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The Hundred Languages of Children

The child
is made of one hundred.
The child has
a hundred languages
a hundred hands
a hundred thoughts
a hundred ways of thinking
of playing, of speaking.

A hundred, always a hundred
ways of listening
of marvelling, of loving,
a hundred joys
for singing and understanding.
a hundred worlds
to discover,
a hundred worlds
to invent,
a hundred worlds
to dream.

The child has a hundred languages
(and a hundred, hundred, hundred more)
but they steal ninety nine.
The school and the culture
separate the head from the body.
They tell the child:
to think without hands
to do without head
to listen and not speak
to understand without joy
love and marvelling
only at Easter and Christmas.

They tell the child:
to discover a world already there
and of the hundred
they steal ninety nine.
They tell the child:
that work and play
reality and fantasy,
science and imagination,
sky and earth,
reason and dream
are things
that do not belong together.

And thus they tell the child
that the hundred is not there.
The child says:
No way
The Hundred is there.

Loris Malaguzzi 1920 – 1994
Early Learning Centre Philosophy

The philosophy holds at its core the unique and important time that is childhood. Our priority is to ensure each child feels safe, secure and supported, fostering a sense of belonging and the opportunity to flourish.

We are committed to the development and nurturing of mutually respectful relationships with children and families within our diverse community of learners. We value children as unique individuals who are powerful contributors to their own learning as well as the learning encounters that are experienced as being part of a group.

As advocates for the rights of young children we believe it is our responsibility to inspire and share with the wider community our innovative practice. Children are respected, with educators holding a strong image of the child, believing they are capable, competent, curious and full of potential.

A variety of experiences (indoors and outdoors) nurture children’s spirit of inquiry, a life long love of learning and provides a foundation to becoming responsible citizens of the world, enabling them to make a difference. By providing periods of uninterrupted time to play children find inspiration, joy and gain a sense of well being. Our engagement with the great outdoors empowers children to connect with nature facilitating their social, spiritual, physical, intellectual and emotional learning.

Environments are thoughtfully planned to be warm, inviting, family friendly and aesthetically beautiful spaces. They are designed to evoke and further develop connections, exploration, problem solving, thinking, wonder, creativity, imagination and ‘supported risky play’.
Introduction to the Reggio Emilia Approach

In collaboration with the PYP our learning environment is influenced strongly by the Reggio Emilia approach to education. This is a brief summary of the fundamentals of this philosophy.

The educators in Reggio view ...

The child as a protagonist. Children are rich, strong, and capable. All children have preparedness, potential, curiosity and interest in constructing their learning, negotiating with everything their environment brings to them. Children, teachers and parents are considered the three central protagonists in the educational process.

The child as a collaborator. Education has to focus on each child in relation to other children, the family, the teachers and the community, rather than on each child in isolation. There is an emphasis on work in small groups.

The child as a communicator. This approach fosters children’s intellectual development through a systematic focus on symbolic representation, including words, movement, drawing, painting, building, sculpture, shadow play, collage, dramatic play and music which leads children to surprising levels of communication, symbolic skills and creativity. Children have the right to use many materials in order to discover and communicate what they know, understand, wonder about, question, feel and imagine. In this way, they make their thinking visible through their many natural languages.

The environment as a third teacher. The use of space encourages encounters, communication and relationships. Every corner of every space has an identity and a purpose, is rich in potential to engage and communicate and is valued and cared for by the children and the adults.

The teacher as a partner, nurturer and guide. Teachers facilitate children’s exploration of themes, work on short and long term projects and guide experiences of joint, open ended discovery and problem solving. To know how to plan and proceed with their work, teachers listen and observe children closely. Teachers ask questions, discover children’s ideas, hypotheses and theories, and provide occasions for discovery and learning.

The teacher as a researcher. The teachers see themselves as researchers preparing the documentation of their work with children whom they also see as researchers.

The documentation as communication. Careful consideration and attention are given to the presentation of the thinking of the children and the adults who work with them.

