

ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
EARLY LEARNING CENTRE
FAMILY HANDBOOK





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WELCOME

We are thrilled that you have made the decision to become part of St Francis of Assisi Early Learning Centre. It takes a village to raise a child and we feel privileged that we can be part of your child's life journey.

We encourage parents to be involved in the life of the Centre as much as possible. However, we also understand that parents share many other commitments. We value your support and contributions which assist us in maintaining a high quality service to your family. To ensure we provide the highest quality care and education, we follow established guidelines, policies, procedures and base our curriculum around the Early Years Learning Framework which encourages ongoing learning and reflective practice.

We hope your association with the Centre is an enjoyable one and we look forward to working with you. We would like you to feel that the Centre and its activities belong to you as well as to the children. You are always welcome to spend time in the Centre with your child.

PHILOSOPHY

We provide a respectful, calm and secure environment.

Our learning spaces inspire creativity, enjoyment, innovation, enthusiasm and individuality.

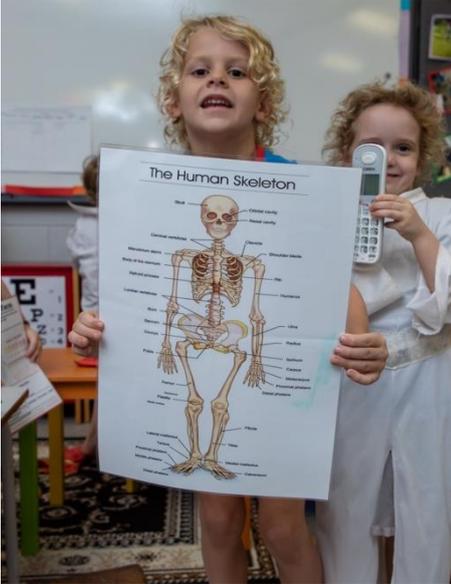
Children have opportunities to develop empathy, accomplishment and cooperation with each other.

We are committed to promote continuous learning for all within a supportive, ethical and friendly environment.

We develop rich and open relationships and connections with our parents and community.

We respect each other and aim to be flexible, honest and compassionate in all our relationships.

GOALS



Our goals are to:

- Recognise each child's unique strengths, talents and interests and incorporate these into the learning program.
- Provide a rich variety of opportunities where children can explore, talk, share, play, sing, laugh, dance, listen, create, experiment, work through challenges and solve problems.
- Challenge children and encourage them to believe in themselves and their abilities, take risks, grow in self-confidence and develop to their full potential.
- Welcome parents and encourage them to become actively involved in the Centre.
- Create an environment in which staff, families and children maintain an open flow of communication at all times.
- Model the values of love and respect for all through our daily interactions with staff, children and families.

Saint Francis of Assisi Early Learning Centre incorporates the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) into our program.

ORGANISATION

Hours of Operation

Monday to Friday: 7.00am – 5.45pm.

Closed on Public Holidays (fee charged unless holiday is booked). Closed for two weeks over Christmas and New Year (no charge).

Staffing

Principal/ Director:	Melanie Bolwell
Deputy Principal:	Sarah Haydon
Assistant Director:	Rebecca Russell
Early Childhood Staff:	Myrna Stoddard Deborah Sully Lydia Hebb
Chef:	Stephen Bolwell
Admin Officer:	Annette Reynolds
Finance Officer:	Nola Hebb
ELC Bookkeeper:	William Spinks

Permanent Staff

All our staff are dedicated to providing your child with quality care and education. All staff have current First Aid training, Emergency Asthma Training, Anaphylaxis Training and Epi-pen training, Fire Awareness Certificate and have had a Police Check/Ochre Card.

Relief staff may be employed when permanent staff are sick or on holidays. All staffing levels are set in accordance with the Child Care Act and Regulations.



Miss Bec



Miss Myrna



Miss Deb



Miss Lydia

Enrolment

Full time or part time care is available for children aged from two to five. Children attend on their specified days (unless otherwise arranged with a two-week warning period). Permanent changes in enrolments may not be possible until vacancies occur. Public Holidays

<u>Fee</u>	<u>2-3 Years</u>	<u>3-5 Years</u>
Weekly	\$425	\$390
Daily	\$103	\$98

cannot be substituted for alternative days as the Centre maintains only permanent bookings. An interview is conducted with each family prior to admission at which time parents will complete all necessary documentation for enrolment.

