

# Early Learning Centre Family Information Handbook



LORETO  
COLLEGE  

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ELC

[www.loreto.sa.edu.au](http://www.loreto.sa.edu.au)

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## Early Learning Centre

Loreto Early Learning Centre is a dynamic learning environment which encourages exploration and play, allowing children to discover a sense of identity and place.

Located in a beautiful heritage house on our historic grounds, the Early Learning Centre caters for girls and boys from six weeks to five years of age. A comforting sentiment of home is created through the house environment, in turn facilitating a sense of family and belonging.

Central to our approach is the concept of play based learning which focuses on the process of discovery and inspires children to be curious and creative. The Centre offers three programs:

- **Gumnut**  
*Nurture & Grow: for children 6 weeks to 18 months*
- **Wattle**  
*Explore & Become: for children 18 months to 3 years*
- **Banksia**  
*Connect & Enrich: for children 3 to 4 years*
- **Preschool**  
*4 years to 5 years*

Educators use intentional teaching practices, providing hands-on investigations that reflect each child's individual interests, experiences and developmental needs. Making sense of their world through active engagement with educators, other children, and their surroundings, learning is a reciprocal process that encourages children to ask questions, communicate ideas and reflect on their experiences.

Early literacy and numeracy learning experiences are combined with storytelling, music, art, design and movement to form the integral components of each program, nurturing new thoughts and deeper understanding.

An essential element of our Centre is our nature play space, The Enchanted Garden. Here our children discover the joys of imaginative play and experience the wonder and excitement of exploring the natural world.

We support children and families through the transitions between home and early learning, and early learning and school. Our focus on learning facilitates a sense of connectedness between the College and our families and ensures a supportive and enriching learning environment for all children.

### Learning Outcomes

- Children have a strong sense of identity.
  - Children are connected with and contribute to their world.
  - Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.
  - Children are confident and involved learners.
  - Children are effective communicators.
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## Learning in the Early Learning Centre

Positive social, emotional, physical and cognitive growth through a child's early years is vital to their success. The Early Years is a time when children gain essential skills, knowledge and dispositions critical for success at school and later in life. Our curriculum is based on the National Early Years Learning Framework, Belonging, Being and Becoming.

**BELONGING** - *Feeling connected in key relationships.*

**BEING** - *Immersion in the here and now of relationships, interests & day to day events.*

**BECOMING** - *Changing and growing in understandings, skills and possibilities.*

The Framework forms the foundation for ensuring that children experience quality teaching and learning. It has a specific emphasis on play-based learning and recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development.

We also visit the Junior School Library weekly to share the love of books and stories and participate in Junior School events such as assemblies and performances where appropriate.

Children in our Preschool Program enjoy a weekly music lesson and all students in the centre learn Chinese. Junior School students also share their skills and knowledge with us, fostering a strong sense of community.

One way children's learning is documented is through the development of a Learning Portfolio. The portfolio provides evidence, through samples of drawing, writing and photographs, of what your child knows, can do and understands. Educators assess each child and comment on achievements and areas of growth. Families can access the portfolio any time and are encouraged to add their own comments.

Excursions and incursions are an integral part of the curriculum, offering interest, challenge and discovery within and about the wider community. We take regular walks through the Loreto College grounds, including visiting the beautiful gardens in the Senior School.





## Administration

### Opening Hours

The ELC is open 50 weeks of the year from 7:30am – 6.00pm, Monday to Friday. The ELC will close for two weeks over the Christmas and New Year period. Fees are not charged for the two weeks the Centre is closed over the Christmas and New Year break.

### Fee Schedule

Program	Booking	Daily Fee
Gumnut (6 weeks - 18 months)	Minimum 2 day a week	\$120
Wattle (18 months - 3 years)	Minimum 2 days a week	\$120
Banksia (3 years - 4 years)	Minimum 2 days a week	\$120
Preschool Program (4 years - 5 years)	Minimum 2 days a week	\$120

### Priority of Admission

The following criteria will apply when applications are placed on a waiting list:

1. A child enrolled to commence in Reception at Loreto College
2. Sibling/s currently attending Loreto College or Loreto Early Learning Centre
3. A daughter/son or granddaughter/grandson of an Old Scholar
4. Date of lodgement of an application
5. Children requesting 5 days per week

### Admission Procedure

#### Step 1: Tour

A tour of the Early Learning Centre can be arranged with the Admissions Office by phoning 8334 4200 or via email at [elcadministration@loreto.sa.edu.au](mailto:elcadministration@loreto.sa.edu.au). Tours are held on Mondays at 9.30am.