The parent as partner. The ideas and exchange of ideas between parents and teachers favour the development of a new way of educating, which helps teachers to view the participation of families not as a threat, but as an intrinsic element of collegiality and as the integration of different wisdom.
Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework

The Victorian Framework sets the highest expectation for every child.

It identifies five Early Years Learning and Development Outcomes for all children:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators

The Victorian Framework describes each of these outcomes for children from birth to eight years, linking the learning outcomes from the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia to the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) Levels 1 and 2. The Outcomes provide a shared language for all early childhood professionals and families to use when planning for children’s learning and development.

The Victorian Framework identifies eight Practice Principles for Learning and Development, which describe the most effective ways for early childhood professionals to work together and with children and families to facilitate learning and development. These Principles are based on the pedagogy of the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, the Prep to Year 12 Principles of Learning and Teaching, and on the latest international evidence about the best way to support children’s learning.

In addition, the Victorian Framework emphasises the importance of supporting childrens’ and families’ transition as they move within and across services throughout the early childhood period.

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework for Children from Birth to Eight Years. November 2009
National Quality Framework

On 1 January 2012, the National Quality Framework was established and applies to most long day care, family day care, preschool (or kindergarten) and outside school hours care services. This framework aims to raise quality and drive continuous improvement and consistency and care services through:

- A national legislative framework
- A national quality standard
- A national quality rating and assessment process
- A new national body called the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority.

National Legislative Framework

The national legislative framework is established through an applied law system and consists of:

- The Education and Care Services National Law
- The Education and Care Services National Regulations

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:

- Educational program and practice
- Children’s health and safety
- Physical environment
- Staffing arrangements
- Relationships with children
- Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- Leadership and service management

The National Quality Standard aims to promote:

- The safety, health and wellbeing of children
- A focus on achieving outcomes for children through high quality educational programs
- Families’ understanding of what distinguishes a quality service

National quality rating and assessment process

Approved Services are assessed and rated against each of the seven Quality Areas of the National Quality Standard and the National Regulations. Cornish College ELC was assessed in October 2014 and received a top rating of EXCEEDING in all seven Quality Areas.
Early Learning Centre Operation

**Hours**

**ELC 3**
- Full time: Monday - Friday (5 days) 9.00am – 3.00pm
- Part time: Monday - Thursday (4 days) 9.00am – 3.00pm

**ELC 4**
- Full time only: Monday – Friday 9.00am – 3.00pm

Out of School Hours Care Program

The Out of School Hours Care Program is located in the portable near the Prep rooms. The College has engaged Extend to run our before and after school care programs. The programs will have access to school facilities and are activity based.

Your child must be registered with Extend in order to use the service casually. We recommend you do this in case of an emergency.

ELC children who are attending Before School Care are brought over to the ELC at 8.30am and signed in by the Extend staff.
ELC children attending After School Care are taken to the Extend portable at 3.30pm by an ELC staff member.

Location: The portable near the Prep Rooms
Before School Care Hours: 7.00am - 8.30am
After School Care Hours: 3.35pm – 6.00pm

**Connection Time**

ELC Children attending the Extend After School care program or those with an older sibling in the school, will attend the connection program in the observatory from 3.00pm until 3.30pm. The ELC staff will take the children to the Extend portable at 3.30pm. Any child who is not picked up by 3.30pm will be booked into the Extend program.

**Contact Details**

Children must be booked into the Out of School Hours program in order to attend the program. Further information and registration forms are available at www.extend.com.au or

Telephone: 1300 366 437
The ELC Program
The program will:

- Promote a strong and positive image of children
- Advocate for their rights as citizens and to realise their own potential
- Require children to accept their responsibilities as global citizens
- Encourage the active participation and involvement of parents
- Provide an environment which will stimulate, challenge and provoke children’s thinking
- Reflect the child’s and adults’ interests and provide opportunities for different learning styles
- Value children as individuals and group members and be inclusive of differences in gender and culture
- Provide small and large group experiences which will provide complex cognitive problems for children to solve, enabling persistence and motivation to develop
- Document the children’s experiences in order to make the learning visible
- Encourage reflection and research for staff, children and parents
- Value relationships that promote collaboration and communication both with and between children, parents and staff
- Encourage children to participate in research projects which will provoke them to theorise, analyse, reflect, revisit and interpret
- Provide learning experiences which are fun.