- Fees are to be paid two (2) weeks in advance.
- All payments can be made at the School Office.
- Full fees will be charged for every day your child is enrolled, including all absences for illness and public holidays.
- Half fees are available for holidays providing two (2) weeks notification is given.
- Please contact the Finance Officer as soon as possible if there are any difficulties meeting payment commitments.
- A late pick-up fee of \$1 per every 1 minute is charged (according to the Centre's clock).
- All fees must be kept up to date to ensure your child's continued enrolment.

Child Care Subsidy

Everyone is entitled to some benefits. Please collect forms from the School Office. Our ELC approval ID is 1-2WX25X.

Allowable Absences

Everyone is entitled to some benefits. Please collect forms from the School Office. Our ELC approval ID is 1-2WX25X.

Sick Days

If your child is sick, please contact the Centre. A doctor's certificate is required in order for the CCS to be paid after the 42 allowable absences have been used.

Holidays

Written notification of holidays is required at least two (2) weeks in advance. Regular fees will apply if notice is late or not given. A holiday form must be completed and signed by the parents/ guardians and given to the Centre or School Office. Holiday forms can be found in the back of the Sign In/ Sign Out Register. A holding fee of 50% of your regular fees will be charged on eligible leave.

End of Care

Written notification is required at least two (2) weeks, or more, prior to the child's last day. A "Notification of End of Care" form must be completed and given to the Centre. If your child is leaving the Centre to attend Transition at St Francis of Assisi School, a school enrolment form must be completed and given to the School Office before your child may begin the school year.

Arrival and Pick Up

To ensure that children arrive and depart safely and happily we ask that:

1. Parents only use the main entrance to the Centre (car park side).
2. Children are always escorted to a staff member on arrival and never left at the gate.
3. Parents acknowledge the child's arrival and departure with a staff member.
4. Parents must sign children in and out on the sign in/ out register each day (this is a most important legal document, and also ensures we have an accurate roll in the case of an emergency evacuation).
5. Wash hands.

If you are unable to collect your child from the Centre, please call or notify the Centre in writing as to who will be picking up your

child. This person must be an adult (over 16) and authorised person noted on your child's enrolment form and he/ she will be asked for identification on arrival at the Centre.

Please note that the Centre is not legally open until 7.00am, therefore you cannot drop your child off any earlier than this. If you are going to be late any time would you please contact the Centre. The Centre closes at 5.45pm sharp.

Late Fees

Please note that if you are late picking up your child, a fee will be charged of \$1 for every 1 minute according to the Centre's clock.

Car Parking

Car parking specifically for the Centre is available in front of the Centre. No parking is allowed in the BUS zone. Please exercise considerable care as there are many pedestrians and children can be very unpredictable. Please observe speed and direction signs.

Saying Goodbye

It may be difficult to leave your child at the Centre for the first time. Staff understand it is as hard for parents as children, so please call if you would like to check on your child. Here are some suggestions on how to leave your child:

- Say, "goodbye, I'm going now and I will be back this afternoon".
- Give them a kiss and a hug, then leave.
Don't leave then come back if you hear your child crying. This confuses children and just makes it harder for you to leave.
- Always farewell staff so that they know you are leaving. This is a signal for them to give a little extra support to your child should they need it.
- Parents and children need time to adjust. Allow time so your child can show you things and places that interest them on arrival and departure.



Routine

Our daily routine enables us to provide a stable learning environment for all children. The routine reflects the individual needs of the children as well as the group as a whole. Our routine is as follows and is displayed in the room.

7.00am - Centre opens. Educators greet parents and children upon arrival. Sun cream is applied and hats on. Children are family grouped. Children enjoy outdoor activities.

8.20am - Children are given a 5 Minute warning for Morning Tea.

8.25am - Water break and hand washing.

8.30am - Morning tea, Children are encouraged to use their self help skills to serve their own morning tea.

9.15am - Outside play continues.

9.55am - Children are given a 5 minute warning for programmed Activities to commence.

10.00am - Water break and hand washing.

10.05am - Children go into their own room and commence programmed activities for the day.

11.20am – Children are given a 5 minute warning for lunch.

11.25am – Water break and hand washing.

11.30am - Lunch. Children are encouraged to use their self-help skills to serve their own lunch, wipe down the tables and sweep the floor after lunch.

12.15pm - Hand washing and laying on beds quietly.

