



LIGHTNING REEF **EARLY LEARNING CENTRE**

PARENT INFORMATION HANDBOOK



Enabling Healthier, Happier Communities



Thank you for choosing the Bendigo Regional YMCA as your Long Day Care and Kindergarten Provider

Bendigo Regional YMCA (BRYMCA) is a non-profit organisation that is committed to having a long term presence within the communities in which we operate. Our aim is to provide programs and services that address community need; are inclusive and demonstrate tangible outcomes. The YMCA National Belief Statement “We believe in the power of inspired young people” drives our mission focused, connected and collaborative approach to all that we do. We value diversity and empowering young people to reach their full potential by valuing their ideas and encouraging creativity and innovation. Our service delivery at Lightning Reef Early Learning Centre reflects this.

BRYMCA Children’s Services are approved by ACECQA (Federal) and licensed with the Department of Education and Training (DET). We operate under the Education and Care Services National Law Act (2010) and Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011).

This handbook should provide you with all the information you need about Lightning Reef ELC and Kindergarten Program. We encourage families to contact us at any time if there is anything they are unsure about. We look forward to working with you to provide your child with a quality education and care program and welcome families to visit the service at any time.

Julie Bowe
Community Services Manager

Cathy Field
Lightning Reef ELC Director

PROGRAM CONTACTS

For all enquiries and bookings, please contact the Children’s Services Administration Office.

Children’s Services Administration Office

Phone (03) 54446666
bendigo.regional@ymca.org.au

Cathy Field
Lightning Reef ELC Director

Phone (03) 54446666
catherine.field@ymca.org.au

Julie Bowe
Community Services Manager

Phone: (03) 54446666
julie.bowe@ymca.org.au

Bendigo YMCA Website

www.bendigo.ymca.org.au

Department of Education and Training (DET)
Bendigo Office-7-15 McLaren Street Bendigo 3550

Phone: (03) 54403111

HOURS OF OPERATION

Lightning Reef Early Learning Centre operates Monday to Friday from 6.30am to 6.00pm. We close for two weeks over the Christmas period and you will not be charged for these days.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Lightning Reef Early Learning Centre does not operate on public holidays.



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT BENDIGO REGIONAL YMCA

Bendigo YMCA is committed to the safeguarding of children and young people.

The YMCA supports the concept that in our society every child and young person deserves the right to thrive, learn and grow, be respected, valued and enabled to become an effective adult member of the community.

Our organisation ensures that each person involved in the delivery of services to children and young people understands their role and the behaviour we expect in safeguarding children and young people from abuse and neglect.

Bendigo YMCA is a recognised Safeguarding Children and Young People organisation accredited by the Australian Childhood Foundation.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY

BRYMCA recognises that all children and young people have the right to develop and reach their potential in environments that are caring, nurturing and safe.

Definition: In Victoria, a child or young person is defined as a person less than eighteen years of age.

BRYMCA works to safeguard children and young people in our care from:

- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse
- Emotional or psychological abuse
- Neglect

STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All of our staff, volunteers and Board Members have clear roles and responsibilities with respect to safeguarding children and young people.

Bendigo Regional YMCA Staff Code of Conduct Summary

BRYMCA staff and volunteers are required to maintain the highest standards of professional conduct towards customers, children and young people.

We have developed this Staff Code of Conduct to identify and prevent behavior that may be harmful to the children and young people in our care.

Transport

Children and young people are to be transported only with prior authorisation from a parent/guardian and a BRYMCA Business Unit manager. Staff are NEVER to give children or young people casual lifts.

To gain approval from a BRYMCA Business Unit manager, staff are required to submit details about the proposed journey including the form of transport, the reason, details of who will be present.

Physical Contact with Children and Young People

Any physical contact with children and young people must be appropriate to the delivery of the programs and services and based on the needs of the child or young person (such as to assist or comfort a distressed young person) rather than on the needs of our personnel.

Positive Guidance

We aim to make children and young people aware of the acceptable limits of their behavior. There are times when staff may be required to use appropriate behavior management strategies to ensure an:

- Effective and positive environment
- The safety and/or wellbeing of children, young people or personnel participating on our programs and services

Any behavior management strategy used must be:

- Fair
- Respectful
- Appropriate to the developmental stage of the children or young people involved



The child or young person is to be provided with clear directions and given an opportunity to redirect their misbehavior in a positive way.

Under no circumstances are our staff to take disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating.

Uniform

Our staff are to wear their Bendigo YMCA uniforms only while involved in delivering service, representing Bendigo YMCA at events, or when travelling to and from work.

Adhering to role boundaries

Our staff and volunteers are not to act outside the confines of their duties, as specified in their position description, when helping to deliver our programs and services.

BRYMCA does not provide private services (e.g. babysitting). BRYMCA takes all reasonable steps to keep children safe while they are at the BRYMCA programs. However, any private arrangement is outside of our control. BRYMCA cannot ensure the safety of children if parents/guardians choose to enter into a private arrangement with BRYMCA staff and volunteers, such as baby-sitting and weekend trips.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children and young people are to be photographed by staff while involved in our programs and services only if:

- Prior written parental/guardian authorisation is obtained (with the exception of special events such as concerts, fairs, performances, open days and competitions)
- The Context is directly related to participation in our programs and services
- The child is appropriately dressed and posed

USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Wherever possible, email and text messages sent to a child or young person is to be copied to their parent or guardian.