Birthdays
Birthdays are a very important part of a young child’s life. If you would like to bring a cake to share with the other children, we encourage you to do that. As we have a ‘no nut’ policy, please do not send any items containing nuts or peanut oil. We find that individual patty cakes or biscuits are the most suitable. If your child is having a private birthday party, unless every child in the ELC is invited, please hand out invitations discreetly, as children are easily hurt if they feel omitted from such an occasion.

Inviting staff to birthdays - whilst we appreciate the thought behind this, we are unable to accept invitations to children’s birthday parties. We believe that if we go to one child’s birthday party we should go to them all and this is not a sustainable situation for staff that have their own family and social commitments outside of school hours.
Buddies
Both ELC 3 and 4 spend a session once a fortnight with their Year 8 buddies. The buddies program operates to give both age groups an opportunity to benefit from a relationship with an older or younger peer. The Year 8s enjoy their mentoring role as well as the chance to play in the ELC, and the ELC children count the days until their buddies come.

Computers/Technology
Children and Computers
Technology is an imperative part of our program. Cameras, videos and various computer programs are utilised to make the process of learning visible. Children are also able to use this technology as we are interested in how they perceive the world around them. iPads are used as a tool to support the children’s learning. They are utilised in a variety of ways including research for inquiry, creating projects and making learning visible.

‘The meeting of children and computer is, in effect the meeting of two intelligences that need to know each other. The intelligence of the child is fluid, intuitive, curious and above all, able to ‘decentralise’ itself and assimilate new interactive rules, to regulate it’s performance, to find and change constructive communicative proposals and solutions.’

Concerns
If you have any concerns or queries, please make a time to discuss this with your child’s teacher before or after school hours. If you have a serious concern, which cannot be addressed by the teacher, you will need to make an appointment with the Director of the ELC. We also enjoy hearing the positives about the Centre, staff and program.
Discipline Policy

It is Cornish College policy that all children and staff have the right to a safe environment. This means an environment which actively promotes respect and acceptance and where issues are effectively and responsibly resolved.

In the case of biting, both sets of parents will be notified – both the parents of the child who has bitten and the child who has been bitten.

We will be encouraging children to solve problems with words rather than aggressive means of coping with conflict.

If physical contact occurs between one or more children, staff will encourage children to think about the child who has been hurt physically. They will ask the child who has been unable to solve the problem with words:

- How do you think that child is now feeling?
- Would you like it if that happened to you?
- How could you solve the problem in the future?
- What can you do to help the child (victim) feel better?
- If this problem is a recurring problem, parents will be notified.

Documentation

What is it?

- Photographs
- Transcripts of small group discussions, explorations of a topic (recorded on audio tape)
- Children’s symbolic representations of their theories and ideas (drawing, sculpting, painting)
- Collaborative products e.g. a group painting, model, or some other form of representation at the culmination of a project
- Video

Why do it?

- It allows children to revisit their own discovery process and perhaps provide a beginning for further learning.
- It provides educators with a tool for research.
- It provides a means of communication with parents and the community.
- It shows that adults value both the process and the product of children’s work.
- It leaves children with traces of the past – memory.
- Documentation provides the opportunity to display to others how powerful children are:
  - Reflecting
  - Revisiting - it’s an anchor for children’s meaning
  - Recognising
  - Self evaluation and social evaluation
  - Gives parents the opportunity to know what their child does and how they do it.
  - When recording their language, we include ‘errs’ and ‘ahhs’ because it indicates that the child is chewing things over.
Environmental Awareness
This program will develop awareness for children to recycle and reuse. We will encourage your children to consider various items, their possible future uses and/or most appropriate place of disposal i.e. compost, recycled glass and plastic items, rubbish. In line with the Cornish College environmental focus we will concentrate on responsible use of our natural and finite resources. During summer the children engage in water play. A rainwater tank has been installed and children are encouraged to be mindful of how they are using the water in their play.

