



Policy 2.1

Access to the Centre

The Two Wells Community Children's Centre will provide equal and inclusive access to all families. We will ensure the safety of children who attend the centre and protect the custodial rights of parents/guardians.

Members of the community, professionals and students will be provided access to the centre where it enhances the quality of the program, protects the welfare and rights of the children and staff, and/or provides training and experience to members of the children's services field.

Our centre offers a variety of service provisions for the Two Wells and surrounding community.

Childcare - We provide education and care for children aged 6 weeks to 6 years.

Kindergarten - We provide a DECD kindergarten program for children aged 3.10 years to 6 years. (exact age is determined by the child's DOB in line with the DECD preschool enrolment policy) indigenous children are eligible to start from 3 years of age but not exceed 2 years of preschool attendance prior to school (12 hours pw in their first year and 15 hours pw in the last year). All preschools and schools from 2017 are zoned. Families must reside within this zone. On occasions the preschool can accept enrolments outside of the zone if the site capacity has not been reached.

Before and After School Care: This service is only available for school aged children up to 12 years of age who have a younger sibling enrolled in the childcare service. Once the last child in the family transitions to school, alternative before and after school care arrangements must be made for the children by the family. School aged children can access the centre during school holidays so long as they have a younger sibling enrolled in the service. (we do encourage families to consider the Virginia, Angle Vale or the Trinity Gawler River Vacation care program that provides an excellent holiday care program)

Enrolments

Each enrolling family must complete an Enrolment form and Fee Agreement. For kindergarten families you will first fill out a waiting list form, and once an offer has been made you will be given the full enrolment form. On enrolment, parents will be given an enrolment package containing these forms, along with:

- Asthma/ Medication forms.
- Parent Induction and Child Information forms.
- A Parent Handbook is included which advises about centre information and policies, including:
 - Priority of Access guidelines (DECD) which state that a child will be given a place according to these priorities:
 - Child at risk of abuse or neglect OR family in crisis.
 - Children in Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander families.
 - Children under the Guardianship of the Minister
 - Children with disabilities or non English speaking backgrounds.



- Family with recognized work or work-related commitments.
- Family with greatest need for child care support.

If a place is not immediately available to the family, they will be put onto a waiting list.

Once entered onto the waiting list it is desirable for the family to contact the centre on a regular basis to confirm their continued wish to remain on the waiting list. When a place becomes available the Assistant Director will contact the family and the enrolment will proceed.

Enrolment forms will be updated when necessary to ensure information is current and correct, but parents should advise the centre when any of their details change. Enrolment information will be kept in a confidential file. Access to this information is available to the caregiver, Director, Assistant Director, parents and commonwealth officers.

Exclusion of children from the service will only occur after all other avenues of communication and support have been exhausted, and when:

- Professional advice confirms a child is in psychological danger as a result of an unusually prolonged inability to settle into care away from the parent/guardian.
- A child puts staff or one or more children at risk through inappropriate or dangerous behaviour.
- Or significant property destruction caused by the child.

Authorisation for Collecting Children

The names and contact numbers of all persons authorised to collect children from the centre must be included on the enrolment form. Any changes to these authorities must be advised in writing, over the phone, or verbally to the centre by the custodial parent as soon as possible.

If the custodial parent arranges for an authorised person to collect their children from the centre, they must contact the centre to advise of this arrangement and confirm who will be collecting the child.

If someone other than the custodial parents arrives to collect the children, and the centre has not been notified, the Director/Assistant Director or senior staff member will contact the custodial parent to obtain their authorisation. Wherever possible, prior notification should be provided by the parent. The child will not be released until the custodial parents' authorisation has been obtained. If the authorised person is not known to the centre, the custodial parent will be asked to provide a description of the person concerned, and the person will be required to provide photographic proof of their identity. This information (Drivers ID) is recorded on the sign in logs.

Late Collection

Parents and guardians who are unavoidably detained and are unable to collect their child at the negotiated collection time, must telephone the centre to advise of their lateness and expected time of arrival.

Childcare – Collection times for childcare are BY 12.30pm and 6pm If a parent /guardian is unable to collect their child prior to closing time they should arrange for another responsible adult to collect their child and advise the centre, in writing if possible, of this arrangement. Authorisation policy will apply (see above).

If the parent or guardian has not either arrived to collect their child or contacted the centre

5 minutes before the end of the session, the centre will attempt to contact the parent/guardian. If this is not successful, the emergency contacts listed on the child's enrolment form will be contacted to arrange for the child's immediate collection.



If no one can be contacted and the child has not been collected **15 minutes** after the centre's normal closing time, the child will be referred to Crisis Care (Phone:131611) in consultation with the Local Police. A notice to this effect will be placed on the centre's entrance with the relevant telephone contact numbers. If the parent arrives before Crisis Care personnel, the latter will be cancelled. *In such circumstances all local solutions will be explored in the first instance to ensure the safety and well being of the child.*

Kindergarten: Kindergarten collection times are 3pm and 1.45pm on Wednesdays. At the end of the kindy session if a child has not been collected a member of staff will phone the parents immediately. If the child is not collected within 15 minutes of the session ending time the child will be transitioned to the childcare service where parents will be charged the total before and after kindy care session amount + a \$20 late fee (the additional \$20 late fee can be waived at the directors discretion, however the full before and after kindy care fee will always apply to cover additional staffing costs in the childcare centre). A member of staff will continue to make contact with the parents.

