

Family Handbook

Early Childhood Centre | 2025



Nazareth





Welcome

Nazareth Catholic Community's mission is reflected in our daily interactions and actions. We are inspired by Jesus of Nazareth and our Patrons, we are people of justice each committed to building community, nourishing family life and making the world a better place.

Nazareth Early Childhood Centre (ECC) is part of the wider Nazareth Catholic Community, the Primary College is our neighbour on the Findon campus and the Secondary College is located at Flinders Park.

Nazareth ECC is an exciting and engaging learning environment for your child. The ECC recognises the uniqueness of each child and the importance of building a learning community where the educators recognise the potential of every child and the need to provide opportunities for growth. The educators offer learning opportunities to assist in developing the child's sense of wonder and curiosity. Children are encouraged to investigate and explore as they make sense of their world. Nazareth Catholic Community fosters the whole child; their social, emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being, and provides opportunities for each child to reach their full potential. We value children as competent and capable. Our indoor and outdoor learning environments and the way our educators work with children reflects this. At Nazareth ECC we believe that children learn best through play and in an environment where they feel safe, secure and free to express themselves.

Nazareth is a place of joy and wonder. It is a place where we believe relationships are at the heart of good teaching and learning, a mutual respect and responsibility exists between the Early Childhood Centre, home and the wider community. Families play a vital role in their child's development and education. We encourage and welcome family partnership at Nazareth ECC.

Our hope is that this booklet provides a window into our world of living, loving and working together.

Mrs Natasha Walc & Mrs Joanne Bird
Early Years Co- Directors

...in joyful hope



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Who We Are

Nazareth is a community of welcome and connection. Our aim is to engage with families across the whole-of-life journey. From newborns and preschoolers, to primary and secondary students, young adults and recent graduates and then into adulthood and senior years, we are creating communities of faith, learning and wellbeing.

OUR PURPOSE

We are called to love one another.

OUR VISION

We are a Catholic Community of welcome; connecting faith, family and education.

OUR MISSION

Inspired by Jesus of Nazareth and our Patrons, we are people of justice, committed to building community, nourishing family life and making the world a better place.



“We are a place of welcome and connection”

Why Nazareth

The ECC is a special place that values the wonder of childhood. It is a community that partners with parents to provide the best educational start for your child.

Our educators work alongside children as they grow so that they develop skills and emotional capacity that will enable them to flourish.

Our centre is staffed with university qualified Early Childhood Education teachers, and educators with a Diploma and or Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care. We are licensed for 100 children a day from six months to school age.

As part of the Nazareth Catholic Community we offer more than a stand-alone facility. As a centre for child and family wellbeing, we offer programs for children, parents and the extended community. There are playgroups, adult education workshops and fitness classes for our older members plus much, much more.

We have a unique and valuable professional relationship with Flinders University through; Occupational Therapy, Dietetics & Nutrition, Speech Pathology and Psychology faculties. This provides for us, and families, expert observations, assessment and direction for early intervention. Through this partnership we are able to put in place strategies to support children's development.

Located on the NCC Findon campus means we have access to many facilities; including the Library, Church, Café and community gathering spaces, Gym and specialised sports equipment, large play spaces, oval, playgrounds, undercover areas and hardcourts, and specialist lessons with the Italian teachers.

We are blessed to be nestled amongst many and it is true that here, at the ECC, the village helps raise the child.



Early Childhood Centre Philosophy

Our Catholic Community calls us to

- Be a place of **welcome; connecting faith, family and education.**
- Nurture each child's spiritual growth, celebrate intercultural connections and empower **globally minded citizens.**
- Be inspired by Jesus of Nazareth and our patrons, with a commitment to **building community** and nourishing **family life.**
- **Share love and kindness,** respect, inclusivity, compassion, integrity, and **justice; making a world that God desires.**
- Embed **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives** through our Reconciliation Action Plan, as we continue to learn and grow in our understanding of the deep need for change.