Events and Celebrations
We will encourage the active involvement of parents at all times in the program. We provide a number of events and celebrations throughout the year which family members will be invited to attend.

At the beginning of the year we organise a sausage sizzle at the Early Learning Centre for families to get to know each other. The whole family is invited to this event.

We also have:
- a Curriculum evening – compulsory for parents
- Mother’s Day celebration (or special friend)
- Father’s Day celebration (or special friend)
- Grandparent’s Day (Please organise either a grandparent or a special friend to visit on this day)
- MAD Week and MAD Night@Cornish
- “Tjanabi” an ELC Living Portfolio celebration
- Christmas party

These are some of the social functions that are organised by the Early Learning Centre and the School. The Cornish College Parents’ Association also organise a number of social occasions for parents to attend during the year.

This list is not all inclusive. There are many other spontaneous occasions to attend during the year. Two class representatives will be chosen for each group and they will be responsible for organising many other social activities for parents and families during the year.
Food

Morning Tea
Each child is requested to bring a piece of fruit or vegetable daily for morning tea. This is then shared so the children can choose from a variety of fruit.

As we have a ‘no nut’ policy, please do not send any items containing nuts or peanut oil.

We also encourage you to bring other healthy foods to add variety to the children’s morning tea. Suggestions include healthy popcorn, cheese, dry biscuits, rice crackers or dip.

Parents are invited to prepare the morning tea for the group each day as this frees up the staff to be with the children. Your help is always appreciated.

Lunches

Parents are requested to send their child’s lunch in a suitably named container. Please do not send lollies or chocolate. As early childhood educators, we are concerned with the health and welfare of all young children. We will be encouraging the children to develop awareness about food that is nutritious. Sending ‘junk food’ also creates unhealthy competition between the children as they begin to compare, and assess who has the ‘best’ lunch.

As we will also be developing the children’s awareness of the environment and teaching them to reuse and recycle we would prefer you to send the children’s water in a drink bottle. We are a rubbish free centre in the ELC which means no glad wrap, pre-packaged food etc. Please respect this policy as it is an important message that we give the children in terms of their environmental awareness. There are a number of different containers available.

Lunch orders from the canteen can be made online using the Flexischools website http://www.flexischools.com.au. Orders are then paid for online and are accepted up until 9.00am on the day of order.

Health and Attendance

Regular attendance is important for all children however children who are unwell recover best at home. Requests cannot be made for children to remain indoors for the day. Please also be considerate of the other children and staff at the Early Learning Centre.

Please do not send your child to the ELC if they have a bad cold as it is easily spread to other members of the group.

If your child has an infectious disease, please let us know, as we will inform you of the length of time your child is required to stay at home. If your child has an ongoing condition or allergy it is important for us to be aware of this so as to provide the best possible care.
Immunisation
Under the proposed “No Jab, No Play” legislation that is intended to be brought into effect from 1 January 2016, all parents/guardians seeking to enrol their child at an early childhood service in Victoria will be required to provide evidence that the child is:

- Fully immunised for their age **OR**
- On a vaccination catch-up program **OR**
- Unable to be fully immunised for medical reasons.

“Conscientious Objection” will not be an exemption.
Homeopathic immunisation will not be recognised as a form of immunisation.

Medications
If your child requires medication during the ELC day you are obliged to provide this medication and to give written permission in the accident/illness/medication record. If you do not sign the record we will telephone you for verbal permission which will be verified by another staff member. We are otherwise legally unable to administer medication. The Early Learning Centre does not provide paracetamol for children. Please consider whether your child will be comfortable at the ELC if they do require medication for illness.