12.30pm - Sleep, relaxation and rest.

1.00pm - Quiet preschool activities

1.45pm - Beds away, shoes on. Sunscreen applied and hats on.

2.20pm - Children are given a 5 minute warning for afternoon tea.

2.25pm - Water break and hand washing.

2.30pm - Afternoon Tea, Children are encouraged to use their self-help skills to serve their own afternoon tea.

3.15pm - Outside Play continues.

5.30pm - Pack away, water break, hand washing.

5.45pm - Centre closes.

This is a flexible daily routine for the children. The children's needs and interests will always come

first. Meal times may be changed and play extended. We simply see where the day takes us!

Parent Participation

Parent input and suggestions are always welcomed. This assists us with programming and reflective practice, which we are constantly adding to our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). Parents are always encouraged to participate in the program by sharing special skills, eg: cooking, puppet making, music, etc and also by collecting junk for art and helping with social functions. Your involvement helps us provide an enriched learning program for all. It is important to share relevant information about your child with the staff.

NB: polystyrene cups, meat trays, toilet rolls cannot be used due to safety and health regulations.

Turtle to Dinosaur Room Transition

Transition times between rooms will start 6 weeks before children turn three.

In the first 2 weeks children will visit their new room in the mornings only and return to their room for lunch and the afternoon.





The next two weeks (weeks 3 and 4) children will visit their new room in the mornings and stay for lunchtime, returning to their room for a sleep and the afternoon. The final two weeks (weeks 5 and 6) children will visit their new room for the whole day (morning, lunchtime, sleep time and afternoon routine). If children are not coping after a short amount of time trying with the transition times they can return to their room and try again the next day that they are in care.

Excursions

We believe that excursions are an integral part of children's learning. We will notify you if an excursion is coming up and you will need to sign a permission sheet before your child can attend. Parent participation is highly appreciated when taking groups on excursions to assist with supervision.

We ask that parents encourage their child to wear the ELC shirts and hats whilst on excursions.

Clothing

All children are required to wear casual clothes (ELC shirts or School uniform is optional). Please ensure your child's shoulders are covered to ensure sun safety (no singlets or straps). Please include 3 spare sets of clothes in your child's bag.

ALL clothing must be named. Children must wear a full brimmed hat (not cap) and suncream at all times when outdoors. Please inform staff if your child is allergic to any suncreams. Please provide a labelled hat to be stored in their school bags. (Bucket style hats are available for purchase from the school)

Please note there is no lost property box.

Sheets and Towels

Mats are provided for rest time. Please bring a sheet and blanket for your child to use at rest time, at the end of the week they go home to be washed. Your child also needs to bring a towel as some days there may be water play

Birthdays

We encourage parents to let children share their special day with friends. Most children like to bring a cake; however, fruit can make a lovely change.

Please check with staff to determine what would be most suitable.

Treasures from Home

Children are not to bring toys from home to the Centre. Toys from home cause unnecessary conflict between children and they tend to get lost or broken. If toys are brought in, they will be put away on arrival and kept safe, for parents to collect later.

Changes to Information and Immunisation Records

Please notify us promptly of any changes to information regarding your child. Change of contact numbers, address, employer and persons authorised to collect your child are most important so that we are able to contact you at all times. Immunisation records need to be sighted at the time of enrolment and immunisation schedule/records to be kept updated throughout their enrolment at the centre.

Sick Children

We are sure parents would appreciate our concern for protecting the health of all children attending the Centre. The Director and/or Assistant Director reserves the right to send home or refuse attendance to any child who is considered too unwell to attend, or whose illness may affect the health of other children.

In cases where a sudden illness occurs, or where the Director and/or Assistant Director considers a child to be showing signs of infectious or contagious diseases (eg: mumps, measles, chicken pox, school sores, nits, etc) the parents will be notified immediately and asked to collect their child. A more extensive list is on display in the Early Learning Centre.

Please refer to the table below.

