



Family Handbook

2025-2026



**River
Region**
EARLY EDUCATION

Welcome to River Region Early Education

River Region Early Education provides Preschool and Childcare services and a Toy Library in Deniliquin, Barham, Blighty, Bunnaloo, Conargo, Pretty Pine and Wanganella.

We welcome all families to our services. We provide:

- **Deniliquin Preschool** - Preschool for children aged 3 to 5 years in school terms,
- **Deniliquin Childcare** - Childcare for children aged 0 to 6 years for 49 weeks per year.
- **Barham Early Learning Service**
 - Childcare for children aged 0 to 6 years from 8am-6pm for 49 weeks per year.
 - Preschool for children aged 3 to 5 years in school terms.
- **Deniliquin Mobile Preschool and Childcare** - Preschool and childcare programs for children aged 0 to 6 years in small communities for 45 weeks per year.
- **Deniliquin Toy Library** - Toy borrowing service based in Deniliquin.

This Handbook contains important information for families about the services of the River Region Early Education.

More information about the educational program, and policies of the organisation can be found in services and on our website.

River Region Early Education recognises that families are children's first and most influential teachers. We aim to create welcoming environments where all children and families are respected. We really value your feedback - it is critical to us understanding and catering to the needs of your child.

You are encouraged to approach the Nominated Supervisor of your child's service with any feedback, concerns or complaints. There are also feedback sheets in the foyer for you to offer any suggestions, concerns or ideas. We regularly review and update our policies, and we welcome any suggestions and feedback.

Felicity Michael
General Manager



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About our organisation

Service contact details

Administration

Our administration office is located in the Community Hub building at 364 Whitelock St, Deniliquin

- Open 8.45am to 3.45pm Monday to Friday
- Telephone: (03) 5881 2394
- Postal: PO Box 427, Deniliquin
- Email: admin@rree.nsw.edu.au
- Website: <https://www.rree.nsw.edu.au/>

Deniliquin Preschool

370 Whitelock St, Deniliquin

- Nominated Supervisor: Heidi Plant
- Telephone: 0457 812 394
- Email: preschool@rree.nsw.edu.au

Deniliquin Childcare

362 Whitelock St, Deniliquin

- Nominated Supervisors: Rachael Barker and Emma Barker
- Telephone: 0437 921 204
- Email: childcarens@rree.nsw.edu.au

Barham Early Learning Service

49 Noorong St, Barham

- Nominated Supervisor, Amy Sturman.
- Telephone 0491 201 588
- Email: Barhamelc@rree.nsw.edu.au

Deniliquin Mobile Preschool and Childcare

Base: 370 Whitelock St, Deniliquin

- Nominated Supervisor: Tammy Cairnduff
- Telephone: 0428 569 050
- Email: mobile@rree.nsw.edu.au

Deniliquin Toy Library

364 Whitelock St, Deniliquin

- Telephone: (03) 5881 2394
- Toy Library Co-ordinator: Penny Gallpen
- Email: toylibrary@rree.nsw.edu.au

Our philosophy

Our home is the wide-open plains of the Riverina on the land of the Wamba Wamba Perrepa Perrepa / Wemba Wemba Barapa Barapa people. We pay our respects to the original custodians of this land and recognise their continuing connection to lands, water and communities.

Our natural landscape is one of farming and open spaces shaped around waterways. Generations of children and families have grown through their participation with our services.

We welcome everyone. We approach all aspects of our service with integrity and value social responsibility, respect for our environment and continuous improvement.

We have a deep commitment to the value of early childhood education and understand the ripple effect it has on children, their families, and communities. Early childhood education supports children to establish their sense of identity and connection to their world, to be confident and involved learners and communicators and to build a strong sense of wellbeing.

We recognise that it takes a village to raise a child, and we work collaboratively to support children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing. Our village believes that:

- Children are capable, and inspirational,
- Families are the foundations of children's learning, and
- Educators are nurturing, empathetic, and passionate.