If the parents cannot be contacted, kindy staff will try contacting emergency or authorized collection persons listed on the child's enrolment form, to collect the child. It is the responsibility of families to provide up to date contact details for authorized persons.

Family Contact

Staff will communicate with parents/guardians in a positive and supportive manner that encourages the parents/child relationship. Information with regard to family issues and personal lives will be handled confidentiality. Every effort will be made to treat both parents/guardians equally. Without legal documentation, staff cannot act as though one parent is more fit than another to the legal rights of their child.

Parents/guardians will have access to qualified staff or the Director/Assistant Director to enable them to discuss any concerns they may have at any reasonable time regarding their child. This may be spontaneous, by telephone or by appointment. Staff will not discuss information of a confidential nature regarding any other child or family within the centre.

Parents/guardians may visit the centre at any reasonable time whilst their children are in care. However they are requested to give due consideration to the time of day, in relation to the centres program; for example rest times would be inconvenient and could disturb other children.

Parents/guardians may bring other relatives to visit at convenient times that have been arranged with the Director/Assistant Director.

Where the child attending the centre is not living with both parents and where a dispute arises in relation to responsibility of the child the following will apply:

- Parental responsibility remains with both parents jointly and individually except where it is altered by a parenting order. In the absence of a parenting order the child will be released to either parent, if both parents are on the enrolment form.
- A parenting order may determine where the child will reside, which parent will have contact with the child and how the contact will happen, which parent has maintenance liabilities for the children and where there are specific aspects of parental responsibility given to one parent.



- Where a non-enrolling parent cites a parenting order giving them lawful access to the children, the parenting order needs to be produced for inspection by the director.
- The enrolling parent, if required, will be telephoned to check the existence of the parenting order and to be informed about the situation.
- Where human life is at risk, any part of the above may not be able to be complied with. In such cases the police will be informed immediately.

Code of Conduct Towards Staff

It is expected that all families will interact respectfully with all staff. We endeavour to build a culture of mutual respect for the benefit of all.

Abuse (physical, emotional and verbal) and bullying, in any form (eg raised voices, intimidating behaviours, excessive/aggressive tones or threatening words) will not be tolerated. We pride ourselves in providing a high level of quality care and education and strong relationships and staff deserve to be treated in such ways. If parents, visitors or older children are seen to be bullying or abusive towards any staff member a formal complaint will be sent to the Governing Council and will be dealt with accordingly.

This type of behaviour can lead to exclusion from the Two Wells Community Children's Centre service.

Visitors, Students and Volunteers

Visitors may be invited into the centre as part of the children's program and may include:

- Members of the fire brigade, police department, medical or nursing profession
- Community people with a skill, talent, or experience from which the children will gain experience or enjoyment.

All visitors to the centre will be required to sign in at the Front Desk.

The centre will offer student placement to:

- High school students who wish to gain work experience as part of their school program, provided that the school has initiated the placement and the students are studying early childhood or family studies.
- Students attending early childhood or child care training at college or university, or high school students who desire a work experience placement.

All placements will need to be negotiated through the Director/Assistant Director. Students will be provided with clear guidelines in relation to their responsibilities and code of conduct whilst at the centre.

Volunteers may be accepted for work experience where there is evidence of a genuine interest in the work involved. Potential volunteers will be interviewed by the Director/Assistant Director to determine their suitability. Volunteers need to be able to articulate their intent and purpose behind their visits. All volunteers will be given clear guidelines in relation to their responsibilities and code of conduct while at the centre. They may be required to undertake a formal police check if they are going to work with children for a prolonged length of time.

Volunteers and students are supplementary to the staff requirements and will not be used to replace absent staff unless they are on the centre payroll.



All other visitors to the centre must make an appointment with the Director/Assistant Director.

Any unwelcome visitors to the centre will be calmly asked to leave. Refusal to leave will necessitate the Director/Assistant Director or senior staff member calling the local police for their removal. Staff will not try and physically remove any unwelcome visitors.

Professional access to the centre will be at the discretion of the Director/Assistant Director or Governing Council. If involving the children, the parent's written consent will be required. The only exception to this would be if the child was at risk.

**Governing Council
Member's Signature:**

Director's Signature:

Two Wells Community Children's Centre's Common Seal

Date Reviewed: 26th June 2016

**Next Review
Due:** July 2018

Sources: Policies to Go By
Department of Family & Community Services
DECD policy and procedure.
DECD enrolment
<http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/childrensservices/pages/policies/NQFpolicies/>
DECD Volunteers Policy, Public Sector Code of Conduct