Our relationships are

- **Secure, respectful and reciprocal.**
- Fundamental to our way of **belonging, being and becoming.**
- Founded on mutual respect, we create an environment where children **feel safe, happy,** and thrive by upholding their **rights to protection, development, and dignity.**
- Developed through **partnerships** which enrich practice and foster a sense of collective responsibility, placing emphasis on trust, open communication, active listening and **responsiveness.**
- Interdependent and extend beyond the concept of care as we connect deeply with God's beautiful world.

Our environments reflect

- A **homely** feel, characterised by **warmth, comfort** and connection.
- **Intentionally co-constructed,** vibrant spaces and provocations that act as **'the third teacher'** to inspire **creativity and curiosity.**
- **Open-ended** opportunities for play which stimulate a **sense of wonder.**
- The importance of **rhythm and rituals** which invite a sense of **meaning, stability and harmony.**
- Children's inherent interest in the outdoors to support their **wellbeing** and **connection with nature** as we work with lessons from the land.

Our educational programs value

- **Play** as the primary learning approach and a child's right.
- A future that bears **witness to children as leaders and advocates.**
- **Challenge** to foster growth, resilience, innovative thinking, and a deeper understanding of the impact of our actions.
- **Critical reflection** as pivotal to our programs and practice. It informs and affirms **decision making** and empowers everyone to be **a leader of their own learning.**
- Authenticity and the **identity** of each person by enriching the educational experience with **diverse perspectives** and life-worlds.
- **Risk-taking** as a catalyst for exploration and essential for nurturing **confident and capable learners.**
- Respect for individual **time and pace,** placing importance on **process** and the ability to see, think, act, make and share with **one hundred different languages.**

Our practice is

- Underpinned by holistic, contemporary and child centred **frameworks, pedagogies and theorists.**
- Reflective of a shared commitment to **sustainability** as **stewards** for a world that is **healthy and vibrant.**
- Supportive of wellbeing practices that include a **healthy** approach to eating and are responsive to the beliefs and the needs of the **community.**
- Unwavering as we proactively advocate for **inclusion and equity,** responsive to diverse ways of being and committed to **addressing injustice.**
- Anchored in **continuous improvement,** we embrace the mindset of **life-long learning.**



About Us

The ECC is open from 7.00am – 6.00pm Monday to Friday. Children can come for all or part of the day. We have one daily fee. We close for approximately two weeks over the Christmas/New Year period and have two closure days for staff professional development. You will be given ample warning regarding this date to enable you to make alternative arrangements.

We have a minimum attendance requirement that supports each child to build attachments and connections with staff and other children in their room. To provide continuity and to engage children in a quality program, a child must attend the ECC for a minimum of two days. In the early years the word fragmentation refers to the number of transitions a child has in a day, each time a different significant adult takes over, the child's world changes. We encourage parents to place a kindy child solely at the ECC. In regards to splitting your child's week, by attending an alternate kindy doesn't allow for strong partnerships. One setting gives your child the predictability with routines, people and environments. This continuity enables the child to build strong identity and self-confidence.

Our centre is set up to maximise and allow children to develop naturally with their peers. We have five rooms that are named after the patrons of Nazareth Catholic Community. Below is a table that outlines our room structure.

Centre Operations

Centre Enrolment

To join the ECC community you need to complete an online waitlist form with an application fee of \$50.00. This is a once only fee and is non-refundable. Your child's name will be placed on our wait list. Your child must be born before they can go on the wait list and we recommend you call every six months to check your status. If at any time you want to be withdrawn from the waitlist, please call and inform us. Should your child be offered a position at the centre and this position is declined, your application date, and therefore waitlist placement will be revised to reflect the date of decline.