We believe that early education is about igniting a passion for lifelong learning.

Our approach to teaching is collaborative, reflective, and intentional. It puts children at the centre of learning and celebrates play and the natural environment, in all weather, to support children to be curious, collaborate and be adventurous.

We provide safe spaces where children have a sense of belonging and can connect and contribute to their world. We believe that childhood is a time for joy, and we help each child feel valued and confident that their voice is heard.



Our vision, mission and values

Our Vision

Educating rural children from the mind and the heart.

Our Mission

To create safe, stimulating environments in rural communities where children are supported to reach their potential and learn life-long skills.

Our Values

Integrity

We are honest and ethical in our interactions with children, families and each other.

Inclusion

A diversity of people feels valued and respected in our service, have access to opportunities and can contribute their perspectives and talents.

Empathy

We value the ability to understand and share the feelings of others.

Joy

There are opportunities for happiness for children, families and educators every day in our services.

Passion

We understand that early childhood education is important and valuable.

Nurturing

We care for, help and encourage the development of children, families and each other.

Our management structure

River Region Early Education is a not for profit, community-based organization. The “Approved Provider” is the Board of Management, which comprises families and community members. The Board of Management is responsible for overseeing the compliant operation of the early childhood education and care services, and the legal and financial operation of the organisation. Elections for the Board are held each year at the Annual General meeting, and positions are for two years. More information is available from the admin office.

You are invited to become a member of River Region Early Education when your child enrolls at any of our services. Community members are also welcome to become members. The annual membership fee of \$1 gives you voting rights at the Annual General Meeting and any Special Meetings of River Region Early Education.

The General Manager is the delegated representative of the Board and is responsible for the strategic, financial and operational management of the Organisation.

Each service has a Nominated Supervisor, who is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the service within the National Law.

Quality education and care

Our services comply with the National Quality Framework (NQF), including the National Quality Standard (NQS), the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the National Regulations.

You can access the Education and Care Services National Regulations here:

<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653>

You can access the National Quality Standards here:

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard>

You can access the National Quality Standards Ratings for each of our services here:

<https://startingblocks.gov.au/find-child-care>

You can access the Early Years Learning Framework here:

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/belonging-being-becoming-early-years-learning-framework>

You can access our current policies and procedures at services and here:

<https://www.rree.nsw.edu.au/policies-procedures>

Our services are overseen by the national body for Early Education and Care, the Australian Children's Education Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), as well as the NSW regulatory authority, NSW Education.

Educator qualifications and ratios

You can find more information about staffing in our *NQS4.38 Staffing Arrangements Policy* and educator to child ratios in our *NQS2.24 Child Safe Supervision Policy*

Our educators are approved early childhood education and care professionals who engage in the principles and practices of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and work within the requirements of the National Quality Framework.

Our educators:

- Hold or are actively working toward a Certificate III level or higher approved education and care qualification,
- Maintain a clearance for working with children,
- Meet national standards which include maintaining quality learning programs, safe and hygienic education and care environments, record keeping and qualifications,
- Maintain current first aid and CPR certificates and training in the emergency management of asthma and anaphylaxis, and
- Regularly attend training and workshops to maintain currency of skills and knowledge.

As specified in the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, we meet or exceed the national minimum staffing levels for each group of children:

- For children from birth to 24 months of age - 1 educator to 4 children (1:4),
- For children over 24 months and less than 36 months of age - 1 educator to 5 children (1:5), and
- For children aged 36 months of age or over (not including children over preschool age) - 1 educator to 10 children (NSW only) (1:10).

Interactions with children

You can find more information about interactions with children in our *NQS5.37 Interactions with Children Policy*

We have a commitment to ensuring that children's learning, development, and wellbeing are firmly anchored in reciprocal, responsive, and respectful relationships. We ensure that:

- Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child,
- Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and reciprocal relationships,
- No child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or any discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances, and
- Children are valued, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives as an important component of the RREE commitment to child safety.