#### Step 2: Admission Form

The Admission Form, together with a \$95 non-refundable fee, is to be lodged with the Admissions Office. Acknowledgement of the Admission Form will be provided in writing.

#### Step 3: Acceptance of Admission

When a place is available, a staff member will contact you in regards to days required. An Acceptance Form, accompanied by other relevant documents will then be emailed to you.

#### Step 4: Place Confirmed

A signed Acceptance of Admission Form, together with two weeks' bond, will secure your child's admission to the Early Learning Centre.

#### Step 5: Transition Visits

Prior to commencement, a transition visit will be arranged. You will meet with an educator/teacher to discuss the individual needs of your child, and to further address any queries you may have. It is recommended that at least two transitions visits (of approximately 45 minutes) are scheduled prior to commencement.

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### **Continuation of Enrolment**

For girls who will progress to Reception in the Loreto Junior School, a separate Admission Form will need to be completed. Discounted fees apply for admission to Reception:

1. The application fee of \$95 is waived
2. The enrolment fee of \$675 is reduced to \$375

### **Bond**

Our payment policy requires that families pay the equivalent of 2 weeks' fees before commencing at the Centre. This serves as a bond and is cancelled out when required notice is given on cessation of the service (4 weeks' notice required for withdrawal from the Gumnut Program and 4 weeks for Wattle, Banksia and Preschool Programs).

### **Payments of Accounts**

Account statements for the Early Learning Centre are generated fortnightly by the College Finance Department and are paid via direct debit. Each direct debit will cover all outstanding child care fees for the previous fortnightly period. There are no discounted holiday periods available at the ELC and if a day of attendance for your child falls on a public holiday or if your child falls ill, normal fees apply. Account statements will include Centrelink payments if the Customer Registration Number (CRN) of both the parent and child are provided to the College.

### **Child Care Subsidy**

Before commencement at the Loreto Early Learning Centre, parents are asked to complete a claim for Child Care Subsidy online via the Centrelink page at [my.gov.au](https://my.gov.au). Please ensure you are registered with Centrelink and issued with a Customer Reference Number (CRN) for yourself and each child attending the Early Learning Centre.

The Child Care Subsidy will be paid directly to your approved child care provider to reduce the fees you pay. Information about the Child Care Subsidy for new families is available from the Department of Human Services website: <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy>.

### **Immunisation Requirements**

The South Australian Department for Health and Wellbeing has introduced further changes to the South Australian Public Health Act 2011 which will be in effect from 7 August 2020, known as the No Jab No Play Policy. The Act states:

- an early childhood service must not enrol a child if all immunisation requirements are not met
- a child cannot 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

Therefore, parents are asked to provide regular up to date *Medicare Immunisation History Statements*. These can be easily accessed through myGov accounts or from Medicare. Please send copies to [elcadministration@loreto.sa.edu.au](mailto:elcadministration@loreto.sa.edu.au).

### **Planned Absences**

Planned absences due to holidays or other commitments need to be communicated to the College via email. Immediate, unplanned absence due to illness should also be emailed as soon as possible. Fees are payable for all booked days including holidays, illnesses and public holidays.

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## Casual Bookings

Casual bookings may be available from time to time, please email requests to the College. Casual bookings will be charged at the standard daily rate. Bookings are made via the ELC Admin email or by calling the Admissions Office on 8334 4220.

To cancel bookings or withdraw from a program, written notice is required in advance. Four weeks' written notice is required to cancel/withdraw from our Gumnut program and six weeks' is required for Wattle, Banksia and Preschool Programs.

For all queries and enquiries relating to Absences, Enrolments, Casual Bookings, Finance, and Administration, please direct communications to [elcadministration@loreto.sa.edu.au](mailto:elcadministration@loreto.sa.edu.au).