Information to note is:

- Some educator full time positions are shared therefore there may be part time staff in a room
- Ages in rooms will vary for individual children and we reserve the right to make the decision of child placement based on our professional training

Room	Age Guide	Class Size
MacKillop	6 months – 18/ 24 months	12 children
McAuley	18/ 24 months – approx. 3 years	14 children
Catherine	18/ 24 months – approx. 3 years	14 children
Dominic	3 – 5 years	30 children
Romero	3 – 5 years	30 children

Fee Schedule

Our centre is a non-profit incorporated body that is integrated into the Nazareth Catholic Community. We aim to provide exceptional service in both staffing and resourcing. Our fees are set at the beginning of each year and we reserve the right to make changes throughout the year if required. Fees include morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

Full Day rate: \$149

Kindy Day rate: \$107 (8.15am – 3.45pm)

These rates do not take into account your eligibility for Child Care Subsidy (CCS). Please contact Centrelink to determine your level of government financial support. We have a funded preschool (Kindy) and as such attract State Government funding.

Child Care Subsidy is available to all families who are Australian Residents if the child meets immunisation requirements and parents meet eligibility requirements. Entitlement and the number of hours of subsidised care available, is determined by an activity test.

Continuity of enrolment is jeopardised if fees are not paid fortnightly. Please note, Debitsuccess is our preferred method of payment, this ensures your fee payment is always up to date. Payments of fees can also be made at the ECC reception, between the hours of 8:30am - 4:30pm (Monday to Friday) or via Xplor payment app. At the end of each year an updated Financial Information document is distributed to families with updated details on fees and any changes in rules or regulations.

Public Holidays

As per CCS regulations our centre is closed on Public Holidays. Normal fees apply if a public holiday closure is on your child's usual day of attendance.

Family Holidays & Booking Cancellation

It is important for your child to have this break and we encourage all children to take some time out during the year. We offer 10 days holidays per year at a reduced rate, including Public Holidays. To support this we offer a discount of \$49.00 on these days. You still receive your CCS. This discount only applies to full day fees. Our Kindy structure does not allow for discount for children who take holidays during term time. A holiday request form must be completed 14 days prior to leave in order to access this discount. Please refer to the financial information document for details regarding your obligations with CCS and Holiday absences.

If you are cancelling your child's booking at Nazareth Early Childhood Centre, at least 28 days' notice must be provided by completing the Holiday and Cancellation Form. Holiday and Cancellation Forms are available at the ECC or on the Nazareth Catholic Community website.

Enrolment & Offers

Priority of Access Guidelines are used to determine placements, and these guidelines are listed on the Waitlist Form. The discretion of the Early Years Director and College Principal may be used to prioritise.

- Current children requiring additional care days
- Siblings of children currently attending the Nazareth Early Childhood Centre
- Children requiring Preschool who are enrolled and accepted to commence at Nazareth Catholic College

It is important that at the time of enrolment you complete forms openly and honestly. Full disclosure of your child's needs is expected as this supports us to be prepared once they are offered a place.

Please note that enrolment to Nazareth Early Childhood Centre does not give automatic entry into Nazareth Catholic College.





Health & Safety

We believe that being healthy and feeling safe are integral to wellbeing. We provide an environment where children feel connected and secure. Any person 14 years and over working in a voluntary capacity at the ECC are required to hold a Working with Children Check (WWCC). A Catholic Police Clearance (CPC) or Teachers Registration may also be applicable. If you would like to volunteer or attend excursions please speak with ECC staff to assist you with this process.

Although we take every precaution to ensure your child are safe, we value authentic and challenging learning experiences which encourages children to independently assess risks. As you can understand sometimes accidents happen, however staff are responsive, comforting and tend to the child's needs. We keep families informed of injuries through a variety of communication methods. This could include a conversation when you collect your child, a phone conversation and for more serious incidents you will be asked to sign an digital incident form via Xplor.

Illnesses & Medical Information

If your child is unwell and is unable to participate in the daily activities of the ECC, the best place for them is in the comfort of their own home. We welcome children back to the centre when they have recovered and ready to engage fully in the learning program.

Please inform the ECC if your child will not be attending the centre for the day due to illness. If a Medical Practitioner has diagnosed your child with an infectious disease please inform the ECC immediately so we can inform the wider community, when appropriate. Families will be notified of infectious diseases via the notice boards located at the beginning of the hallway and via Storypark.