Any communication is to be restricted to issues directly associated with delivering our programs and services, such as advising that a scheduled event is cancelled.

RESPONDING TO CHILD ABUSE REPORTS AND ALLEGATIONS

BRYMCA staff and volunteers play an important role in protecting children and young people who may be at risk of harm due to abuse or neglect. Staff and volunteers often have daily or weekly contact with children, young people and their families, and so are well placed to observe when a child or young person appears to be at risk of harm.

Our staff and volunteers are required to identify report and respond to any concerns about, or incidents of, serious abuse or neglect towards children or young people to whom we provide services.

Serious abuse or neglect refers to situations in which a child or young person has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm (Children, Youth and Families Act, 2005, VIC).

Staff are required to:

- Report suspected abuse to their direct supervisor/manager
- Report suspected abuse to the Department of Human Services or the police
- Staff will be provided with support during this time.

Confidentiality is of the utmost importance to fair and effective reporting processes. Only authorised YMCA staff, Australian Children's Foundation staff and Bendigo YMCA legal representatives will have access to documentation regarding a report.



Bendigo YMCA will co-operate with the Department of Human Services and police and other agencies as required by law. We will comply with any reasonable request in a timely manner.

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/CARERS

Bendigo Regional YMCA is committed to creating an environment where all its community can enjoy participation in our activities, events or programs without experiencing abusive, insulting, threatening or other anti-social behavior.

We call on all parents/carers (and other spectators) associated with BRYMCA to:

- Observe our organisation's guidelines for parents/carers;
- When necessary, politely and respectfully remind others of their obligations under these guidelines; and
- In the event of serious or ongoing breaches of these guidelines by another person, to report the matter to a BRYMCA staff member so that appropriate action can be taken.

OUR GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/CARERS

Your and other children and young people's participation and enjoyment in BRYMCA activities, programs or events are our primary consideration. As parents and carers your role is to support these outcomes by:

- encouraging your child's participation in a positive manner;
- not engaging in behavior that discriminates against any other person on the basis of gender, race, ability, color, religion, language, politics or national or ethnic origin;
- not engaging in, or threatening to engage in, violent or physical confrontations with any other person;
- not encouraging or inciting players to violence, or similar breaches of competition rules or spirit;

- expressing your support by cheering our team and not engaging in behavior designed to belittle, insult or intimidate our opponents, their supporters or their officials;
- never mocking or insulting participants – including our own – when they make a mistake or do not perform well;
- demonstrating good sportsmanship by respecting and acknowledging good play by our opponents;
- respecting and accepting the decisions of officials and not criticising or arguing about decisions during or after the event;
- not entering any area where children are involved in activities without appropriate authority; and
- following any directions of **BRYMCA** Personnel, including any request to modify your behavior or to leave the area following a breach of these guidelines.

Serious or ongoing breaches of these guidelines are not tolerated. Those who breach our guidelines risk being asked to leave the service and/or being prohibited from attending in the future.

POLICIES

Bendigo Regional YMCA Children's Services Policies

BRYMCA regularly reviews all policies in consultation with staff, families and children.

Policies are available at the service or on the website www.bendigo.ymca.org.au

National Quality Framework

QA 1 - Educational Program & Practice

CS 1.1 Curriculum Development Policy

CS 1.2 Inclusion and Equity Policy

QA 2 - Children's Health & Safety

CS 2.1 Administration of Medication

CS 2.2 Dealing with Medical Conditions

CS 2.3 Anaphylaxis Policy

CS 2.4 Asthma Policy

CS 2.5 Diabetes Policy

CS 2.8 Acceptance and Refusal of
Authorisation Policy

CS 2.9 Administration of First Aid

CS 2.11 Sun Protection Policy

CS 2.12 Water Safety Policy

CS 2.13 Dealing with Infectious Diseases

CS 2.14 Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
Policy

CS 2.15 Nutrition, Oral Health and Active Play
Policy

CS 2.17 Delivery and Collection of Children

CS 2.18 Excursions and Service Events Policy

CS 2.19 Transport of Children Policy

CS 2.20 Supervision of Children

CS 2.21 Emergency and Evacuation Policy

CS 2.23 Relaxation and Sleep Policy

QA 4 - Staffing Arrangements

CS 4.1 Staffing Policy

CS 4.2 Determining Responsible Person
Policy

CS 4.3 Participation of Students and
Volunteers Policy

CS 4.4 Code of Conduct

QA 5 - Relationships with Children

CS 5.1 Interactions with Children Policy

QA 6 - Collaborative Partnerships with Families

CS 6.1 Enrolment and Orientation Policy

QA 7 - Leadership and Service Development

CS 7.1 Complaints and Grievance Policy

CS 7.2 Governance and Management of the
Service Policy

CS 7.3 Privacy and Confidentiality Policy



ACCESS AND INCLUSION

BRYMCA supports and encourages the attendance and participation of all children regardless of ability, social, financial or cultural circumstances.

