



# Parents Notebook

## 2022

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### A message about this Notebook.

We have kept the colour use to a minimum to save ink, and we have kept the colourway very natural because that best reflects who we are. We encourage you to only print if necessary.

We acknowledge the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation as the traditional custodians of this land and waters.

We pay our respects to Noongar elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledge their cultural connections in our education

## We are a Centre that is exceeding the national standards

Unicare is independently reviewed by the Western Australian government on a periodic basis, and we are proud of our 'Exceeding' National Quality Standards rating.

This rating, and the work that goes into achieving it, means that you and your child are not just included in Centre life, you are at the core of what we do.

Detailed information about the standards we comply with can be found on the ACECQA website: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/about>

## About our Unicare Vision

Unicare aspires to be a place of wonder where children can explore and develop a desire for lifelong learning. We are passionate about early childhood and as such, create magical environments and experiences that are inspiring to the young mind and encourage the wonder.

Unicare is dedicated to genuine partnerships with families and communities. Nurturing, kindness, and respect are at the foundation of Unicare principles promoting equality for everyone.

## Centre Policies

Our policies are based on evidence, learning and the government requirements for the education and care sector. They consider the uniqueness and complexities of providing education and care to children within a group setting. Our policies and procedures are reviewed periodically and our parents are always invited to join in.

## Valuing Diversity

We are an incredibly diverse community at Unicare, reflecting the broader local community.

We are proud of our staff family and as you will see in the foyer, we are a multilingual group with qualifications and experience from all over the world.

This year our staff speak 17 different languages and are encouraged to celebrate this with our children.

For us, diversity is our inspiration for our curriculum. We practice and teach kindness, respect, and caring, and we share a respect for multiple perspectives, and we are strong practitioners of the ECA Code of Ethics (A copy can be found in our foyer).

## Our Educators

Our team are qualified, dedicated professionals. Our qualifications range from Certificate and Diploma in early childhood education and care, Early Childhood Teaching degrees and several staff have or are studying for a Master's degrees.

We believe that highquality programs are provided by Educators who are committed to their profession and the education of children. Our Educators regularly attend professional development courses on best practice and child development.

You will see a photo frame in the window near each room showing you who is working in the room. We avoid employing external casual staff, preferring to have our own internal pool of staff who know the children and our families. We use these staff to support room teams when they are on leave – with the bonus that the children will see Educators that they already know.

New Educators who join our team are taken through a carefully structured orientation and have a mentor for their first 6 months to guide their learning about this very special Centre and our children.

## Partnerships with Families

We work in partnerships with families and would like families to view our service as a caring, learning community.

Family members are encouraged to contribute to the curriculum, attend family meetings and share with Educators about their child's learning and development.

We welcome parents making an appointment with their child's room leader to work through their child's program and development. To remind you, we advertise for this twice a year, but of course it is welcome at any time.

## Enrolling at Unicare

In line with State and Commonwealth regulations, an enrolment form must be completed prior to starting at Unicare.

We work with new families to book a minimum of two orientation visits before the date of commencement. This is our way of supporting your child to build feelings of belonging in the Centre.

The orientation helps children build confidence and feel comfortable in their new environment whilst they have the security of a family member with them.

We aim to make your orientation as individualised as possible. We encourage you to talk with Educators about your child's strengths, interests, culture, and routines. The more information we have, the more meaningful and respectful we can make your child's transition into education and care.

Please feel free to contact the centre at any time if you would like updates on how your child is settling in.

**An important note: Some children at Unicare are diagnosed with anaphylaxis and some are being closely observed and supported due to their reactions to foods. To ensure the safety of every child no food is to be brought into the centre. If your child may have products such as peanut butter, please do ensure they are thoroughly cleaned prior to coming in. We thank you for your cooperation in ensuring every child's safety.**

## How does enrolment work?

The Australian early childhood enrolment process can feel a little bureaucratic as we need to comply with state and national laws. **Don't worry, we will assist you through it.** There are forms to fill in, but we want you to be able to focus on your needs and your child's needs and so we will be sending you the necessary forms for each stage only when they are needed.