If you arrive at the ECC at the beginning of the day and it is clear that your child is unwell we will ask you to take them home. If your child has been prescribed medication for an illness, a daily medication form will need to be completed with the child's educator for any short term medications or conditions. Please note we do not administer pain relief.

Immunisation Requirements

Following changes to the South Australian Public Health Act 2011 (the Act), from 7 August 2020, children will not be able to enrol in or attend early childhood services unless all immunisation requirements are met.

The Act states: An early childhood service must not enrol a child if all immunisation requirements are not met; a child cannot attend, or continue to attend, an early childhood service if all immunisation requirements are not met; early childhood services must keep a current copy of an approved immunisation record for each child enrolled in, or attending that service; approved immunisation records must be supplied by parents/guardians to the early childhood service at specified times.

Allergy Aware Zone

We monitor children with allergies closely. This discussion is held at enrolment and alternative meals are prepared when required. Please keep us informed of your child's needs. If your child has an allergy, dietary requirement or diagnosed medical condition, **you will be required to complete a Medical Condition Risk Minimisation Plan.** The completion of this plan will take place in consultation with the Admin staff.

Any medication must be supplied to the front desk in the first instance. Children will not be able to start at the ECC if the relevant forms or medication have not been provided. **We ask families not to bring food into the centre at pick up, drop off or in children's bags, to ensure all our children with allergies are safe.**

Meals

We are committed to providing nutritionally balanced meals. Our centre offers delicious and nutritious meals for morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. Our menu follows a four week rotation cycle and we have a seasonal menu plan. Our menu is displayed for parents to read and recipes are available upon request. Any changes to the daily menu are written on the message board.

We employ a qualified cook who is well trained and experienced. All meals are prepared fresh using quality ingredients. ECC staff are trained in Safe Food Handling. This enables meal time procedures to meet council regulations and requirements. Children are encouraged by educators to drink water throughout the day.

Our Catholic identity is integral to our community, therefore meal times are a social and enjoyable ritual where we emulate family experiences and prepare children with life skills.

Rest Time

All children require some down time during their day. After lunch in the ECC all rooms plan sleep, rest or quiet time. We work in partnership with families to maintain babies sleep routines.

The Care X Change

Our hallway prominently displays The Care X Change. The Care X Change is a play for children and families to offer pre-loved items to others by changing and swapping items. It is a place for recycling and promoting sustainability; signifying the care we have for our common home.

Items can include books, clothing and toys and can be donated at any time. We kindly ask that all donated items are in good, clean condition. If we have an overflow of donations (particularly clothing), we will pass these on to Vinnies.

Car Parking & Mobile Phones

The car park out the front of the ECC is for our families exclusively. It is not very big and as you can appreciate it is important that the parks are free for our precious little people.

Families who also have children in the school are not to use this for school drop off/pick up. Please do not leave your car in our car park if you are entering the school grounds. There is ample street parking nearby should you not be able to find a park. It is also unacceptable for families to leave young children unattended in the carpark. We are here to support you. Please reach out to staff should you need assistance.

Please be mindful that we are an educational setting. We appreciate you conversing on your phone outside of the centre.

Sun Safety

Our centre is SunSmart. We aim to protect children and staff from high UV to help minimise future skin cancer risk. Staff access the daily sun protection times via the Sun Smart App or www.myuv.com.au to assist with implementing this policy. When the UV levels are three and above the 5 SunSmart steps will be followed. Visit www.sunsmart.com.au for more information.

Children must wear a broad brim hat, have their shoulders covered and apply their first application of 50+ sunscreen at home. Sunscreen will be reapplied as required.

Nappy Changes and Toileting

At Nazareth Early Childhood Centre we acknowledge and respect that children become confident and independent with toileting in their own time. We ensure every child's nappy changing experience supports their health and wellbeing. Please provide nappies for your child each day.

The Toddler Neighbourhood is often the space where children begin toilet training as current advice outlines that most toddlers are mature enough to make this transition between the ages of 18 months and 3 years. Should your child be ready to embark on their toileting training journey, we will walk alongside them in this experience. Consistency is imperative at this time, so whatever approach you employ at home, we will strive to embed and mirror at the ECC.