This service acknowledges the diversity within the community and aims to ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in activities in a fun, nurturing environment.

To do this staff will:

- Interact with and include all children
- Model appropriate behaviour in relation to cultural awareness
- Respect the difference in backgrounds of individuals and encourage children and families to do the same
- Commit to professional development relevant to diversity, multiculturalism and assisting children with additional needs
- Liaise with various external agencies to gain assistance and expertise in these areas
- Connect families with services that may be able to provide financial assistance when needed

English as a second language? If you require assistance accessing our service or would like further information, please contact our staff on 5444 6666 and we will happily provide you with the necessary resources.

PROGRAM AND PLANNING

Our fully qualified Educators plan daily for children using the Early Years Learning Development Framework (EYLF).

Educators plan for all children by taking observations of the children throughout the day, as well as gathering information from children and families. The Program aims to provide ongoing experiences that enhance the children's learning and extend their development. A number of components make up the complete picture of our program planning:

- Based on interests, needs, strengths and development with reference to the EYLF
- Plans for individual children
- Written group and individual evaluated plans
- Verbal and hands on experiences
- Parental involvement-surveys, discussions, information sheets, communication books etc.

CURRICULUM

Curriculum describes everything that happens in the centre that impacts your child's learning, development and wellbeing.

Our curriculum is based on the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia and involves experiences children initiate themselves, daily rituals and routines that occur throughout the centre, and learning experiences that our educators plan.

Lightning Reef provides a wide range of experiences to provide opportunities for children to explore through open ended play.

These experiences are based upon individual needs and interests.

We understand the importance of developing a **sense of belonging** and will ensure that every child is cared for and nurtured so they are able to develop with confidence and feel safe and supported in their journey.



CURRICULUM PRINCIPLES WE ADHERE TO

- Activities should be carefully matched to the development stage and abilities each individual child has reached.
- Children are central decision-makers and initiators, constructing their own knowledge through active learning
- The people (adults and children) with whom the child interacts are of central importance
- We focus on what the child can do (not what they cannot do)
- The imagination is a critical part of a child's inner structure. Under the right conditions it will emerge
- A child's success is rewarded with encouragement and specific praise
- Children need time away from adults so they can create 'world of their own'
- Parents are the child's first and main educators
- Children should be supported to enhance their own learning through everyday routines and experiences.

PRACTICE

- What does this mean in practice for your child?
- Children learn with and alongside others
- They should feel good about who they are
- Learning includes developing a sense of belonging and independence
- Physical abilities need to be developed
- Creative abilities such as art, musical dance and movement are also important
- Acceptable boundaries and limits are respected
- Children are helped to develop language and listening skills

- Learning to look after yourself, others, belongings and the environment are fundamental skills
- Encouraging problem solving, negotiation skills and the resilience to challenge themselves
- Developing the confidence to assert themselves honestly with guidance
- Having fun in an enjoyable environment.

STRUCTURE OF CARE

The centre operates with five rooms and is staffed with educators who are passionate, qualified and experienced with all regulations and accreditation guidelines. The program offered is indoor /outdoor, weather permitting.

Jarra

Birth -1 year. Maximum 12 Children

Mount Alexander

1 year - 2 years. Maximum 16 Children

Castleton

years - 3 years. Maximum 28 Children

Sandhurst

3 years - 5 years. Maximum 30 Children

Bendigo

Kinder - Maximum 29 Children

Kinder families have option of

- Enrolling in the long day care kinder program
- Enrolling in sessional kinder

PARENTS AND FAMILY

Parents and family are a critical part of every child's learning, therefore, communication with you is one of the most important things we can do. We endeavour to keep parents and families informed every step of the way through monthly newsletters and daily reflections.



There are pockets located in the hallway, outside each room, for every family. These pockets are used to forward on any information we may have regarding your child/ren, upcoming events and other significant issues about the program. Parents need to ensure their family pocket is checked on a regular basis.

Each room also has individual communication boards/books for the use of both staff and parents.

Please also check the notice board in the entrance way and hallway for updates from YMCA, Lightning Reef Early Learning Centre and other Community organisations.

Like us on Facebook to see regular updates and photos about our programs.

FEEDBACK

Feedback from families, including children, in relation to program delivery and our organisation is valuable to management and all educators involved in the programs' daily operations. BRYMCA seeks regular feedback from families in a variety of ways. We encourage families to participate in surveys and respond to feedback opportunities at the centre as they arise. All feedback received is discussed with our team of educators and considered in future planning and when arranging training and development for staff.

COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

In line with our Complaints and Grievance Policy, any concerns regarding your child and/or the program should be discussed with the room leader in your child's room. Any other concerns or any issues you feel are still unresolved after meeting with the room leader should be referred to the Director on 54446666 or emailed to catherine.field@ymca.org.au. This policy is available at the service along with all of our current policies.