Condition	Exclusion From The Centre
Chicken Pox	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least five days after the spots (eruption) first appear. Please note that some remaining scabs are not a reason for continued exclusion.
Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from the eyes has ceased.
Diarrhoea and vomiting (gastroenteritis)	Exclude until bowel motions have returned to normal and at least 24 hours after the last abnormal bowel motion.
Diphtheria	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received following at least 2 negative throat swabs, the first not less than 24 hours after finishing a course of antibiotics and the other 48 hours later.
Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before seven days after onset of illness or jaundice.
Impetigo (School Sores)	Exclude until treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces should be covered with a watertight dressing.
Influenza	Exclude until child feels well. No coloured discharge from the nose.
Measles	Exclude for at least four days after the onset of the rash.
Mumps	Exclude for nine days or until swelling has gone (whichever is sooner).
Ringworm	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has started.
Rubella (German Measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of the rash.
Whooping Cough (Pertussis)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of the rash.



Hygiene

Strict hand washing procedures are implemented. Children will be encouraged to wash and dry their hands as they arrive and depart from the Centre, before and after meals, after using the toilet and after messy activities. Please continue this practice at home.

Toileting

Although our Centre has facilities for nappy changing, children are encouraged to become toilet trained. Staff will assist children to change (please remember to include labelled spare clothes in your child's bag) if they have little accidents and will help the children to become more independent with their dressing skills.

Nutrition

The Centre provides morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. Cold water is freely available. Children are encouraged to drink regularly from their water bottles during the day.

Meals will be prepared in the School Canteen by our Chef. The Centre aims to provide a nutritionally balanced menu. These meals and snacks will be appropriate to the children's developmental needs. Cooking activities for the children are also planned regularly and the products shared.

If you have any meals you would like us to cook please ask us for a menu suggestion form. Your input and suggestions are always welcome.

Please **DO NOT BRING ANY FOOD FROM HOME**, as this may be dangerous to other children with allergies (this includes foods that are normally considered to be healthy). Food brought into the Centre from outside will be removed by the staff unless prior arrangements have been made (eg special diet).

If you have any concerns regarding your child's nutrition, the meals provided or allergies your child may have, please let us know. A weekly menu is posted in the room.

Sleep/Rest Times

If your child usually has a sleep during the day, please let us know the normal times and requirements for going to sleep (eg soft toy, etc). However, these items cannot be allowed out in the general play area.

If your child usually requires a rest during the day, please let us know. If children ask for a sleep/ rest, it is provided. At times, rest or sleep is offered if the child appears particularly tired, grumpy or upset.

The children who normally have an afternoon sleep are taken aside after lunch for quiet reading and settling down on individual mattresses. Please provide a bottom and top sheet for your child. Pillows are not permitted due to health/hygiene regulations.



PROGRAMMING

The Early Years Learning Framework is a guide for Early Childhood Educators who work with children from birth to 5 years. It helps educators develop Early Learning Programs that are responsive to the children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities in the context of their families and communities.

The framework outlines a vision and an education program that promotes wellbeing and learning in a culturally responsive, safe and supported setting.

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) describes the Early Childhood Years as a time of belonging, being and becoming. The EYLF focuses on the following outcomes:

1. Children have a strong sense of identity.
2. Children are connected and contribute to their world.
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.
4. Children are confident and involved learners.
5. Children are effective communicators.

Learning through play

Play provides opportunities for children to learn as they discover, create, improvise and imagine. When children play with other children they create social groups, test out ideas, challenge each other's thinking and build new understandings. Play provides a supportive environment where children can ask questions, solve problems and engage in critical thinking. Play can expand children's thinking and enhance their desire to know and learn. In these ways play can promote positive dispositions towards learning.

Intentional teaching

Intentional teaching is deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful. Educators engage in intentional teaching and they recognise that learning occurs in social contexts, and that interactions and conversations are vitally important for learning. Educators actively promote children's learning through worthwhile and challenging experiences and interactions that foster high-level thinking skills. They use strategies such as modelling and demonstrating, open questioning, speculating, explaining, and engaging in shared thinking and problem solving to extend children's thinking and learning.



Assessment for learning

Assessment for children's learning refers to the process of gathering and analysing information as evidence about what children know, can do and understand. It is part of an ongoing cycle that includes planning, documenting and evaluating children's learning.

Educators use a variety of strategies to collect, document, organise, synthesise and interpret information that they gather to assess children's learning. They search for appropriate ways to collect rich and meaningful information that depicts children's learning in context, describes their progress and identifies their strengths, skills and understandings

The five Learning Outcomes in this framework, provide early childhood educators with key reference points against which children's progress can be identified, documented and communicated to families, other early childhood professionals and educators in schools.