We establish practice guidelines and support educators to:

- Encourage children to express themselves and their opinions,
- Allow children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem,
- Maintain at all times the dignity and rights of each child,
- Give each child positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour, and
- Have regard to the family and cultural values, age, and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child being educated and cared for by the service.

Educational program

You can find more information about the educational program in our *NQS1.10 Educational Program and Practice Policy*

Our curriculum is based around the National Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) themes of Belonging, Being and Becoming.

The EYLF Principles underpin practice that is focused on assisting all children to make progress in relation to the Learning Outcomes. Educators consider ethical, socially just, and inclusive principles for children's learning in the early years when they:

- Build secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships
- Develop partnerships
- Are respectful of diversity
- Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives
- Commit to equity, inclusion and high expectations
- Consider sustainability in all its forms
- Engage in critical reflection and professional learning
- Exercise collaborative leadership and work as a team.

Our key learning outcomes are aligned to the National Early Years Learning Framework and encompass the following key understandings:

- 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

The program is available in hard copy in your child's classroom and on Storypark.

Play-based learning

The program at River Region Early Education services is built around play-based learning, focused on the interests of young children and also the intentional planning undertaken by educators. Play provides opportunities for children to learn as they discover, create, improvise, and imagine.

Research shows that when children play with other children, they create social groups, test out ideas, challenge each other's thinking and build new understandings.

The educational programs:

- evolve from the interests displayed by the children during each session and educators and teachers welcome the opportunity to discuss the program with parents,
- are educational and fun,
- recognise that "play" is children's work,
- are child centred and build on a child's natural curiosity, and
- recognise each child as a unique individual who will learn at their own level and pace.

The distance travelled

Educators consult with families to develop goals for their child's learning and observe and document their activities and progress toward learning outcomes, also known as the 'distance travelled.'

Families can access these documentations in Storypark as Learning Stories.

Parents will be provided with a summary of their child's development in each of the five outcome areas of the Early Years Learning Framework at the end of the year. Children transitioning to school will also be provided with a Transition to School Statement in Storypark – let us know if you would like a printed copy.



Self-assessment and continuous improvement

You can find more information about continuous improvement in our *NQS7.66 Continuous Improvement Policy*

Each service has an annual Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) that identifies goals for the service and tracks progress. Families are encouraged to contribute to the service's QIP and can access the working document on request. Updates are also shared in Storypark.

Service QIPs are part of an overall continuous improvement process that includes:

- Self-assessment against the seven National Quality Standards,
- Regular audits to ensure compliance,
- Critical reflection and tracking of continuous improvement actions, and
- An annual Family Satisfaction Survey and Employee Engagement and Wellbeing Surveys.

Transitions

You can find more information about transitions in our *NQS6.44 Transitions Policy*

We understand that transitions between rooms, services and between preschool and school can be a challenging time for children. We know that children feel more confident if they are helped to understand expectations and routines between different spaces and this helps them feel comfortable with the process of change. Transitions are also helped when services share information about children's knowledge strengths and interests.

We provide a structure to help children transition between rooms within a service and between our services, for example from childcare to preschool. This includes consulting with families and providing orientations and time for children to become familiar with new spaces and educators.

We also provide support for children transitioning to school. This includes:

- Completing NSW Education Transition to School Statements to share information about your child with their new school.
- Intentional teaching about school readiness, including road and bike safety as well as making connections for children between what they are familiar with and what they may experience at school.
- Engagement with any orientation or transition program offered by schools with a teacher attending the first day to support children's confidence, and
- Offering opportunities for teachers from all local schools to attend the service and meet children before they commence school.

Inclusion and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives

You can find more information about inclusion in our *NQS5.38 Inclusion Policy*

We have a commitment to inclusion that ensures every child can access service, participate meaningfully and experience positive outcomes. Diversity, equity and inclusion contribute to the RREE commitment to being a child safe organisation as defined by the Child Safe Standards and aligns with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Inclusion involves considering each child's learning styles, first language, cultural identity, abilities, disabilities, gender, sexual identity, family circumstances, and geographic location.