If children require Ventolin to be given on a regular basis then an **action plan from the family doctor must be given to the centre** to be kept with the children’s records. This is a Department of Education and Early Childhood requirement.
### Schedule 7 Minimum Period of Exclusion from Primary Schools and Children's Services Centres for Infectious Diseases Cases and Contacts (Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Exclusion of Cases</th>
<th>Exclusion of Contacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amoebiasis (Entamoeba histolytica)</td>
<td>Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campylobacter</td>
<td>Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chickenpox</td>
<td>Exclude until all blisters have dried. This is usually at least 5 days after the rash appears in unimmunised children, but may be less in previously immunised children.</td>
<td>Any child with an immune deficiency (for example, leukaemia) or receiving chemotherapy should be excluded for their own protection. Otherwise not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctivitis</td>
<td>Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diarrhoea</td>
<td>Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diphtheria</td>
<td>Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received following at least two negative throat swabs, the first not less than 24 hours after finishing a course of antibiotics and the other 48 hours later.</td>
<td>Exclude family/household contacts until cleared to return by the Secretary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand, Foot and Mouth disease</td>
<td>Exclude until all blisters have dried.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)</td>
<td>Exclude until at least 4 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis A</td>
<td>Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis B</td>
<td>Exclusion is not necessary.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis C</td>
<td>Exclusion is not necessary.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herpes (&quot;cold sores&quot;)</td>
<td>Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing, where possible.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human immuno-deficiency virus infection (HIV/AIDS)</td>
<td>Exclusion is not necessary.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impetigo</td>
<td>Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenza and influenza like illnesses</td>
<td>Exclude until well.</td>
<td>Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leprosy</td>
<td>Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Secretary.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measles*</td>
<td>Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash.</td>
<td>Immunised contacts not excluded. Unimmunised contacts should be excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case. If unimmunised contacts are vaccinated within 72 hours of their first contact with the first case, or received NHIG within 144 hours of exposure, they may return to the facility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>Exclusion of Cases</td>
<td>Exclusion of Contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meningitis (bacteria - other than meningococcal meningitis)</td>
<td>Exclude until well.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meningococcal infection*</td>
<td>Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed.</td>
<td>Not excluded if receiving carrier eradication therapy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mumps*</td>
<td>Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner).</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pertussis* (whooping cough)</td>
<td>Exclude the child for 21 days after the onset of cough or until they have completed 5 days of a course of antibiotic treatment.</td>
<td>Contacts aged less than 7 years in the same room as the case who have not received three effective doses of pertussis vaccine should be excluded for 14 days after the last exposure to the infectious case, or until they have taken 5 days of a course of effective antibiotic treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poliomyelitis*</td>
<td>Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Re-admit after receiving medical certificate of recovery.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (head lice)</td>
<td>Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubella (german measles)</td>
<td>Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of rash.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmonella, Shigella</td>
<td>Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)</td>
<td>Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is produced.</td>
<td>Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)</td>
<td>Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuberculosis</td>
<td>Exclude until receipt of a medical certificate from the treating physician stating that the child is not considered to be infectious.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typhoid fever (including paratyphoid fever)</td>
<td>Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Secretary.</td>
<td>Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verotoxin producing Escherichia coli (VTEC)</td>
<td>Exclude if required by the Secretary and only for the period specified by the Secretary.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worms (Intestinal)</td>
<td>Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How can families help?

Our overall educational program includes participation as a strong point of our experience. This level of participation is possible to maintain only when the families are consistently aware of:

- The work being carried out by the school and the children
- The extent to which they can become directly involved
- How important your involvement is for the continuity of the methods, the objectives and the climate of the experience
- The family’s co-responsibility is both necessary and essential

For this reason, the maximum attention is paid to the documentation of the work of the teachers and children. This is done to provide an ongoing flow of information to families enabling them to have a more involved relationship with the school.

The projects and learning experiences that we undertake may involve the parents in a variety of ways. Your involvement will vary depending on work commitments etc, but every family will have the opportunity to be part of their child’s learning journey.

You will need to:

- Read the journal (a summary of the learning that has taken place during the day). Use this information as a catalyst for discussion with your child. This will be emailed to you three times a week. There will also be a hard copy on display at school at all times.
- Check emails daily.
- Staff use emails on a regular basis to send out notices, reminders and for general updates.
- Keep an eye on the display board for updates on our current projects or interests. The documentation is an important insight not only into what your child is doing or learning, but how they are working as part of a group.
- Sometimes we will write notes asking for your participation in a project. This will vary depending on the project so it is difficult to predict how you will be involved at this stage.
- Check the Cornish College notices that are emailed home each Wednesday.
- Spend a session with us as part of our ‘visiting families’ experience. This will be explained at the information evening.
- Collect materials that may be useful in the classroom e.g. soft wood off cuts, metal bottle tops, paper off cuts, small boxes etc. A more extensive list is further on in this handbook.
- Help prepare morning tea. When parents are able to cut up the fruit/vegetables, this then enables the staff to be with the children. Any help is much appreciated and welcome!
- Attend information sessions / curriculum nights. This is imperative to having an insight to the philosophy and how we work with your children.
- Attend Well-being/Pastoral Care interviews in March and Parent Teacher Progress meetings in July.
Parent Representatives
Each group invites 2 to 3 parents to act on behalf of the parent group. This role is to support family connections and a sense of community, to be a conduit between staff and parents, in order to support strong communication and connection. Parents are welcome to participate throughout the program, provide feedback, help out with various projects and contribute ideas.

Independent Toileting
At ELC we encourage independent toileting.

Our definition of independent toileting is:

- Children who recognise when they need to go to the toilet and do so. If your child has frequently occurring accidents an action plan will be decided upon between the classroom teacher and the parents. (The centre is not equipped with changing or bathing facilities)
- Children who can wipe their bottom independently. Staff are not expected to do this for children.

Toileting accidents do happen on occasion. Children will be supported and made to feel comfortable if this occurs.

Specialist Subjects

Art
Creating art expands a child’s ability to interact with the world around them and provides a new set of skills for self-expression and communication. The art teacher works with small groups of children in the ELC weekly to enhance and further develop our program’s art experiences.

Creative Movement
Creative dance and movement explores and develops each child’s natural dance potential while extending their movement range. Individual creative and imaginative expression is valued and the dance experience is focused through:

- Rhythm (music, percussion, body rhythms and natural cycles)
- Sensorial stimuli (e.g. colour, texture, language and props)
- Aesthetics and design (e.g. image, shape and space); positive reinforcement, fun release and relaxation.

Library
An appreciation and love of books will be developed during library lessons. The children will be able to borrow a book on a weekly basis. To keep our books protected and in good condition your child will need a school library bag.

Music
The music program is designed using a combination of the Kodaly and Orff Schulwerk philosophies. Children sequentially learn the basic concepts of music, such as beat, rhythm and pitch, through interactive singing, games and playing percussion instruments. Lessons incorporate enquiry and cross-curricular learning, through creating and singing songs from around the world.

Japanese (ELC4 Only)
Japanese studies in the Early Learning Centre will incorporate the introduction of basic linguistic elements and vocabulary through a variety of activities. The communicative approach to learning will be implemented and the children will have the opportunity to enjoy learning a foreign language in an informal environment.
Outdoor Education Specialist
We have decided to incorporate the skills of PMP (Perceptual Motor Program), previously run in the gym, into the natural flow of the children’s play. The outdoor specialist will spend time with the children outdoors, challenging and extending their physical development. The Gym may be used on occasions of inclement weather.

Portfolios
Each child in the ELC will have a portfolio. The portfolio will be a collection of thoughts, images and photographs reflecting your child’s development over the year. Your child and their educators will choose meaningful pieces to go into the portfolio, and this will involve your child reflecting upon the things they have done and what they have learnt throughout the year. Parents are invited to create the first page for the portfolio, as you are the child’s first teacher.

Rest/Quiet Time
The children will rest for approximately an hour each day. They may sleep or rest quietly on their beds. Each child will be supplied with a waterproof mattress. All children need a small fitted sheet (cot sheets are perfect), a small pillow and a small rug or a blanket. Each of these items need to be clearly named. The pillowcase and sheet will be sent home throughout the term for laundering. Children are encouraged to read and listen to stories during rest time as this is an important part of their literacy development. Children are not required to sleep but this quiet time is encouraged as part of children’s wellbeing, and a time to process learning.

Settling In
Some children settle into an early learning program quickly and happily and some feel shy and may cry on their first days. As they get used to the program, their new surroundings and the staff, they will be eager to start each day’s experiences. We will do everything we can to make your child feel secure and happy in what may be their first time away from their parents.