We are constantly observing and assessing the children's cognitive, language, social/emotional, gross motor and fine motor development. These may include photos of daily activities or events and learning stories. From these observations we create programs that extend on children's interests and strengths while also addressing their needs. Your child's observations will be kept in their learning journey in the room and will be available for your perusal at any time. The children will also have access to their learning journey so they can both discuss and share ideas with each other. Privacy and confidentiality rules are strictly observed, and any sensitive documents will be kept in a locked cabinet.

If your child is found to have needs in any area, we will notify you and with your permission, expert advice can be sought through the Department of Health and Community Service's Children's Development Team.



Portfolios

Each child will have a portfolio in which observations, learning stories, art work, letters and any other documentation will be kept. When your child first starts at the Centre, you will be asked to fill out a simple profile sheet and an "About me" sheet, which is in the enrolment pack. These will provide staff with basic information about your child and the folders will be used to document your child's progress throughout the year. These folders belong to you and your child, so feel free to look through them whenever you can and make any parent comments, so we can add these into our programme.



POLICIES

St Francis School Board

Our School Board is an advisory group for the School Principal/ Centre Director. An ELC Sub-Committee will be formed. Parents are encouraged to become a member of this sub-committee of the Board. The focus is on forward planning and development of the Centre as well as fundraising for resources.

Parent Information

Please read the Parent Information board each day. The ELC newsletter comes out every 2 weeks and will be put into your child's locker. If you would like your newsletter emailed, please pass on your email address to an educator. The SFAS School newsletter is sent home every Thursday. There is a Parent Communication Book situated next to the sign in/out register, so if there is anything you would like us to know, please use this book. Please read all notices and signs in the Centre. We also have a parent suggestion box at the sign in/our register. This is checked weekly by the Educators, so please let us know if you have any suggestions/feedback for us.

Accidents/ Incidents

Staff members record any accidents on an Accident/ Incident Form. If your child has been hurt during the day, you will be asked to sign this document at the end of the day, so that you are aware of any incident involving your child throughout the day. If necessary, you will be contacted to collect your child. If you cannot be contacted, your emergency contacts will be called. If they are unable to be contacted, we will seek medical attention for your child. Any medical expenses incurred will be the parent's responsibility.

Medicine Administration Policy

Only prescription medicine can be administered. If your child requires prescription medication, the medicine register must be completed and signed by the parent. Once the prescription

medication has been administered, the staff member doing so will sign to indicate that it has been carried through. **This procedure is to be completed on a daily basis, even if prescription medication is to be administered for more than 1 day. The prescription medication must be in the original named container.**

If your child will require prescription medication every day or most days (i.e., Ventolin puffer, antibiotics, etc) you will need to complete a "Long Term Medication Authority" form. Please ask staff for a form.

The prescription medication container must be clearly marked with the doctor's instructions. All medication is locked away from the children.

Nappy cream

If your child requires nappy cream at any time, we ask you to provide us with a letter which we will keep on your child's file.