The process goes like this:

- Coming onto the waitlist - to do this you fill out the waitlist form that we send you – this triggers the whole process.
- You will then receive an email that invites you to book a tour. On the tour, you will be able to discuss your family's needs, learn more about us, and ask any questions that you may have. You will be offered a place when it becomes available close to your start date.
- We will be in touch to discuss your tailored orientation program and confirm your booked days. On the first orientation visit – typically 30 minutes to an hour in room – you will meet the room team – when your child sees you at ease in the room, they will settle in. You can talk with your Educators about preparing for enrolment.
- At this time, we will ask you to fill out the Centre's enrolment forms:
  - The digital version is done through the Xplor email link we will send you
  - The paper version comes from the Centre's Admin team.
- The final steps will be shared with you via email as it needs to be tailored to each family and that relates to fees and payments.
- To introduce your child to the rooms, we ask you to fill out your child's introduction record, it is called 'All about me' and it is essential for your child's Educator so that they can get to know you and plan for your child.
- If your child has any health conditions, discuss the need for a 'Medical Plan' with the Enrolment Team at Unicare.
- Don't worry, your Educators will guide you through your orientation, they are expecting you!

## Notes

Make notes here on things you want to remember to talk to your child's Educator's about when you enrol (or at any time):

**For example:**

**Can we talk about the daily routines?**

**What do you do if my child is unsettled?**


## Clothing and Things to Bring

There is no such thing as inappropriate weather just inappropriate clothing and at Unicare we play in the outdoors in almost all weathers. Children are required to wear clothing that at least covers the shoulders during the hotter months, and we ask that you bring in your gumboots and raincoats for winter.

We also recommend comfortable shoes for venturing out in our community and exploring nature.

Please ensure that all items brought into the centre are clearly labelled with your child's name. This includes clothing, shoes, comforters and milk/drink bottles.

Unicare provides wide brim hats, the Cancer Council sunscreens and water bottles. Bring the following items each day:

- A change of clothes each day
- Nappies, if required
- Bottles and dummies, if required
- A soft toy, if required
- Gumboots and a raincoat for rainy day play

## The Unicare Curriculum

In early childhood settings such as ours, the word curriculum means ‘all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children’s learning and development’.  
[adapted from the Early Years Learning Framework]

Our environment and curriculum are created to support play-based learning and we see it as our role to empower children to have the freedom to determine their learning, but we support this learning through carefully planned, knowledgeable interventions. Far from being static, children’s learning is done through play and is dynamic and at the same time, wonderfully complex. We know that play is a context for a child’s learning and:

- allows for the expression of personality
- enhances dispositions such as curiosity and creativity
- enables connections between prior experiences and new learning
- assists children to develop relationships and concepts
- stimulates a sense of wellbeing.

We document and analyse the learning to support further planning for each child and for the group.

We use family books, learning stories and floor books to document the children’s voices and learning experiences. Family input is highly valued as part of the Early Years Learning Framework’s curriculum planning cycle process.

You will find the overall program on display in room. We will also email the room program out to you monthly. Your child’s Educator will take you through how to read it and know what is happening in your room each day. Check your child’s group book (in the older rooms) or individual family book (in the younger rooms) for more details and messages from the day.

At least twice a year you will be invited to meet with your child’s Educator’s to go through your child’s developmental summary and have a chat about how they are developing. You are of course welcome to ask for a meeting at any time. We are a very open team and will of course come to you if we have any concerns about your child.

If your child is receiving any specialist care, discuss this with your room team and they will talk to you about integrating programs to ensure that your child always receives consistent support between the teams.

If you want to know anything more about how the curriculum works in this Centre, make a booking to have a chat with our Educational Leader.

***The educational leader at the service leads the development and implementation of educational programs in the service.*** Regulation 118 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012