CONFIDENTIALITY

BRYMCA collects sensitive information for enrolment records, with family consent. This information is stored on our data base, and in secured filing cabinets on site. BRYMCA does not disclose this information without consent. The staff at BRYMCA maintains confidentiality in all matters at all times. At no stage will personal information of families and staff be given to a third party. Our Staff ensure they protect children's rights at all times.

Please refer to our 'Privacy and Confidentiality' policy for further information.



ENROLMENTS AND ORIENTATION

ENROLMENT

Families enrolling for the first time must complete a BRYMCA Online Enrolment Form.

To enrol your child, go to www.bendigo.ymca.org.au and follow the links. If you are unable to access the Online Enrolment form or require assistance to complete the form, contact the Children's Services Office. One of our friendly staff will be happy to assist. Upon submission of your enrolment form and all required supporting documentation our office staff will contact you to confirm receipt of your enrolment and provide a booking form.

Upon first enrolling, families will be offered the opportunity to visit the centre for a tour, meet the staff, and learn about the program and daily routines.

To allow time for all paperwork to be processed through our internal booking and filing systems before your child attends, BRYMCA upholds a two day processing policy.

This commences from the time when all paper work is received. Bookings can be made upon enrolment, commencing in at least two days' time or after the enrolment is formalised.

Important note: All kindergarten enrolments are managed by Loddon Mallee Pre-School Association (LMPA) so if you are enrolling in the kindergarten program at Lightning Reef you will need to complete an enrolment application with [LMPA](#) as well as complete the online enrolment with us as detailed above.

CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Families of children with additional needs will be required to meet with the Director as part of the enrolment process, prior to bookings being made. During this session your child's needs, abilities and interests will be discussed and an individual inclusion plan developed. It is important that we

gain as much knowledge as possible to ensure we provide an engaging and relevant program that takes into account the needs of all children, as well as arrange additional support if necessary.

BOOKINGS

Permanent Bookings:

To make a permanent booking for your child the **Lightning Reef ELC Booking Form** needs to be completed and returned to the Children's Services Office for processing. Permanent bookings are not able to be changed from week to week. Additional bookings may be placed if space is available. If you wish to alter your care arrangements you will need to complete a **Change or Cancellation of Permanent Bookings form** and submit to the office for processing.

Please note: Your child will not be able to commence care until the enrolment and booking form has been confirmed and payment arrangements finalised. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their enrolment information is kept current. This process also relates to any changes to bookings at the start of each year.

Casual Bookings:

Casual Bookings are days that do not fall into a regular weekly or fortnightly pattern.

Casual Care is available each day, depending on availability. Families can choose to make a casual booking for either a full day: 7am-5pm or a half day: 7am-12noon or 12noon-5pm. If care is required for either more than five hours or for a block of time that crosses over specified half day sessions, the full day rate will apply. Casual Bookings can be made up to one week in advance and payment must be made at the time of booking.

Please note: Your child will not be able to commence care until the enrolment has been confirmed and payment received. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their enrolment information is kept current.



EXTENDED LEAVE/HOLIDAY LEAVE

We understand there may be occasions when your child will be absent for an extended period of time but you still want to retain your permanent booking, eg family holiday, significant illness etc. In this instance you are required to submit a **Request for Leave form**. This form must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the absence and, if approved, bookings will be charged at leave fee rates. This arrangement is only available for periods of absence of one week or more and families are entitled to 4 weeks extended leave per calendar year.

KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

The 2018 Kindergarten Program at Lightning Reef will be delivered from 9am-2pm each day. Families not seeking full long day care can enrol in a funded kindergarten program in one of the following groups:

- Group A** Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday
9am-2pm
- Group B** Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
9am-2pm
- Group C** Monday, Wednesday and Friday
9am-2pm
- Group D** Tuesday, Thursday and Friday
9am – 2pm
- Group E** Monday, Thursday and Friday
9am-2pm

These are the hours the Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) will be working in the room with the children. In order to be eligible for kindergarten funding or the kindergarten fee subsidy, children are required to attend for 15 hours per week with the ECT.

Whether your child attends for only the funded kindergarten program or for the full day, they will receive a high quality education and care program that is planned and delivered by our experienced and qualified team of educators led by Cathy, Kobee and Andrea.

Families who are unsure about what is the funded kindergarten program and what is regular full day care are encouraged to contact us. We can help you decide the most affordable way for you to manage your child's enrolment, ensuring that your child is booked in for the days and hours you require next year.

FUNDED YEAR OF KINDERGARTEN

DET provides kindergarten per capita (per child) grants as a contribution toward the cost of running a kindergarten program for children in the year before school provided that the child:

- is at least 4 years old on 30 April of the year in which they are enrolled to attend the funded program
- is enrolled for at least 15 hours per week or 600 hours per year
- is not enrolled and attending a funded kindergarten program at another service

Children will not be able to withdraw and recommence in a State funded 15 hour program once they start their kindergarten year. If they have two or more significant developmental delays they may be eligible for a second year of kindergarten, however funding will not be available the following year if a child is immature and families decide they were 'not ready' for kindergarten once they have actually started. Parents are advised to carefully consider when their child enrolls as children are only eligible for ONE funded year at kindergarten.