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) identifies that providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to see themselves, their identities and cultures reflected in their environment is important for growing a strong identity.

You will see inclusion in our services in our respectful practices, inclusive language, diverse resources, celebration of national days like NAIDOC Week and Harmony Day, and embedding of different cultures and perspectives in the educational program and learning environments.

Our approach to inclusion also guides how we identify and support children with additional or emerging needs. This might include children with disabilities or developmental delays, neurodiversity, or challenges regulating their emotions or forming social connections. We use Individual Learning Plans and, if needed, Individual Behaviour Support Plans, to help identify needs, goals and strategies and work collaboratively with families and support professionals.

Sustainability

You can find more information about sustainability in our *NQS3.21 Sustainability Policy*

Sustainability is a principle of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) that supports children's interest in the world, their capacity to advocate for positive change and their understanding of their citizenship, and rights and responsibilities as members of local and global communities.

We support children to understand environmental, social and economic sustainability by:

- Connecting children to nature through art and play and the natural environment,
- Engaging children in learning about the food cycle, including growing, harvesting, and cooking food, and the use of food waste for compost and worm farms,
- Engaging children in learning about social justice and equity, respect for diversity and inclusion, and active citizenship and community, and
- Including water and energy conservation, waste reduction, and caring for resources in programs, daily routines, planned and unplanned experiences, and intentional teaching



Getting started

Enrolment and orientation

You can find more information about enrolment and orientation in our *NQS6.40 Enrolment and Orientation Policy*

Enrolment procedures for River Region Early Education services aim to establish strong relationships between the home environment and the service.

Application forms may be completed at any time for any of our services via our website “Apply Now” tab <https://www.rree.nsw.edu.au/>.

Where demand for enrolment exceeds available places, families will be placed on a wait list.

- Places will be offered in line with priority of access guidelines as outlined in the Enrolment and Orientation Policy.
- Parents will be contacted at least every six months to confirm the place is still needed.

At enrolment, an enrolment form link will be sent to the family for completion. Enrolment forms must be accompanied by your child’s birth certificate and immunisation statement together with health care card, court orders and medical forms (if applicable).

Before application or enrolment, families can request a tour of a service at any time or participate in one provided during open days or other events. Tours take approximately 15 minutes and will include the indoor and outdoor environment, sleeping areas, toileting and nappy change facilities, and an overview of routines, play-based learning, and the RREE Philosophy.

After enrolment, individual or group orientations will be offered to build relationships between your child, your family and educators and to help you and your child become familiar with the environment and routine prior to beginning education and care.

Immunisations

You can find more information about immunisation requirements in our *NQS2.70 Disease Prevention and Immunisation Policy* and *NQS6.40 Enrolment and Orientation Policy*

Immunisation is a simple, safe, and effective way of protecting people against harmful diseases before they come into contact with them in the community. Immunisation not only protects individuals, but also others in the community, by reducing the spread of disease.

To be and stay enrolled in our services, families must provide proof of their child’s immunisation. Proof of immunisation must be a medical certificate or an Australian Immunisation Register (AIR):

- Immunisation History Statement which shows that the child is up to date with their scheduled vaccinations, or
- Immunisation History Form on which the immunisation provider has certified that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule (temporary for 6 months only), or
- Immunisation Medical Exemption Form which has been certified by an authorised immunisation provider.

Families can access an immunisation history statement via the myGov app or request one at medicareaustralia.gov.au by registering for online services or calling 1800 653 809.

If there is an outbreak of an infectious diseases, families will be notified and asked to keep any infectious child at home in accordance with the Exclusion Periods recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/attachments/Exclusion-for-common-concerning-conditions-poster.pdf>

Settling in

New experiences can be overwhelming for young children. The transition to an early learning environment or between services can be emotional for both children and their families. Our educators want your child to look forward to coming in each day. To ease this transition, we are happy to support visits that can help children familiarise themselves to their new peers and surroundings, with the comfort of parents being present.