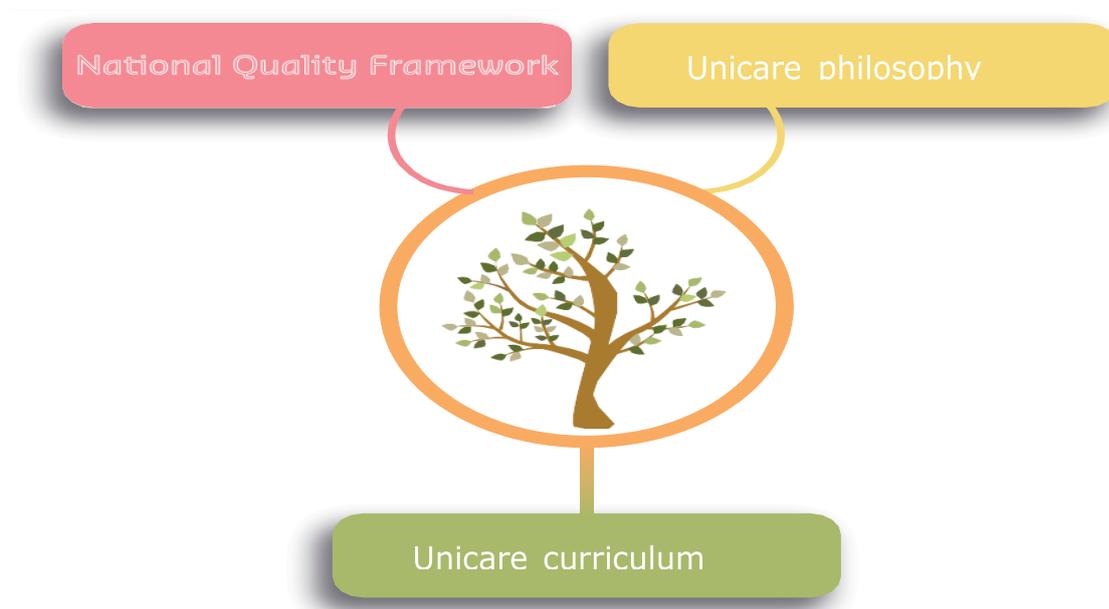
At Unicare:

The programs that are offered at Unicare are not 'extras', they are not subject to additional charges, they are integrated with the room program and individual programs for children.

For example:

The child may develop an interest in a particular area and this is used across the centre through the room program in concert with the additional Educators from our Attenborough (environment, sustainability) program. The extensive loose parts library would be used to provide open ended resources, and it is all worked on through the outdoor studio and in the natural playground.

If a child has some identified issues that need additional support, the 'Embrace' inclusion support program might set up a working plan with the child's Educators to support and explore what is needed further, work closely with the child's family, and integrate input from the child's specialists into their program.



The Centre policies and procedures guide us.

They are built with parent and community input. We have a copy available in the Centre's reception or on our website.

We don't rest on our 'Exceeding' National Quality Standards rating. Our commitment to ongoing improvement can be seen in our Quality Improvement Plan – a copy is available in our reception.

Most of all, we want you to know that the more we receive parent input, the better this wonderful Centre gets!

## Our special programs offered at Unicare

### Body Buds

Our Body Buds program is aimed at supporting the development of the children's social, physical and emotional resilience through various outdoor and indoor activities. It includes providing the program on physical activity, supporting emotional resilience and social skills. The Body Buds program provides a large range of learning experiences to support the development of the children's physical movement skills.

### Embrace

Our Embrace program was developed to encourage children at Unicare who require additional support. We work in a multi-disciplinary approach to ensure that every child in the centre has an opportunity to grow, thrive, and engage meaningfully in their environments. The Embrace Program offers:

- Working with families and their chosen specialists to develop and implement inclusion plans that address the specific needs of the child.
- Hosting specialist appointments for children at the Centre, to ensure that children's therapy or support programs are integrated into their learning at Unicare.
- Building the capacity and knowledge of all Educators through targeted professional development.
- Providing information about the support services available for families within the community.

### Attenborough

The Attenborough Program is a research-focused, child-led nature program that is unique to Unicare.

Our Attenborough program is underpinned by the following four principles:

Nature pedagogy

Sustainability

Building connections with the community

Embedding First Nations perspectives

### Polyglots

The Polyglots program provides children at Unicare opportunities to learn different languages. This approach reflects our multicultural centre.

Through a play-based focus, children engage in small sessions in the targeted language, with new words and phrases being introduced and consolidated over the year. This program provides the perfect foundation to introduce and engage our children in various languages.

Each year we are deeply engaged with learning Auslan Sign Language each week during term time.



## The rooms at Unicare

Our curriculum is created to support play-based learning and empowers children to have the freedom to determine their learning. Children are closely supervised with our higher staffing levels, and this also means they are closely supported as they play and learn.

They are allowed to form relationships with many children and Educators throughout the centre. All children are welcome to explore and play in any of the rooms and participate in activities with any educator. Children are exposed to pre-literacy and pre-numeracy through play-based learning in all rooms.