Signs of readiness:

- Nappy stays dry for a couple of hours at a time
- The child seeks for their nappy to be changed when it is wet or dry
- The child informs you when their nappy is wet or soiled
- The child can pull their nappy or pants up and down
- The child can sit for a short period and shows interest in using the toilet or potty

For more information on toilet training, please visit: <https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/health-daily-care/toileting/toilet-training-guide>

What to Wear

Dressing your children in clothing that is comfortable, weather appropriate and practical for play, mess and dirt allows them to have the best possible experience each and every day.

To easily identify children within the 3-5 Neighbourhood we ask that families dress their child in a yellow polo shirt or Nazareth ECC Polo, black trackpants, shorts or leggings. This can be paired with a black jumper/windcheater/jacket when the weather is cooler. Children must wear well-fitted shoes and safe footwear for running and climbing activities. Please label all clothing items.

What to bring to the ECC

All children will need to bring the following items and we ask that everything is clearly labelled:

- Hat (bucket hat, legionnaires or broad-brimmed)
- Drink bottle
- Change of clothes (don't forget socks!)
- Spare underwear (soiled underwear may be unable to be returned)
- Nappies (if required)
- Comforters for sleep
- Babies: Bottle, formula, dummies

We ask that children **do not** bring personal items (toys etc) unless explicitly invited by staff. We can not be held responsible for lost or damaged items.



Our Program

Nazareth Early Childhood Centre is inspired by Reggio Emilia principles. Our curriculum embraces the interests of the children and is responsive to their curiosity and thinking.

As a centre built on the foundation of the Catholic Faith our Religious Education revolves around prayer and developing skills to be a kind, grateful and loving person. Educators guide children to experience the presence of Jesus in their lives. Children typically have an innate wonder of God and the world and we work with this to develop a respect for others and the environment.

Educators at the ECC are seen as both facilitators of an education program and co learners with the children. They encourage children to take risks and support them to grow, learn and develop at a rate that suits them.

We base our program on the Belonging, Being and Becoming framework for children from birth to five years.

The framework's vision is for all children to experience play-based learning that is engaging and builds success for life. The Early Years Framework describes childhood as a time of:

Belonging

Is about the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel they belong because of the relationships they have with their family, community, culture and place.

Being

Is about living here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need time to just, be – a time to play, try new things and have fun.

Becoming

Is about the learning and development that young children experience. Children start to form their sense of identity from an early age, which shapes the type of adult they will become.

Offers & Visits

When you are offered a place at Nazareth Early Childhood Centre, you will be given a start date and asked to confirm your booking by returning the Acceptance of Offer form along with a \$200 Acceptance Fee and all relevant paperwork. An ECC staff member will be in contact with you to arrange visits prior to your child/children starting. The number of visits may vary due to individual children's needs.

In the initial weeks of starting at the ECC, it is important that the children's transition meets their individual needs in a way that helps build resilience. Wherever necessary we encourage, families to start their journey with shorter days. If you require further information please talk with the ECC front staff who will answer your questions or point you in the direction of the person who can.

Family Engagement

At Nazareth Early Childhood Centre we recognise parents as the first educators and value working in partnership with families. The National Quality System through the Early Years Learning Framework states that children are more likely to be successful learners when we work together with families. We believe family engagement at the ECC is the shared responsibility of the family, school and community.

We offer diverse opportunities for families to engage with the ECC, both during and after hours, ensuring all families can participate in some or all events. To become a volunteer we encourage family members to obtain a Working With Children Check and complete the College induction procedure for volunteers and visitors.

Raising a complaint with Department for Education

We recognise that sometimes things go wrong and you may feel that your expectations are not being met. If you have an unresolved issue or a complaint, please raise it. It is important to work together, talk, listen and find solutions so we can improve our services to the community. Please visit the [SA Gov website](#) for more information including steps to take if you have a complaint or concern.



Nazareth

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