KINDERGARTEN FEES

DET provides funding for each child to attend one year of kindergarten. This funding covers approximately 60% of your child's kindergarten year. We therefore genuinely rely on kindergarten fees to cover the costs associated with delivering the kindergarten program.



KINDERGARTEN FEE SUBSIDY

The Kindergarten Fee Subsidy supports eligible children to attend kindergarten by meeting the cost of 15 hours of kindergarten per week.

Kindergarten services claim the fee subsidy from the Department on behalf of the families.

The Department pays the kindergarten a subsidy in order to provide eligible families with 15 hours of kindergarten free of charge or at minimal cost.

The Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (KFS) is available for children attending a four year old (funded) kindergarten program who meet the following criteria:

- The child is eligible to attend a funded kindergarten program; and
- The family or the child has one of the concession cards, visas or documents listed below (refer section 1 below); OR
- The children are triplets or quadruplets (refer section 2 below); OR
- The children are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders (refer section 3 below); and
- The family does not have 'approved' Commonwealth Child Care Benefit applied to the fee paid for the time spent in the funded kindergarten program.

1. Families or children with specific concession cards, visas or documents

- In order to be eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy the family or child must have one of the following cards, visas or documents:
 - Health Care Card
 - Pensioner Concession Card
 - Temporary Protection/ Humanitarian Visas 447, 451, or 785
 - Asylum seekers on Bridging Visas A - F and Refugee and Special Humanitarian Visas holders 200- 217

- Resolution of Status (RoS) visa, Class CD, subclass 851
- Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card.

2. Triplets or Quadruplets

If triplets or quadruplets are attending kindergarten in the same year the family is eligible for the subsidy for each child.

3. Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Children

All children identified by a parent, carer or legal guardian as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children are eligible for the subsidy.

In addition to the above eligibility criteria, the department may extend the subsidy in specific circumstances (eg. severe weather conditions as has occurred in 2011). These additional eligibilities are outlined in the DET's Kindergarten Guide.

To obtain KFS, supporting documentation must be sighted by the staff prior to or at the commencement of Term 1 or when the child becomes eligible. The type of concession card and expiry date will be recorded on the child's file. Further documentation will be required upon the expiry of the card to maintain eligibility.

EARLY START FUNDING

The DET provides targeted funding for some children to attend a kindergarten program two years before school. Funding is aimed at improving access and diminishing barriers to participation for vulnerable children and Aboriginal children.

Early Start Kindergarten provides free or low cost kindergarten to eligible three year old children where programs are offered by a qualified early childhood teacher for up to 15 hours per week for 40 weeks in the two years before starting school.

Your child is eligible if they are aged three by 30 April in the year they will be attending kindergarten, and:

Your family has had contact with Child Protection (or been referred by them to Child FIRST), or



your child has been identified as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Applications for Early Start Kindergarten funding are made by the service on your behalf and the grant is paid directly to the service. For more information about Early Start Kindergarten, visit <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/kindergarten/Pages/earlystart.aspx>

SIGNING IN AND OUT

When leaving and collecting your child from the centre, you are required to fill out and sign the attendance sheet which is located in each room. This is a requirement of both DET and Family Assistance Office.

The following details are required –

- Time of arrival and signature of person bringing the child to care.
- Expected pick-up time. If you're going to be late, please call ahead of time
- Expected pick up person (please don't write mum or dad , this is not accepted by DET)
- You MUST sign in and out every day your child is in care to receive your CCS entitlements.
- Any medications MUST BE written up in a separate medication folder - the staff will guide you through this.

Please note that only individuals identified on a child's enrolment form are authorised to sign them in or out of a service. Written permission must be given for children to be collected by anyone not already identified on the enrolment form. ID will need to be shown upon pick up. Under no circumstances will any staff member allow a child to be removed from the centre by an unauthorised person.

We understand from time to time you may require others to collect or drop off your child/ren. In the event of this occurring, please phone ahead to our children's services office and notify who will be collecting your child. They will need to provide photo identification upon collection. Parent/Guardian will be required to follow up with written confirmation.

Please refer to our 'Delivery and Collection of Children' and 'Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations' policies for further information.

CUSTODY INFORMATION

If there is any custody information that the staff need to be aware of, please notify accordingly, and provide copies of all legal documents to our children's service office upon enrolment or as they are obtained. Parents/Guardians listed on the enrolment form have legal access to their child at all times unless a legally binding Parenting Order, restraining order or information and/or documentation supplied by the Police or Department of Human Services Child Protection states otherwise. Families must ensure that there is a copy of any current, relevant, legally binding documentation relating to the child with the child's enrolment record at the service. Please note that staff cannot legally refuse the release of a child into the care of a parent without a provided court order.

STAFFING

Lightning Reef Early Learning centre is licensed by the Department of Education and Training. We follow a ratio of 1 staff: 4 children aged 0-3 years, 1:11 for children aged 3 years and over and 1:8 for public excursions. Our Safeguarding Children policy ensures we always have a minimum of two staff on duty. All educators hold relevant qualifications in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Act and Regulations. The name of the person responsible for the service (Supervisor on Duty) will be on display each day at the service.