If you feel that your child requires more time to transition into the program please discuss this with your class teacher.
**Signing In**
For safety and security reasons, parents are required to sign their child in and out of the centre. The arrival and departure time of the child must be documented and initialled. If the child is to attend the After School Care Program please document this in the sign in book also by writing ASC clearly in the column provided. Please do not fill in the departure time until you collect the child.

**Spare Clothes in Lockers**
Children often require a change of clothes due to a toileting accident or getting wet when having fun playing. It is essential to have a change of casual clothes kept in their locker. Please include several pairs of underpants and socks.

**Student Teachers**
We are committed to giving student teachers (from Melbourne, Monash, Deakin, Swinburne, Charles Sturt and RMIT universities) an opportunity to undertake their teaching placements in our ELC. Student teachers bring with them the latest in research about children and learning, and this is invaluable in terms of the staff’s professional learning. We also believe we have a responsibility to share what we believe about how children learn and how we undertake this.
The Great Outdoors

Our ELC offers the best of all worlds – a secure and creative space inside, a gently challenging outdoor investigative zone which supports young children to develop emotional and physical confidence and skills, and then the wider property where they can feel the freedom of a fully natural environment.

We are situated on 42 hectares of marshland including a farm, lake, orchard, an island (gathering place) and an extensive area of bush. Such diversity provides a range of purposeful contexts for the children’s exploration and investigation.

To increase their connection to nature, as well as many other educational benefits, the children will be spending extended periods of time outside. This will give them tangible ways of working with nature in a variety of settings.

Parents and younger siblings are welcome to join us during our time on the property. During the colder months a campfire is enjoyed at the ‘Gathering Place’ on the island. This is to create a sense of warmth but is also used to cook on. Families are encouraged to participate in this popular experience.

Due to the children’s sense of adventure, they can get wet or damp despite the use of waterproof suits and gumboots. Please ensure your child has a change of clothes in their locker at all times, including socks. All items must be clearly labelled.
Toys
We discourage toys being brought into the centre unless the children are invited to for a specific purpose. Cuddly toys can be brought in for quiet time.

Transition
To begin the school year, a transition program enables children to develop a sense of belonging by feeling secure in their environment and with their relationships with other children, families and educators.

We are certain that any children who have attended the Early Learning Centre will make a smooth transition to our school. They will be familiar with the environment, the prep teachers and the school community.

Weather
Hot Days
We are very concerned with all aspects of safety for your child, therefore we are aware of skin safety in the playground. The children will be required to wear a school hat at all times during Term 1 and Term 4 and on any other sunny days during Terms 2 and 3. We recommend you keep a spare broad rimmed hat in your child's bag at all times.

In Terms 1 and 4 children need to bring in a named roll-on sunscreen to leave in their locker.

We will assist children to independently apply sunscreen before they go outside to play.

Cold Days
In the colder months children must have a warm coat, warm hat, gumboots and any other items of clothing that you would like to keep them warm and dry. In winter, students may wear the College scarf and beanie.

About Waste and Nutrition
Waste
Due to the deep and genuine concern that the children of the ELC have shown for the environment of their school and indeed the world, we have implemented a rubbish free preference with regard to lunches and drinks. All items coming to school should be in reusable, refillable containers. No packaged items, plastic bags or cling wrap please.

We believe that in order to be sustainable in the future we must encourage our children to have positive environmental habits.
Nutrition

As advocates for young children we are deeply concerned about their health and well being and have witnessed a worrying trend towards the provision of processed, packaged, sweet, high fat, high salt snacks for children that have many colouring and flavouring additives. The media spend millions promoting these products to our children. In the Melbourne Age, (17 January 2011), a review of snacks for children was conducted and the results were staggering. So called healthy foods were brought under the microscope. There are almost daily calls for the banning of junk food in schools.

State Governments are now recommending that all schools should be NUT FREE zones and in the light of an increasing number of children with life threatening allergies we ask that no nuts or nut products come into the centre. (This includes peanut butter and Nutella sandwiches).