### Koobidja (3 – 12+ months)

The word Koobidja is defined as ‘smallest child’ in the traditional Noongar language. Our focus in Koobidja is to form secure and loving relationships with our precious little babies. We take pride in our one-on-one interactions we provide to these children to create nurturing relationships – which we hope will last for their whole journey at Unicare.

### BindiBindi and Djoongong rooms (12 months up)

We have these individual toddlers’ rooms set up with exciting and inspiring environments to encourage the children’s sense of wonder. Our toddlers embark on their journey to build their own identities, independence, and awareness of the world they live in. They also form meaningful relationships with their Educators and develop a sense of belonging to their room and Unicare as a whole.

### Wonnil (2.5 up) and Kulbardi (3 up)

These are rooms of discovery. With learning areas created to further support our children and their ongoing development and growth. We expose our children to construction, ideas development, sharing with friends, experiments and encourage discussions and reflections of our experiments and discoveries. The children learn primarily through play and we introduce activities based around the environment, art, drama, stories, and music.

The age ranges are estimates – we work on child development to tailor our approach to each individual child.

### Maali (4 ish up)

This is a wonderful play-based kindy program with a registered early childhood teacher. We would love to talk to you about it further.

## Gardens at Unicare

Our gardens are more than playgrounds. In your orientation and then later on, we encourage you to come and play in the gardens and explore the spaces of discovery with your child. Ask to see our chickens, stick insects and other pets.

## When children grow beyond the group - Transitions to a new age-group

### **Information for Parents about transitioning**

Key steps to transitioning throughout Unicare are:

There are basic skills that need to be acquired before a decision to begin transitioning a child from one room to the next can be made. Team Leaders ensure that transition plans are developed that will include a focus on safety, age-appropriate expectations and social, emotional readiness.

Educators will initiate a discussion with you when we feel your child is ready to transition to the next room. This will be based on an assessment of readiness, and availability of places. We will then discuss the opportunity with you and make the decision to stay or move, together.

The transition itself will be a planned process that usually takes time. This is not a rushed experience for your child. Some children need more time than others, and our Educators are sensitive to this. We will manage shorter or longer transition periods based on individual needs and keep up communication with you along the way.

#### How it works

After the discussion, which includes you receiving a 'readiness summary', your child will 'visit' the new room for small periods each day, increasing in length over time.

We will usually start with mealtime and play visits, moving on to afternoon 'sleepovers' further into the process.

When possible one of your child's current educators will come along on these visits to maintain a feeling of security and to help form bonds with the new Educators.

We try to transition two children together so they will each have a 'moving buddy'.

We actively encourage parental involvement in the transitioning process.

Spending some time together in the new room can help relieve anxiety you or your child might be feeling.

Keep talking to us about how you are feeling about the transition and what you see in your child's response - each child responds differently, and you know your child the best!

## Health Procedures

Unicare utilises the Australian Government, National Health and Medical Research Council's most recent edition of "Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services".

Please keep your child at home if the child is showing any of the following symptoms:

Generally showing cold/flu symptoms

A temperature above 37.5°C

Diarrhoea or vomiting.

Children with infections must be excluded for the period recommended by the Department of Health.

All families will be notified when other children have confirmed infectious diseases whilst remaining confidential about the child's name and details.

Where serious infections or major outbreaks occur, the nominated supervisor will seek the advice of the public health unit and issue families with information advising them of prevention and action to be taken.

Where a potentially serious infectious event occurs, the Centre Manager will contact the public health unit for advice

## Immunisation

Health professionals strongly urge the vaccination of all individuals to protect themselves and the wider community from serious and sometimes fatal vaccine-preventable diseases.

A child's immunisation status must be confirmed via the MyGov App immunisation register and parents must provide the Centre with their child's Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement. This statement must not be more than two months old.

: The Child's immunisation status must be 'up to date' according to their AIR Immunisation History Statement to be permitted to enrol into long day-care.

## Medication Procedures

Medication will only be administered if a medication authorisation form has been completed in full and signed daily by a parent or other authorised person.

Authority to administer medication to a child will not be accepted over the phone except in the case of an emergency. The medication authorisation form must be checked by an educator before the parents leave.