SETTLING YOUR CHILD IN

Sometimes children take time to be comfortable with you leaving them in their new surroundings. We like to have a transition period for new children which may take 2, 3 or even more visits, depending on the child. This is done by gradually increasing their period of stay, usually one routine at a time. Your child's Educator will guide you through this process.



It is recommended that you spend time settling your child into an activity. When you have to go, give them a hug and kiss goodbye, say you are going and that you will be back later, then leave.

Your child may cry (you probably will too) and want to go with you, but be strong! If you keep coming back it makes it more difficult for the child and the Educator to settle them. We do not like seeing children distressed any more than you do. If they do not settle within a short time – which they usually do – then we will contact you. It may be hard for you but please trust that we will call only if necessary. You are always welcome to call and enquire how your child is feeling and whether they have settled in.

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE

YMCA Staff regularly participate in training and professional development to support and facilitate positive behaviours and interactions. Expectations of behaviour will be clearly expressed in a positive manner and reinforced consistently in a developmentally appropriate way.

Children are encouraged to develop social skills that help resolve conflicts and have needs met without the use of aggressive or destructive behaviours. Educators are not permitted to physically or verbally abuse, intimidate or deprive any child for any reason in accordance with The Children's Services Regulations 2011. Staff will demonstrate acceptable behaviours as outlined in the Code of Conduct policy.

Please inform the director at time of enrolment if have any concerns regarding your child's behaviour and we can discuss our behaviour guidance plans.

Please refer to our 'Interactions with Children' policy for further information.

WHAT TO BRING

- Children will need to bring the following items when attending our service. All belongings should be labelled.
- A bag or backpack.
- At least two full sets of clothes including socks, and underwear. Messy activities and accidents do happen.
- If your child/ren have comfort items they wish to bring please label them. Toy weapons (guns, swords, and knives) are not permitted in the centre.
- Children in nappies need to have enough nappies to get them through the day (usually 4-5) as well as your own nappy cream. We supply sheets and blankets for sleep-time in all rooms. If your child has a dummy, bottle or favourite toy for comfort or sleep /rest time, please send it along and make staff aware of this.
- We do offer an indoor /outdoor program and ask that you dress your children to suit the weather conditions. Warm clothes for winter including gumboots, beanies, etc and Sun Smart clothes for summer weather.
- An appropriate Sunhat (Sun Smart recommends broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket-style hats) for outside play. Hats must be worn from September 1st to April 30th (or where the UV index reaches 3 and above). Children without hats will have outdoor play restricted.
- Sunscreen is applied 20 minutes prior to going outside. If your child has sensitive skin and needs his or her own sunscreen, we are happy to use it if brought in and our staff notified. Sleeveless tops and dresses are also not appropriate or Sun Smart.
- A refillable drink bottle if your child would like otherwise we do have drinking taps as well as access to water all day.
- We ask that your child does not wear thongs as they can be dangerous for children when they are trying to climb and run,

Please note that valuables should be left at home. Bendigo Regional YMCA will not accept any responsibility for lost, damaged or stolen valuable personal possessions brought to the program.



WHAT NOT TO BRING

- Food and drinks - food, lollies, chocolates or any drinks (other than water) should not be brought into the centre unless specifically requested e.g. for celebration days as part of the program. All programs are NUTELLA and NUT FREE. For further information please refer to our Food and Nutrition Policy on site.
- Toys that are not comfort items. This includes electronic games, guns, dress-up items, jewellery etc. Toys will be removed and returned to the parent on departure. Removal, breakage or loss of toys can cause distress to the child, it is important to avoid bringing toys to the service. All lost items are the responsibility of families.

LOST PROPERTY

Families are requested to take home children's property and art work at the end of each day. We also encourage families to label **any** items brought from home with the potential to be misplaced (hats, jackets, toys, drink bottles, etc.).

Lost property will be displayed in the rooms and it is recommended that you browse through this regularly regardless of whether you are missing something or not, to ensure that an item has not been lost unknowingly.

Any items that remain unclaimed for one month will be used by the service or donated to charity.

SUNSCREEN

Sunscreen will be supplied and applied 20 minutes prior to outdoor play and re-applied every two hours. Please provide your own product if required.

Please refer to our 'Sun Protection' policy for further information.

FOOD AND MEALS

Children are supplied with a nutritious lunch freshly prepared by our centre cook. The weekly menu is listed on the notice board in the front entry area. Our menu has been assessed by Nutrition Australia. It will provide up to 75% of the daily dietary requirements and consists of a variety of recipes. In addition to lunch, we also provide the following:

- Morning Tea consists of toast, pita bread, cereal, savoury platters, raisin toast etc.
- Afternoon tea is substantial and includes yoghurt, dips with veggies and biscuits, savoury platters or fruit crumble.
- A selection of fresh fruits is available throughout the day from our fruit bowl for the children to choose when they like. Water and milk is served with each meal.