Please do not put chips, Rollups, Twisties, Shapes, fun size chocolate bars, frogs, lollies, sweet biscuits, fun fruits, muesli bars, Dunkaroos etc in your child’s lunch box. They are all individually packaged and are not preferred for that reason, they are also high in fat, sugar and salt. Children do not need these things as part of a healthy lunch.

Children will be encouraged to use their drink bottles during the day to stay well hydrated (the brain loves water). Their drink bottles should only contain water. Please send the drink bottle every day (encourage your children to get this ready.)

For morning tea the children will be offered a variety of fresh and dried fruits and vegetables depending on what you provide. We are happy to offer cheese and biscuits and homemade goodies if you bring them in, but only plain crackers that have no flavour enhancers or colours please.

(Please note that Trident and Fantastic rice crackers have lots of additives in them. Sakata plain and seaweed and Farmland plain crackers seem okay.)

Health regulations for the heating and serving of food to children have become very strict. As we do not have food handler’s qualifications and our kitchen is not equipped with the correct thermometers etc for testing food, we are unable to heat any food to serve to children.

The school canteen provides a lunch order service for the ELC and while they have a low fat foods policy, we recommend that children have lunch orders only occasionally. They offer a range of healthy sandwiches and pasta meals. Orders can be made online using the Flexischools website http://www.flexischools.com.au. Orders can be paid for in advance and are accepted up until 9am on the day of order.

Please do not order flavoured milks or juices. The children only need water all day. The two healthiest drinks for children are water and plain milk.
Lunch Box Tips

Six items to put in a lunch box:

- Fresh fruit
- Crunchy vegetables (carrot/ celery/cucumber sticks, cherry tomatoes etc)
- A dairy food – cheese, milk or yogurt (freeze yogurt or milk the night before in warm weather)
- A protein food – slice of lean meat, tuna or salmon or egg
- Starchy food – bread, roll, flat bread, wrap, fruit bread, crackers (whole grain, wholemeal, hi-fibre white)
- Water

Use mayonnaise or butter in small amounts / use avocado instead.

Choose in season fruit and veg. for quality and value.

In involve your children in choosing healthy lunches/ plan together.

Try a variety of breads (cut into strips or use a shape cutter for a novelty).

Sandwich fillings to try:

- Lean roast beef, lamb or pork with tomato and lettuce
- Light cream cheese, grated carrot and sultanas
- Low fat cheese, pineapple and lettuce
- Lean ham and fruit chutney
- Hommus, tomato and lettuce
- Tuna or salmon with low fat mayonnaise
- Avocado, lettuce, skinless chicken
- Tabouli, lettuce and fetta
- Cheese and vegemite
- Salad with a cheese spread

Snacks:

- Slice of fruit loaf
- Pancake or pikelet (add mashed banana or apple to the mix)
- Fruit/ date/ pumpkin scone
- Rice crackers and salsa
- Rice cakes with a scrape of cream cheese and vegemite
- Muffins (make them together) use ½ wholemeal ½ white flour
- Vegetable sticks and hummus
- Wholemeal crackers and a slice of cheese
- Dried fruit
- Snow peas, fetta, pitted olives
- Fruit kebabs
- Rice paper rolls
- Sushi rolls

We would encourage you to contribute recipes to share. We may even compile a book if we have lots of contributions.

Websites to check out (click on recipes)

www.freshforkids.com.au
www.freshfoodkids.com.au
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<th>Items to Save and Look Out For!</th>
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Keep your 🌾 🌾 peeled!

We can usually find a use for anything!!
If I can
ask my own questions,
try out my ideas,
experience what’s around me,
share what I find;

If I have
plenty of time for
my special pace,
a nourishing space,
things to transform;

If you’ll be
my patient friend,
trusted guide,
fellow investigator,
partner in learning;

Then I will
explore the world,
discover my voice,
and tell you what I know
in a hundred languages.

Pamela Houk

This poem, first used as an introduction to The Hundred Languages of Children Exhibit at the Dayton Art Institute, was meant to alert viewers to aspects of the Reggio Emilia experience as well as to the dialogues of the children printed on many panels. It was written by Pamela Houk with valuable suggestions from Leila Gandini and the late Loris Malaguzzi.