We recommend you plan extra time to settle your child on their first day. You're welcome to sit with your child as they become comfortable, joining them in the first activity of the day. Communicate with educators and your child about what time you will return so your child can begin to connect your regular pick-up time to their daily routine. You can call us during the day to see how your child has settled.

Separation anxiety is normal during early childhood. It reflects a child's attempts to hold on tight to what feels safe and will reduce as your child gains confidence. It helps if you are able to communicate when you will return and let educators know if you are running late so they can reassure your child.

What to bring for the day

Your child's educator will confirm what you should bring to the service each day. As a minimum guide we recommend the following, **clearly labelled with your child's name**:

- Sun-safe hat,
- Bag or backpack,
- Water bottle,
- Morning tea and lunch (and afternoon tea if required) unless food is provided,
- Spare changes of season-appropriate clothes, including underwear, pants and socks,
- Nappies (6-8 if required),
- Bottles with milk (if required) clearly labelled, and
- Comfort items (if required), including pacifier to be kept at the service.

We encourage children to leave their own toys at home so special items are not lost or broken. We understand that some children may need 'comfort' items. If your child has a comfort item, please ensure it is clearly labelled with your child's name and that their educator is aware of it.

What to wear

Please dress your child in clothes they can play comfortably in and keep in mind they may be involved in messy activities during the day.

UV radiation from the sun can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer, with infants and toddlers up to four years of age being particularly vulnerable to UV damage. We are a SunSmart (Cancer Council NSW) accredited organisation and we encourage children to wear sun-protective clothing.

Please label all belongings

We recommend that children wear:

- Shirts with sleeves and collars (RREE polo shirts are available for purchase),
- Knee-length or longer style shorts, skirts and dresses,
- Sun-safe hats that protect their face, neck and ears, either:
 - broad-brimmed hats (with a brim size of at least 6cm and 7.5cm for adults),
 - bucket hats with a deep crown (and brim size of at least 5cm and 6cm for adults), or
 - legionnaire-style hats, and
- Shoes that provide grip and are secure to their feet while playing indoors and outdoors (no thongs), and
- Clothing suitable for outdoor play in most weather, for example warm hat, warm or waterproof coats and gumboots for cold or wet weather.

Please provide one additional set of clothing each day, including underwear and socks, and three full sets for infants. Wet or dirty clothing will be put in a plastic bag and placed with child's bag to take home.



Everyday best practice

Policies and procedures

Our policies are compliant with National Law and Regulations.

You can access our current policies and procedures:

- On our website <https://www.rree.nsw.edu.au/policies-procedures>
- In a Policy and Procedures folder in the entryway of our centre-based services
- By requesting a copy from Administration or the service your child attends.

We expect our employees, volunteers and families to adhere to our policies and procedures to ensure compliance and that the safety and wellbeing of children is maintained at all times. We are constantly reviewing our policies and procedures, and we welcome all feedback as part of our commitment to continuous improvement.

Code of conduct

You can find more information in our *NQS7.45 Code of Conduct Policy*

Our Code of Conduct described the minimum standards of performance and behaviour for employees and volunteers.

What you can expect from us – we will:

- Understand and abide by the RREE Statement of Commitment to Child Safety,
- Demonstrate organisational values and philosophy in work performance, conduct when seen to be representing the organisation in person or online, and in all interactions with children, families, community and work colleagues,
- Be honest and act with integrity and accountability for their actions,
- Treat all people with dignity and respect and uphold their human rights, including those identified in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the ECA Australia Code of Ethics,
- Ensure no person is discriminated against due to their gender, sexuality, age, cultural background, physical or intellectual abilities, appearance, family status or other protected attributes,
- Set and maintain clear professional boundaries with children, families and work colleagues,
- Only have physical contact with a child in ways appropriate to their professional role and responsibilities and avoid any form of corporal punishment or inappropriate discipline.
- Take responsibility for achieving and maintaining a high standard and continuous improvement of work performance,
- Work within the requirements and delegations of their job role or position description and follow reasonable directions from supervisors,
- Be compliant with all relevant laws and regulations, including Education and Care Services National Law and Regulation,
- Maintain the privacy of children, families and work colleagues and the confidentiality of RREE information,
- Use RREE resources lawfully, efficiently and only as authorised,
- Declare and manage any real, perceived or potential conflicts of interest, and