If you have any special menu requests or ideas, please see our cook to discuss these. If your child is celebrating a birthday you are welcome to bring a cake for your child/ren to celebrate with their friends. Due to health regulations this must be a purchased cake with a list of ingredients, not homemade.

If your child has a food allergy or intolerance this will need to be discussed in detail upon enrolment to arrange a risk management plan to ensure all educators are very clear about your child's dietary requirements.

Occasionally, the educators will have cooking activities with the children and families are more than welcome to participate.

Please refer to our 'Nutrition, oral health and active play policy for further information.



FEE STRUCTURING

Fees are effective from July 1, 2018.

Please note that these prices are BEFORE any Centrelink Benefits are applied, to enquire if you are eligible contact your Centrelink office.

Session	Fees
Long day care Daily fee (includes kindergarten for eligible children)	\$110.00 per day
Transition Fee	\$55.00
Long day care weekly fee	\$101.00 per day \$505 per week
Leave Fee	\$88.00 daily rate \$81.00 weekly rate
Full Day Casual Care 7.00am – 5.00pm	\$120.00
Half Day Casual Care 7am-12noon OR 12noon-5pm	\$70.00
Sessional Kindergarten	Group A Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 9am-2pm \$13 per day (no CCS) Group B Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 9am-2pm \$13 per day (no CCS) Group C Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9am-2pm \$13 per day (no CCS) Group D Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9am – 2pm \$13 per day (no CCS) Group E Monday, Thursday and Friday 9am-2pm \$13 per day (no CCS) Families eligible for Kindergarten Fee Subsidy \$0
Before and After Kinder Care is available in 2 hour blocks or part thereof: 7am-9am 2pm-4pm 2pm-6pm	\$25 per two hours block. This fee is eligible for CCS \$50.00 per four hour block

LATE COLLECTION POLICY

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to arrive to collect their child before the centre closing time. The BRYMCA recognises however that there may be isolated occasions when parents/guardians may be delayed and will be required to contact the service notifying of alternative collection arrangements for their child.

It is important to note the following:

- After 30 minutes has lapsed from centre closing, if no one from authorised persons list on the enrolment form is able to be contacted the local Police will be called on 54481300.
- A late collection fee of \$20.00 will be charged per child to the family account for collection after 6.00pm up to 15 minutes and an additional \$20.00 for every further 15 minutes.
- Penalty fees are not eligible for CCS entitlement.



FEE PAYMENT PERMANENT BOOKINGS - DIRECT DEBIT

The payment method for all Permanent bookings is Direct Debit via HubHello (Integra Pay). When completing your online enrolment form, you will be required to complete the Direct Debit Request section. You will first need to accept the terms and conditions governing the direct debit agreement. Once you have accepted this acknowledgement your Bank Account or Credit Card details will need to be entered.

It is important to note that the fee charged is an estimate until CCS is formally applied so any variances to your program fee will be charged to your nominated account in the next fortnight's direct debit run.

Electronic statements will be sent to account holder's email on the Monday before each Thursday direct debit is due. In the event that a public holiday is on a Monday, statements will be sent the following day. There is no fee for this service. Parents requiring hard copy statements will need to contact us to arrange how often they would like to receive statements and will incur a \$2 fee per statement.

Accounts will be debited on Thursdays on a fortnightly basis. The amount debited will include bookings for the week following the direct debit, and the subsequent week (2 weeks in advance). Please note that the statement you receive is subject to change due to bookings made after the statement has been issued or potential Centrelink adjustments. In the case of a public holiday, the direct debit will occur on the following business day.

If no payment is received your child will not be booked in to the program.

The following fees will be incurred to process direct debit payments:

Type of Transaction	Fee
Bank Account	\$0.75
Credit/Debit Card	\$0.75 plus 0.9%
Amex Card	\$0.75 plus 3.85%

Please note that BRYMCA is not responsible for these fees as our direct debits are processed by a third party. As such, these fees are subject to change.

FEE PAYMENT CASUAL BOOKINGS

All Casual Bookings must be paid for at the time the booking is made by either EFTPOS or by paying cash at our Children's Service Office.

It is important to note that the fee charged is an estimate until CCS is formally applied so there may be variances once our attendances have been submitted to CCSS.

YOUR DIRECT DEBIT OBLIGATIONS

It is your responsibility to ensure that sufficient funds are available in your account and that you have provided us with correct bank or credit card details. It is your responsibility to let us know if any of these details change.

