Committees. A new incorporated body, **Stewart Child Care Services Inc**, was formed. This Board of Directors is an ongoing organisation, a service to the Community, and this handbook will keep the Community and our clients informed of the services provided by the STEWART CHILD CARE SERVICE.

Our Team of Educators

Belinda Salter	CEO
Mare Westergreen:	Assistant CEO
Lauren Bassett	Cook

Joey Unit: Kelli, Danielle, Chynesse, Wendy
Koala Unit: Maree, Lucy, Melissa, Lynette, Trudy, Tracy
Possum Unit: Kristel, Julie, Goy, Nicole, Frances
Kookaburra Early Learning Unit: Belinda, Loretta, Lisa, Kyra
Emu Early Learning Unit: Bronwyn, Rachel
Wombat Early Learning Unit: Cheryle, Emily

RDO Cover: **Sally**

Relief Staff: **Samantha, Elena, Bonnie**

Hours of operation **7.15am - 6.15pm**

Fees for one child in care

Maximum	
Weekly	\$450.00
Daily	\$100.00

A \$90.00 Levy is payable upon commencement of care and in February each year. \$5.00 of this levy is for Association membership to our incorporated organisation.

Our Centre offers quality care and education for children from birth to school age on a permanent basis. The centre has qualified educators who offer guidance and support for all family members to ensure that all children enjoy and learn from their experiences at Stewart.

Public Holidays: **The Centre will be closed on the following days:**

Australia Day	Friday 26th January
8-Hour Day	Monday 12th March
Easter	Friday 30th March
	Monday 2nd April
	Tuesday 3rd April
Anzac Day	Wednesday 25th April
Queen's Birthday	Monday 11th June
Launceston Show Day	Thursday 11th October
Recreation Day	Monday 5th November
Christmas Break	TBA
	Re-open TBA

Fee Information:

As our service works on a break-even, non-profit budget, which is calculated in advance for the following twelve months the Board require that all fees be paid within the fortnight of care.

Childcare Benefit and Child Care Rebate is available and is provided by the Federal Government through The Family Assistance Office.

It is the parent's/guardians responsibility to have their family income assessed by Centrelink. You will need to provide our service number which is 555 000 088H for Long Day Care. Failure to do so results in the family paying the MAXIMUM fee. Families must also contact Centrelink if family income changes.

Most families are also entitled to Child Care Rebate which is up to half of your out of pocket expenses. You can opt to have this rebate paid directly to us thus halving your fee.

From the time your child starts at Stewart Child Care Services you are charged weekly for your booked place even if your child does not attend.

Each family has a file in the front foyer. We ask that you check your file on a weekly basis. Weekly accounts will be emailed to you.

A levy is payable upon commencement of care each year. \$5.00 of this levy is for Association membership for our incorporated organisation.

Fee Policy:

General Principles:

To maintain an equitable fee structure for all clients

To keep fee increases to once a year as far as possible

To ensure the Centre remains viable.

Procedures:

Parents/ Guardians may apply for childcare benefit and Rebate through Centrelink (Family Assistance Office).

Fees will be charged for all days booked, whether or not they are used in full or regardless of notification of absence.

Fees will not be charged for times when Centre is closed, e.g. Public Holidays, Christmas break.

A surcharge of \$5.00 applies to each child not collected from the Centre 5 minutes after closing. A further \$5.00 will be charged every 5 minutes unless notification received.

Fees are payable at commencement of agreed period. Non-payment of fees will result in exclusion of child from Centre.

Overdue Accounts: Notices for over-due accounts are issued to clients to serve as a reminder for payment. If payment is not received with-in 10 working days, the Services will make contact with the client to discuss the outstanding invoice and action a repayment plan. The CEO will consider the circumstances of the client and options available to recover the overdue account. Options available are: Suspension, temporary or permanent, of care at the Centre, A repayment plan or placement of the client with a debt Collection Agency.