- Maintain awareness of and follow RREE policies and procedures

What we expect from you when we interact with you, or you are attending our services:

- Treat all children and adults at the service with dignity and respect,
- If you suspect or know that a child is being abused, neglected, discriminated against or mistreated, including by one of our employees or volunteers, notify the nominated supervisor, the General Manager, a Board member or any employee as soon as possible,
- Don't discriminate against or be disrespectful to any person due to their gender, sexuality, age, cultural background, physical or intellectual abilities, appearance, or family status,
- Maintain the security of any confidential information, including security codes, logins or any confidential information disclosed to you,
- Don't take photographs of children at our services on personal devices or share them online without direct consent (we will take photos for you on request),
- Don't use or be affected by alcohol, illegal drugs or tobacco (including vapes) while on our premises,
- Meet any responsibilities identified in our policies and procedures, including keeping your information up to date, providing authorisations when requested, paying fees on time, providing medical information and medicine when needed and keeping us informed of important information related to your child, and
- Let us know as soon as possible if you have feedback, a complaint or a concern (you can talk to any employee or Board member or contact our General Manager).

Privacy

You can find more information about how we manage and protect privacy in our *NQS7.60 Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* and *NQS7.64 Photography Policy*

We follow the Australian Privacy Principles in how we collect, use, store and disclose personal and sensitive information.

Personal information is anything that can identify an individual, such as a name, photograph or document, or any group of information, such as a date of birth and an address, which might reasonably identify a person. It can be documented or verbal. Sensitive information is a subset of personal information and includes health and cultural information and any confidential information such as bank details or copies of identification documents.

We collect and store personal and sensitive information in:

- Enrolment documents, including names, addresses, contact details, emergency contacts and authorised nominees, dates of birth, cultural information, government identifiers, medical records and plans, diet plans, inclusion and support documents, identification documents, and immunisation records.
- Financial documents, including fee payment and bank account details.

We make sure we:

- Collect personal information with the person's knowledge and consent,
- Only use personal information for the purpose we collected it for,
- Protect personal information from unauthorised access or loss by keeping it secure and locked away,

- Only share personal information with consent, and
- Only keep personal information for as long as we need it or are required to keep it and securely destroy it when it is no longer needed.

You can contact us to make sure any personal information we have is up to date and correct.

There are some circumstances where personal information about you or your family might be disclosed to other people as part of delivering a service to your family. We will:

- Collect written consent from you before information is shared unless we are allowed by law (for example in an emergency, if there have been reportable allegations made about an employee or volunteer or to protect the safety or wellbeing of a child),
- Only share or publish photographs of your child with consent, and
- Never identify a child on social media, including obscuring faces, unless we have specific consent to do so.

We follow the *ACECQA National Model Code for Taking Images or Videos of Children while Providing Early Childhood Education and Care* (National Model Code) which prohibits the use of personal devices that can take photographs when working with children.

- Photographs of children can only be taken on RREE devices.
- Families are asked not to take photos of children, including their own child, while on our premises so that we can make sure that the privacy of all children is protected.
- Educators will take photos on an authorised device on request and can share them with families in line with consents.

If there is a data breach, for example there is unauthorised access to or disclosure or loss of personal information, we follow the requirements of the *Privacy Amendment (Notifiable Data Breaches) Act 2017*.

Complaints and feedback

You can find more information about complaints in our *NQS7.42 Child Safe Complaint Policy*

We are committed to being a child safe organisation where children, families, community members, employees, and volunteers feel safe and supported to raise any concerns or complaints, including those related to a child's safety and well-being. Our statement of commitment to child safety includes ensuring our complaint processes are child-focused and transparent, and that complaints are addressed promptly, thoroughly, and fairly.