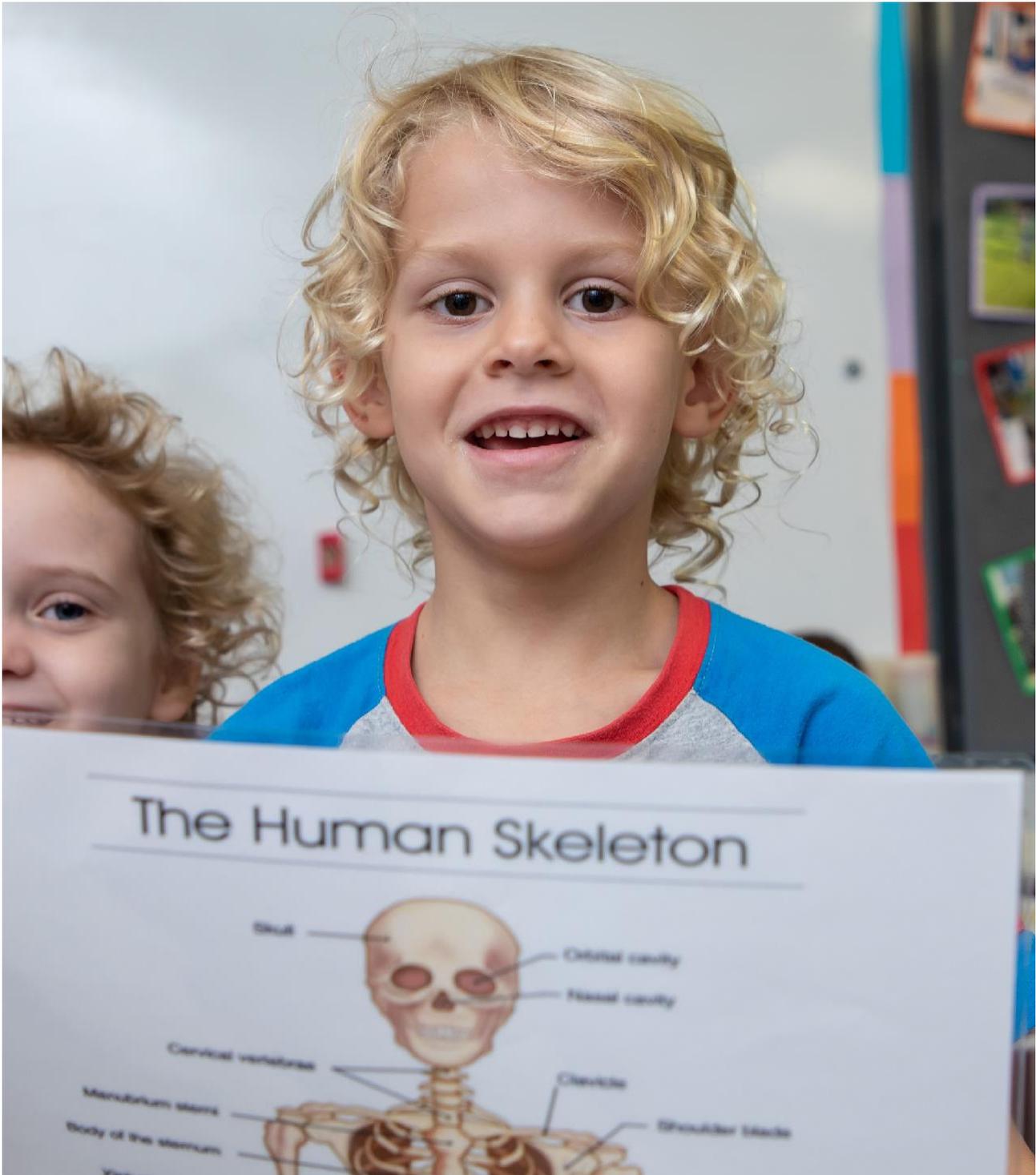
Please ensure your nappy cream is labelled, this will be kept on the top shelf in the nappy change area.

Behaviour Management

We aim to provide a safe, happy learning environment for all children, staff and parents at the Centre. Therefore, the following guidelines apply:

- Positive guidance directed towards acceptable behaviour with praise freely given.
- Discipline will always be very constructive:
 1. Suggesting alternate acceptable behaviour
 2. Keeping the child busy by re-directing the activities
 3. Talking with the child about feelings and the consequences of their behaviour
 4. Focusing on the behaviour and not on the child.
- Behaviour guidance and management strategies should be framed in positive language to enhance the child's self-esteem, encouraging the children to believe that acceptance does not depend on their behaviour.

- The environment will be arranged so that any disciplinary issues can be minimised by:
 1. Ensuring that an adequate number of toys/ equipment and stimulating experiences are available, to avoid misuse and conflict
 2. Ensuring the activity is supervised adequately, and it is developmentally and age appropriate
 3. Ensuring that there is convenient storage available so that the children may easily assist with "packing up" and activity selection
 4. Ensuring that there is a balance of quiet and active "user friendly" spaces for indoor and outdoor play.



WHAT TO BRING

1. A school bag with 3 spare sets of clothes, 3-5 spare sets of underwear and a towel.
2. A Minimum of 6 nappies.
3. A broad brim/bucket hat to leave at the Centre (in your child's bag).
4. Sheet/blanket for sleep/rest time. This will go home at the end of the week to be washed by the parents.

(Parents will be called to drop off more clothing if there has not been enough provided)

PLEASE ENSURE ALL PERSONAL ITEMS ARE CLEARLY NAMED.

Please feel free to discuss any aspect of your child's education or development with your child's Educator.

We encourage all students to wear the ELC shirts and hats. They are for purchase at the School.

Shirts are \$17.50 & Hats are \$15.





**ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**
Grow in Wisdom and Love

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