Bookings will not be accepted if fees remain unpaid from previous year. Fees to be reviewed twice a year & adjusted where necessary, or at other times during the year if the financial viability of the Centre requires it. Families will be given a fortnight's notice of impending fee increases.

Orientation:

We encourage families to visit before commencing care. We have several different sessions to allow time to familiarise yourselves and your child with our environment and educators.

We recommend that you allow enough time to help settle your child in the first couple of weeks. It is important to let your child know when you are leaving and that they are close to an educator for support if they need it. If the child is still upset or you wish to reassure yourself, please ring the Centre and talk to the educators. Remember the educators are there to help you. If possible try to come earlier. It may be necessary to repeat this process when your child moves to another room or has been absent for a period.

Family Involvement:

We encourage families to be involved in all aspects of your child's day. Try to allow a little time each day to talk with the educators about your child. This way we can exchange information about your child and the experiences and learning opportunities that are on offer during your child's day. We encourage you to keep an eye on display boards in your child's room as this documentation is an important insight into what your child is doing and learning at that time.

When cleaning out at home remember that we can use a wide range of items; e.g. toys, dress up clothes, kitchen items for Home Corner, pot plants, old cards, decorations, material scraps and items of children's clothing.

Family Changes:

To ensure we are able to give your child our support, care and understanding during changes within the family, a word to the CEO and an educator would be appreciated, e.g. relative in hospital, separation, moving house, death in the family. If at any time you are concerned about your child, please talk it over with the CEO or an educator before it becomes a major issue. We are here to help and support both you and your child. Wider family matters can be addressed either by providing information or through liaison with other professionals and organisations within the community.

Our Programme

At Stewart Child Care Services we believe that any program offered to children must reflect our Philosophy and with that, we recognise that each and every child is unique with individual needs, strengths, abilities and interests.

Our educational curriculum encompasses:

The Australian Early Years Learning Framework- Belonging, Being and Becoming, Move well Eat well, Kids Matter, The Centre's Philosophy and Early Childhood Theorists.

Our programme provides children with planned and spontaneous experiences that promote all areas of a child's development.

We empower children to make their own decisions and support such decisions within our daily programme.

We encourage children to be active, enthusiastic and creative explorers of their environments. To become independent, self -confident and inquisitive learners.

We nurture every child's sense of wonder and sense of fun. We understand play is essential for young children's learning. We will endeavour to meet the needs of children's natural curiosity by providing safe opportunities for them to experiment, to discover, solve problems, to find out about themselves, other people and the world in which they live.

We recognise that children learn through active involvement, experiences will be arranged for a balance of indoor and outdoor experiences. Interactions in both large and small groups and also individual situations.

We encourage family contributions and input to our programmes. We acknowledge the diversity of families; their beliefs and values and how this can impact children's learning. Educators establish respectful and caring relationships with children, their families and the community. We value that we can work together to construct learning experiences relevant to the children

We will provide opportunities for staff professional development to support and enhance programming practice.

Assessment and reporting

Your child's learning and development will be assessed on an ongoing cycle. Ongoing observations made by educators will be documented and provide the basis for planning the programme offered. Your child's progress will be recorded through written and photographic observations and these will be sent home throughout the year. You will receive both formative and summative records about your child and we value your feedback and comments about these assessments. All of these assessments will be kept in your child's profile which is kept in the room.

Events and celebrations

We encourage active involvement of families in our centre. We provide a number of events and celebrations throughout the year in rooms and as a whole service which family members will be invited to attend. At the end of the year we have a Christmas family BBQ to wrap up the end of another year at the centre.

Birthdays

If your child is having a birthday you may wish to bring along a cake and leave the party to us! Just let the staff know the day and check the number of children in the group. When bringing cake (foods) in please provide a list of ingredients. If you are planning a party and wish to hand out invitations at the service please leave them with office staff and they will be placed in family files in reception.

PLEASE NOTE! We are a NUT & EGG aware service.

We do not use either of these products in our cooking as we have children who suffer anaphylaxis from these products.