## Arrival and Departure

The centre opens at 7.30am and closes at 6pm. To ensure children arrive and depart safely and happily we ask that:

- Families use the door closest to their child's room and the code provided
- Parents/carers sign children in and out on the sign in sheet each day, indicating the time of arrival and, on pick up, the time of departure. It is helpful for educators if you note the expected departure time in the "Notes" column. This is a legal document and provides an accurate roll in the case of an emergency evacuation. Please do not sign the departure box until you collect your child
- Children must be escorted to their room and parents/guardians should speak with an educator before leaving your child. Please take time to settle your child before leaving
- Please remember to apply sunscreen in the morning before you leave when the UV factor is 3 and above
- When it is time for you to leave in the morning, it is best to make a swift departure, telling your child you love them and you will be back at the end of the day to collect them. Always say goodbye to them. No child will be permitted to leave the Centre until the parent or caregiver has arrived, and the child has been farewelled by staff

Please advise staff if somebody other than a regular person is to collect your child by filling in the comments section on the sign-in sheet. Only adults you have authorised on your child's emergency contact form may collect your child.

If you are unable to collect your child from the Centre as planned, please call us to inform us as to who will be picking up your child. This person must be an adult (over 18) and authorised person noted on your child's 'Information for Admission' form. He/she will be asked for identification on arrival at the Centre.

Please note the Centre is not open until 7.30am, therefore you cannot arrive any earlier than this. If you are going to be late to collect your child at the end of the day, please contact us. A late collection fee of \$20 for each fifteen-minute block will be charged for a child that remains in the ELC after 6pm.

## What to Bring to the Early Learning Centre

### All children:

- Named medication and doctor's action plan (to be given to an educator on arrival)
  - A named bag
  - A named water bottle/sipper cup (water only)
  - A named broad brimmed/bucket hat
  - A named change of clothes – appropriate to the season and including socks & underwear (please pack extra items if your child is in nappies or toilet training)
  - Banksia & Preschool children must wear the ELC uniform but spare clothes can be non-uniform. Gumnut and Wattle children may wear the ELC uniform if so desired.
  - Sunscreen, only if you wish to provide your own child's sunscreen. Sunscreen must be named and handed to an educator
  - We discourage children from bringing toys or jewellery from home as it can be upsetting for the child if it is lost or broken (a comforter/security item is acceptable).
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### **Gumnut and Wattle Children**

- Bottles/formula – If your child requires milk/formula throughout the day, please pack enough pre-sterilised bottles for each feed (either empty, pre-filled with boiled water or containing breast milk) and if on formula, please provide a formula dispenser with enough formula for the entire day's feeds. Toddlers requiring cows' milk or soy will have this provided by the ELC
- Please ensure all bottles and dispensers are named. Bottles will be rinsed but not washed. Please wash them thoroughly at home
- Please ask an educator to place fresh breast milk into the refrigerator. We support breast feeding and will provide a quiet space should you want to come and feed your baby during the day
- Any comforters your child might need (dummy, soft toy, sleeping bag etc.)
- Nappies are provided by the ELC

Wattle children may also bring a small cushion and blanket for rest time - to stay at the ELC during term.

### **Banksia & Preschool Children**

- A packed lunch, including morning and afternoon tea. We promote healthy eating in the ELC and encourage items such as fresh fruit and vegetables, yoghurt, plain biscuits (water crackers, plain rusks or rice cakes), sandwiches, wraps, pasta, rice and fruit. We cannot refrigerate lunches so please use a freezer pack
- For rest time, children may bring a small cushion and blanket
- If your child requires a pullup when sleeping, please ensure this is also packed
- It is anticipated Banksia children are toilet trained and no longer need bottles or dummies. Please talk to our educators if you have any concerns
- For Friday attendance, please bring a named library bag (not plastic)

Children are not allowed to share food in Banksia & Preschool due to food allergies. We are a nut aware centre and ask that NO NUTS are sent in lunchboxes.

Banksia & Preschool children are required to wear the Loreto ELC uniform as supplied by the Uniform Shop which is located in the Junior School with a separate entry off Talbot Grove. Staff are ready to assist with all uniform fittings, purchases and enquiries.

During the school term, the College's Uniform Shop is open from the following times:

Monday: 8am-12pm

Tuesday: 8am-12pm

Wednesday: Closed

Thursday: 1pm-5pm

Friday: 8am-12pm.

The Uniform Shop hours change during the school holiday periods. Please contact 8334 4211 for more information.