Medication must be in its original container with the original label, clearly labelled with the child's name and within its expiry date. All medication must be handed to an educator. Under no circumstances should medication be placed in the child's bag or locker. The medication will NOT be administered if:

- The medication form is not fully completed and signed.
- The medicine is not in the original bottle with the original label.
- The medication is prescribed for anyone other than the child.
- The medication has expired.

The staff administering the medication will adhere to the instructions on the medication container should there be any anomalies between the container and parent instructions. Where possible parents will be contacted to be notified of any anomaly.

If in doubt about medication, Educators are not required by law to administer medication. The first aid cabinet and storage for Epi-pens is in room with a backup centrally located in the dining room and is easily accessible to all Educators.

## Accidents and illnesses in the Centre

Sometimes children will have a tumble or feel unwell. This part of childhood is especially hard for parents and children alike. Every first aid incident or early illness will be documented so that you have the information that you need.

A peak at our accident form.

 Saved to this PC <b>Accident/ Incident Report</b>	
<b>Child's details</b>	
Date	
Child's name	
Age	
Room	
Staff in the area	
<b>What happened?</b>	
Where? What time? Was any equipment involved?	
<b>Where there any injuries?</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Abrasion, scrape <input type="checkbox"/> Bite <input type="checkbox"/> Broken bone / fracture <input type="checkbox"/> Bruise <input type="checkbox"/> Burn
Details of injury: _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Cut <input type="checkbox"/> Rash <input type="checkbox"/> Sprain <input type="checkbox"/> Swelling <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
<b>What action was taken??</b>	
_____ _____ _____	
<b>Was any medical assistance required?</b>	
_____ _____	
<b>Contacting family</b>	
Parent/authorized person	
Time:	
Parent/authorized person	
Time:	
Parent/authorized person	
Time:	
<b>Person completing this record</b>	
Staff member:	
Date:	
Time:	
Leadership team member notified:	
<b>Parent acknowledgement</b>	
I have been notified of my child's incident/injury	
Parent/Guardian Signature: .....	Date: .....
Would you like feedback on the follow up investigation?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
<b>Followup (Office)</b>	
Any investigation or follow up:	
Conclusions:	
Changes made:	
Incident logged in QA 2 system:	

A quick peak at our illness report form

 early childhood education <b>Illness Report</b>	
<b>Child's details</b>	
Date	
Child's name	
Age	
Room	
Staff in the area	
<b>Please describe the signs of illness</b>	
_____ _____ _____	
Where? What time?	
Does the child have any known medical conditions?	
Is the child on any medications?	
<b>What action was taken??</b>	
_____ _____ _____	
<b>Was any medical assistance required?</b>	
_____ _____	
<b>Person completing this record</b>	
Staff member:	
Date:	
Time:	
Leadership team member notified:	
<b>Parent acknowledgement</b>	
I have been notified of my child's incident/injury	
Parent/Guardian Signature: .....	Date: ..... / ..... / .....
Would you like feedback on the follow up investigation?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
<b>Followup (Office)</b>	
Notes from investigation or follow up:	
Conclusions:	
Changes made:	
Illness logged in QA 2 system:	
Is there a need to put up a sign for other parents?	
<b>Contacting family</b>	
Parent/authorized person	
Time:	
Parent/authorized person	
Time:	

## Important information you will need

### **Services Australia**

For information on help with the cost of child care <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/child-care-subsidy>

### **Raising Children**

For great, and current, information on raising children <https://raisingchildren.net.au/>

### **My time**

Supporting parents of children with disabilities <http://mytime.net.au/why-mytime/>

### **Australian Breastfeeding Association**

Breast feeding support <https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/>

### **Play Groups WA**

Local play groups <https://playgroupwa.com.au/>

### **Speech and language development**

Fact sheets on speech and language development

[https://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/SPAweb/Resources for the Public/Fact Sheets/SPAweb/Resources for the Public/Fact Sheets/Fact Sheets.aspx?hkey=e0ad33fb-f640-45b1-8a06-11ed2b73f293](https://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/SPAweb/Resources%20for%20the%20Public/Fact%20Sheets/SPAweb/Resources%20for%20the%20Public/Fact%20Sheets/Fact%20Sheets.aspx?hkey=e0ad33fb-f640-45b1-8a06-11ed2b73f293)

### **Your local child health nurse**

[https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A E/Community-child-health-nurses](https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Community-child-health-nurses)

## Contact us

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