We ask that you do not bring these products into our service.

Below are some ideas for celebrating from Move Well Eat Well

1. Fruit platter or fruit kebabs
2. Egg free pikelets, scones or mini savoury muffins
3. Nibble platter- cheese, vegetable sticks, fresh or dried fruit, crackers
4. Bring along a game for the educators to play with the children
5. A special CD or toy to share with friends

Food and Nutrition

Stewart Child Care Services aim to provide fresh nutritious meals, snacks & drinks to the children attending our Centre in an atmosphere that encourages both enjoyment of food & a safe learning environment.

Menus are developed in consultation with families & staff with reference to “Dietary Guidelines for Children & Adolescents in Australia” (Produced by Aust Govt Dept Health & Ageing).

We provide an eating environment that is conducive to promoting mealtime as an enjoyable experience & as a time to discuss food, family & multicultural values with their educators, where children are not rushed with plenty of time to eat.

We recommend families & educators to read Move well, Eat well information & Get up & Grow, Healthy Eating & Physical Activity for Early Childhood. We refer to these documents for all aspects of healthy eating from breast feeding through to the connection between healthy eating and physical exercise.

Our programmes and mealtimes are designed to educate children about food varieties, nutrition, exercise & dental care.

Board of Management

Another way to be involved in the service is by coming to any meetings at the Centre or joining our Board of Management. The Annual General Meeting is held in August each year and nomination forms are available at the Centre.

The Board of Management works closely with the CEO to ensure the following is done:

Establishing the goals of the Service.

Development of Governance policies.

Financial Management.

Keeping appropriate meeting minutes & reports.

Handling publicity and community relations.

Evaluation and accountability of the Service.

The Board of Management meets at the service monthly.

Staff Ratios:

Staffing ratios are determined by the needs and abilities of the children and are regulated by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations as follows: -

Under 2	1 Educator to 4 children
2-3 years old	1 Educator to 5 children
3 years plus	1 Educator to 10 children

Privacy Statement:

We are committed to protecting and maintaining the privacy, accuracy and security of your personal and financial information. At times we are required by law to disclose your personal information. Your consent will be sought for any other circumstances which may arise.

Medication:

In the event of your child needing medication while at the Centre, parent/guardian must sign a medical permission sheet giving clear details of dosage and times. All medication must be given to a staff member and NOT left in children's bags. When collecting your child please check that the medication was given and sign it out.

Medical Information:

We encourage all families to ensure appropriate immunisation of your child in accordance with recommended National Immunisation Program Schedules. We require copies of your child's up-date schedule on commencement of care and as they are updated.

Please specify on your enrolment forms if there is any medical/health information that is relevant to your child, e.g. anaphylaxis, asthma, allergies, hearing or sight problems. All medical information needs to be also passed on to the educators in your child's unit.

Health and Well being

To ensure the health and wellbeing of all children, hand washing and other personal hygiene practices are promoted. We encourage all children and educators to wash their hands before and after eating, after toileting and nappy changes and after blowing their nose or coughing. To ensure germs are not spread we ask that if your child is unwell that they remain at home. Should your child become unwell while in care, you will be contacted and asked to collect them.

Families must abide by the decision of the CEO or educators as to the fitness of a child to attend on any given day. We refer to the relevant Staying Healthy in Childcare Guidelines to determine if a child could be infectious or not. At times a doctor's clearance or certificate may be requested. Immediate notification of all infectious diseases in the Centre is requested in the interests of ALL children.

Collection:

When collecting your child please ensure an educator knows the child is going. If any person other than those listed on the enrolment form is to collect your child, written authority must be given at the Office. Please tell the staff if someone else is collecting your child.

Signing in and out:

It is a Federal Government requirement that each child be signed in and out by you (or the person authorised by you) each day. Please ensure that this is done daily on the sheet provided for each week in your child's unit. Child Care Benefit will not be paid if your child/ren is not signed both in and out each day. This also ensures that we can account for every person in the Centre in the event of an emergency.