If the direct debit is declined for any reason you need to be aware of the following:

- a) You will be charged a \$25.00 administrative fee per occurrence by BRYMCA and you may incur bank fees imposed by your financial institution and HubHello (Integra Pay)
- b) You must arrange for payment within 3 business days once notified by BRYMCA of your rejected debit payment.



c) BRYMCA will remove future bookings if full payment is not received within 4 business days following a declined direct debit payment. These bookings will only be reinstated once payment is received in full.

d) BRYMCA may refer your account to a debt recovery service if payment is not made within 14 days

Date statements emailed to families 2018:

Jan			Feb		March		April		May		June		July			Aug		Sept		Oct		Nov		Dec		
01	15	29	12	26	12	26	09	23	7	21	4	18	2	16	30	13	27	10	24	08	22	05	19	03	17	31

In the event that a public holiday is on a Monday, statements will be sent the following day

Direct Debit Dates for 2018:

Jan		Feb		March			April		May		June		July		Aug			Sept		Oct		Nov		Dec	
04	18	01	15	01	15	29	12	26	10	24	07	21	05	19	02	16	30	13	27	11	25	08	22	06	20

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY SYSTEM

Parents accessing care at Lightning Reef ELC may be eligible for Child Care Subsidy (CCS), through the Family Assistance Office. CCS enables most families to receive a discount on their daily fee. Child care providers are not directly involved in the making of a claim for CCS by the individual or their partner. However, the individual or their partner must make a claim, and be determined to be eligible, in order for CCS entitlement to be determined.

In order to apply for CCS, the family should create or access their Centrelink online account via www.my.Gov.au.

Centrelink will check and confirm the eligibility of the individual and child for Child Care Subsidy.

Families can create or access their Centrelink online account and lodge a claim for Child Care Subsidy through myGov.

Information for families about Child Care Subsidy and Additional Child Care Subsidy is available on the Department of Human Services Website.

Families can call Centrelink about Child Care Subsidy and other family payments on 136 150, from Monday to Friday, 8am-8pm, including for staff assistance in completing the claim form.

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY SYSTEM RECORD OF ABSENCES

ALLOWABLE AND APPROVED ABSENCES

Child Care Subsidy and Additional Child Care Subsidy are payable for up to 42 absence days for a child in a financial year, in relation to sessions of care where an individual still incurs a genuine fee liability to pay for the care. A reason does not need to be provided for a child's initial 42 days of absence

Once 42 absence days have occurred in a financial year, Child Care Subsidy and Additional Child Care Subsidy can only be paid for any additional absences where they are taken for a reason defined in the Family Assistance Law.



MEDICAL AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORIENTATION

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

To ensure the best care for all children, we ask that families communicate with us regarding medical conditions and provide any relevant details that will assist in providing a safe and informed environment.

Any child with a diagnosed medical condition will require a full coloured copy of the participant's management plan signed by their doctor. In addition, a Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation Plan, and Medical Conditions Communication Plan will be developed by staff in consultation with families prior to booking.

Please refer to our 'Dealing with Medical Conditions', 'Anaphylaxis', 'Asthma', 'Diabetes' and 'Epilepsy' policies for further information.

MEDICATION

Families are asked to sign in your child's medication. Full details, including dosages, times, participant's name, doctor's name and expiration date must be provided and staff will co-sign once medication has been administered. Medication must be in its original container, bearing the original label with the name of the child to whom the medication is to be administered, and be within its expiry date. All medicines will be kept in a secure location, out of reach of children. The medication register can be found when signing children in/out. Please ask one of our educators for assistance. **Please do not leave medication in your child's bag.**

Please refer to our 'Administration of Medication' policy for further information.

ILLNESS

From time to time your child may become ill at home or at the service. It is the YMCA's responsibility to protect all children, families and staff from the spread of infectious diseases at the

service. As a parent you are the person that knows your child best, if there is any change in your child's general health or wellbeing please keep your child at home and seek medical attention. If your child becomes unwell at the service, this will be immediately monitored and recorded and you will be informed by telephone. Due to this, you may be asked to collect your child earlier than usual.

In the case that any infectious diseases occur at the Service, affected child/ren may be excluded for the communicable period of the disease, or until they have satisfied conditions to return to the service. This exclusion is necessary for the protection of all children and to reduce the risk of further infection. If a parent reports that their child has contracted a contagious disease, the program will put up a notice advising parents.

Please refer to the latest edition of 'Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services' published by the Australian Government: National Health and Medical Research Council for information on exclusion periods. This document is available from www.nhmrc.gov.au

You can also refer to our 'Dealing with Infectious Diseases' policy for further information. Please ensure your child is well before returning to the Centre after illness. This may at times require a medical clearance from a doctor. Your child should be able to cope in a group situation. Please refer to our illness policy.

INCIDENT, INJURIES, ILLNESS AND TRAUMA

All incidents, injuries, illnesses or traumas, and the treatment given for these, will be recorded on our Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record. Authorised contacts of children may be notified by phone and will be asked to sign the form when collecting the child.

In the case of an emergency, an ambulance will be called, and you will be contacted immediately.



Parents are requested to ensure that the daily telephone contact number and the contact details on the enrolment form are correct and up to date. If either parent cannot be contacted, emergency contacts will be called.

The cost of the ambulance or any medical expenses will be covered by the child's family.

Please refer to our 'Administration of First Aid' and 'Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness' policies for further information.

EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION

Emergency Management Plans are in place at Lightning Reef Early Learning Centre. Evacuations will be rehearsed each term with the children at the service. Our evacuation points are the primary school oval and the Bendigo Showgrounds oval.

Please refer to our 'Emergency & Evacuation' policy for further information.



BRYMCA acknowledges the traditional Aboriginal owners of country Victoria and pays our respect to them, their culture and their Elders past present and future.