*Please ensure that everything your child brings to the ELC is clearly named. Also, please ensure your child wears sun smart clothing and footwear that supports exploration (no thongs/crocs).*



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## Food Provided

Food is prepared by our qualified chefs for babies and toddlers in the boarding kitchen. The meals are healthy, fresh and in accordance with national healthy eating and menu planning guidelines for long day care centres. Allergies are provided for. Please ensure you immediately notify us in writing of any changes to the status of your child's allergies. Children with restricted diets will require a letter from their GP confirming these details.

We celebrate special events at the ELC including children's birthdays. However, we ask families to refrain from bringing cake or other food treats to share, as this can pose a risk to children with allergies. Parents and carers may like to access lunch and snack ideas at: <https://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/teachers-childcare/food-and-nutrition/publications.aspx>

## Rest Time

Each child will be assigned their own designated cot in our baby sleep room (for infants/babies) or stretcher bed with allocated sheet (washed weekly for each child). All children aged 18 months to five years old may use their own cushion/small pillow and personal bedding brought in from home and stored at the ELC in a named bag (not plastic). Please take personal items home at the end of each term to clean.

## Health

Parents should keep their child home if they are running a temperature of 37.5 degrees Celsius or above, or showing any other signs of illness. Children with a coloured runny nose or a heavy cold should be kept at home to minimise the spread of disease through the centre. Children who have had vomiting or diarrhoea should also be kept at home for at least 24 hours after the last episode, to safeguard the health of other children and educators. Any creams/medications must carry a pharmacist-generated label. Parents will be contacted to collect their child from ELC if they present as being unwell. Families are asked to collect children within 30 minutes of the call.

## Children's Behaviour

Children are supported to engage with each other and staff in a friendly, sociable way. Young children are undergoing great changes in themselves and in relation to others and skills are constantly developing. Staff support children to act with care for themselves, others and ELC property.

Should a child need to move from an area or from other children they will be supported to do this and have "time in" with a staff member. If appropriate, they will have time to calm down and think about what has happened and how people (including themselves) have been affected. Educators encourage children to make positive choices at every opportunity.

## Communication

Our aim is to work with families to assist children to achieve their full potential while at the ELC. We do this by regularly discussing your child's progress with you. We encourage you to discuss any concerns with us as they arise. Staff are available for quick chats but if you would like to discuss important issues that may take longer please make an appointment.

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We have several noticeboards displaying information for your interest. Our learning programs are also displayed by the main entrances. Please ask a staff member if you would like more information about your child's learning.

Feedback is always welcome from children and families about all issues. We value diversity in backgrounds and culture so please share some of your family traditions and celebrations with us so we can celebrate with you. We hope you feel comfortable to discuss any ideas with staff or to write a note and drop it into the suggestion box on the shelf in the Tiger Room. You can ring the ELC or email at any time.

### Daily Schedule

We acknowledge that every day will look a little different according to the program children are attending and their needs. The schedule is a guide only. Children can access both indoor and outdoor areas during the day. Morning and afternoon rests and naps are supported, as well as variations in children's eating times.

7.30-9am	Arrivals
9-10am	Group time/inquiry learning & fruit time
10.20am	Outside and inside supported play
11am-1pm	Group time/inquiry learning & lunch
1pm	Rest. Outside and inside supported play
3pm	Group time/inquiry learning and afternoon tea
4-6pm	Departures

Your family's input into our program is highly valued. The sharing of family culture and experiences are particularly important. Your family may have skills or interests like gardening, cooking, craft, music which you would like to share. Please feel encouraged to share your contributions, we look forward to a long and positive relationship with your family. You are also warmly invited to participate in the Loreto College Parents & Friends Association and whole school community events.



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## Contact Emails

Query	Email Address	Phone	Department
Absences	elcadministration@loreto.sa.edu.au	08 8334 4200	Enrolments
Enrolments	elcadministration@loreto.sa.edu.au	08 8334 4200	Enrolments
Casual Bookings	elcadministration@loreto.sa.edu.au	08 8334 4200	Enrolments
Billing/Accounts	finance@loreto.sa.edu.au	08 8334 4200	Finance
Educational Program	elc@loreto.sa.edu.au	08 8334 4220	ELC
Other Child Related	elc@loreto.sa.edu.au	08 8334 4220	ELC

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