What to bring:

Children will engage in messy experiences so play clothes are more appropriate. In cold weather children need a coat, hat and gumboots. In summer we provide hats which each family purchases at the start of enrolment. Sunscreen lotion is provided. Please provide suitable summer footwear, Sandals please, not thongs! Children in nappies require an adequate supply and a plastic bag for soiled clothes. (We suggest at least six nappies each day.) Please provide a few changes of clothes especially if your child is toilet training. We ask that ALL belongings are clearly named to ensure they return in the correct bag.

Hats:

We have had a very successful hat policy since the beginning of 1994. We supply hats that have been specifically designed to protect face, ears and neck and are approved by the Australian Cancer Council. The hats remain at the Centre all year. We take responsibility for washing and maintaining them. Children have a peg to keep their hat on and each hat will be clearly labeled. It is a policy of the centre that no child will be permitted outdoors without first having a 50+ sunscreen applied (which is supplied by us unless your child has a skin problem or you prefer to supply your own) and they must wear their hat. During the summer period families are encouraged to read our Sun Smart Policy. Hats cost \$5.50 on enrolment.

Students:

Students are regularly placed in our Centre for short observation sessions, work experience and longer practical training. If a student wishes to do a case study, the families' permission will be sought prior to commencement.

Sleep and Rest Time:

The length of time children rest/sleep is dependent upon their needs. Children are free to do quiet activities during rest time or after resting.

Lockers/Bag hooks:

Each child is allocated a locker/bag hook. These are for your child's belongings.

Toys:

Children are not encouraged to bring toys from home as they can be easily lost or broken. However, if your child has a particular toy or 'cuddly' that will help them settle more easily, this can be brought along, named clearly.

Excursions:

Excursions are occasionally planned as part of our programme. Families will be notified and requested to sign a permission form prior to any excursion taking place.

Art experiences:

It is often the process of creation that is important to the child, not the end product. Some children take a while before they feel happy taking part in messy activities so try not to insist on products to take home. Attempt to display work your child does bring home –it is great for stimulating conversation.

Photography:

Occasions may arise when we use photographs of your children. Your consent is requested on the enrolment form.

PLEASE INFORM EDUCATORS IF

- Someone different is picking up your child.
- Your child is sick or going on holidays.
- Custody/Access arrangements have changed.
- Your address/telephone number has changed.

Website:

Please refer to our Website for further information on any area of our service.

www.stewartccs.tas.edu.au

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES UPON ENROLLING CHILD

- ❖ **CONTACT CENTRELINK RE CHILD CARE BENEFIT & CHILDCARE REBATE. OUR LONG DAY CARE SERVICE NUMBER IS 555 000 088H.**
- ❖ **IF WORKING, STUDYING OR LOOKING FOR WORK PLEASE ENSURE CENTRELINK ALLOW YOU 50 HOURS OF CARE PER WEEK.**
- ❖ **FILL IN AND RETURN COMMUNICATION FORMS.**
- ❖ **BRING IN CHILD HEALTH RECORD BOOK TO HAVE IMMUNISATION RECORDS PHOTOCOPIED.**
- ❖ **CHECK YOUR FILE IN RECEPTION EACH WEEK. ANY NEWSLETTERS, ETC WILL BE IN YOUR FAMILY FILE, AND YOUR ACCOUNT WILL BE EMAILED WEEKLY.**
- ❖ **ENSURE THAT YOUR ACCOUNT IS KEPT UP TO DATE. CARE WILL BE STOPPED IF ANY ACCOUNT IS TWO WEEKS IN ARREARS.**

You can contact the Board by writing to: -

The President
Stewart Child Care Services INC
PO BOX 82
LAUNCESTON 7250

Or

Telephone: (03) 6344 9490

Fax: (03) 6343 6893

Email: sccs@stewartccs.tas.edu.au

Website: www.stewartccs.tas.edu.au

If your child has an ongoing MEDICAL CONDITION please read our policy:

Stewart Child Care Services believes all children need to be safe while attending our service. For children who have medical conditions including asthma, diabetes or diagnosed anaphylaxis, the service needs to have procedures in place to ensure educators; staff and volunteers know what to do in the case of an emergency.

Procedure

- Upon enrolment families need to provide the service with a medical management plan and procedure in relation to these medical requirements.
- The medical management plan needs to be followed in the event of an incident relating to the child's specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition.
- Identify and manage risks within the environment. Formulate risk management plans.
- All staff, nominated supervisor, volunteers and students need to know their role in managing these medical conditions.
- Parents and educators need to discuss and work out the best risk minimisation plan while the child is in care ensuring families are notified of possible contaminants at the service. (Where applicable)
- The child's individual management plan and photo are to be clearly displayed in the room so all relevant people are aware.
- A detailed communications plan needs to be established so relevant staff members and volunteers are informed about the medical conditions plan, medical management plan and risk minimisation plan for the child.
- Opportunity for the child's family to communicate any changes to the medical management plan and risk minimisation plan will be documented and displayed where relevant.
- Depending on the medical condition relevant Centre policies and procedures will be followed.
- All medication administered by educators will be documented as stated in our medication policy and procedure.
- A copy of the medical conditions policy is provided to the family of the child enrolled if they have a specific health care need, allergy or other relevant medical condition.

Items to save and look out for!

Cabinet makers- Sawdust, wood shaving, cut offs, wood turnings, scrap wood

Department stores- Boxes, wrapping, tissue, ribbons, cardboard

Florists- Dried flowers, ribbon, leaves, seed pods

Interior designers- material off cuts, sample books

Hardware- wallpaper sample books, tile samples, screws, nuts, plastic offcuts

Plumbers- wire, tiles, pipes

Please keep your eyes peeled!

We will find a use for just about anything!



Local community resources & support services

•Family assistance office- www.familyassist.gov.au or 13 61 50, Teletypewriter 1800 810 586

•Child care Access Hotline- 1800 670 305, www.mychild.gov.au

•Australian Childhood Immunisation Register in Medicare- 1800 653 809 or www.medicareaustralia.gov.au

•Adult Migrant English Program- 131 881 or translating & interpreting service- 131 450

• Bicultural Support contact Inclusion Support Agency- 03 63 322211

Fax: 63342660 (NISA)

• Baptcare Gateway on 1800 171 233 or email tasfamilycommunityservices@baptcare.org.au.

Baptcare Family and Community Services Tasmania Northern Region

Level 1/8 Boland Street

Launceston TAS 7250

(PO Box 952)

Admin: 03 6323 6700

Referrals and Assistance: 1800 171 233

•DHHS-Family violence counseling & support services- 63362692,

24 hour Family violence response referral line 1800 608 122

•St. Giles, Family support services- 63457333, www.stgiles.org.au

fax: 63457372,

Speech Pathology 63437388 (Referrals to St. Giles speech assessment clinic)

•Centacare Tasmania-201 York Street, 63320600

•Uniting Care Tasmania, Family Support-34 Paterson Street, Launceston,

63 338000

•Family & Relationships Services- Launceston Family Relationships Centre, 121-125 York Street, Launceston, 63367050

•Family Planning Tasmania, 269 Wellington Street, Launceston 63434566

•Uniting Care, Free lending & resource library, Pregnant & Young Parent Support Service, Sexual Assault Support Service (Laurel House) 63342740

- ACECQA, 1300 422 327
- Bravehearts, 1800272831-www.bravehearts.org.au
- Kids help line, 1800 551 800
- Life line, 13 11 14
- Breast feeding helpline, 1800 686 268
- Get healthy service, 1300 806 258
- Oral health services, Children's dental services, 63365160 (Kings Meadows)
- Northern dental centre, 63364100
- DHHS Child health & parental service, Kings Meadows 63365133, Launceston 63362444, Newstead 63311165
- Education & Care Unit: 67772529, fax: 63362171