- You can make a complaint in any way, including by speaking to us in person, sending us a letter or email, phoning us or through another agency.
- We support children to give us feedback and make complaints by fostering a child safe culture where children are believed and we actively seek the opinions of children, include their voices and interests in day-to-day experiences, and support them to contribute to decisions that affect them in line with their age and stage of development.
- We will respond immediately to any complaint about the abuse or neglect of children or harmful sexual behaviour in children or adults.
- We will treat every complaint with integrity and in a fair and unbiased manner and will ensure procedural fairness

The key contact for complaints is the General Manager who can be contacted on 03 5881 2394 or generalmanager@rree.nsw.edu.au

Working together

Family participation

You can find more information about family participation in our *NQS6.42 Family Involvement Policy*

We believe in the importance of developing and maintaining respectful relationships with families that honour their expertise, culture, values and beliefs, and supports them in their parenting roles. This commitment aligns with our Philosophy and the belief that it “takes a village to raise a child.”

We encourage families to be involved in the service their child attends by providing a welcoming environment and opportunities for family members to spend time at the service. This includes:

- Encouraging parents to help their child settle or to volunteer for activities such as reading to children, sharing a skill they have, or attending an excursion or incursion,
- Approaching and welcoming families at delivery or collection and encouraging them to share information about their child,
- Hosting special days and celebrations where family and community members are invited into the service for activities and to spend time with their child, and
- Supporting parents to spend time in the service to celebrate a special occasion for their child, such as a birthday.

Parents who are breastfeeding are welcome to attend services and will be provided with a comfortable space to feed their child.

Communication

Open conversations and effective communication between families and educators is an important way to build trusting relationships and achieve the best outcomes for children.

- Parents are encouraged to talk to educators about their child at drop off or pick up or make a time to meet with educators or the Nominated Supervisor
- Email is used for communication related to enrolment, accounts, invoicing and newsletters.
- Storypark is used for all information about children’s learning, daily experiences, important notices, special events, policy updates and reminders.
- Phone and SMS will be used for urgent notifications and emergency contact.

Special occasions and birthday celebrations

We encourage families to help us celebrate children’s birthdays and special occasions. If you would like to bring in a cake, we recommend the following to help minimise the spread of infection and ensure all children feel included:

- Enough cupcakes for all children, or
- A large cake and a separate cupcake for the birthday child to use to blow out a candle, and
- A list of the cake or cupcakes ingredients, and
- Notification in advance that you will be bringing in cakes so alternatives can be organised for children with dietary requirements.

We usually celebrate at morning or afternoon tea, and families are welcome to come along and share this special time. Educators will take photos to share with the family on Storypark.

Excursions and incursions

You can find more information about excursions and incursions in our *NQS2.90 Excursion and Incursion Policy*

Excursions (where children leave the education and care premises to visit a community space or event) and incursions (where community members or professionals come in to the service premises) are an important way to add varied experiences to children's routines and connect them up with community.

Each service plans excursions and incursions in the educational program, which might be regular excursions (walking around the block or visiting something interesting close by), a series of incursions (a musician coming in each week) or one-off so that children can participate in events or activities.

- We must have written authorisation from parents before a child can participate in an excursion (for regular excursions this can be once a year authorisation),
- A risk assessment will be completed with a copy made available to you before each excursion,
- Intentional teaching about road and community safety will be included in excursions,
- Families will be notified of the details of any upcoming excursion or incursion and will be invited to participate.



Support services for families and children

Our philosophy recognises that it *takes a village to raise a child*. We have compiled a list of community services, groups and agencies that provide services and supports for families.

Primary schools

Deniliquin area		Barham area	
Blighty Public School	03 5882 6238	Barham Public School	03 5453 2133
Bunnaloo Public School	03 5489 7275	Koondrook Primary School	03 5453 2428
Conargo Public School	03 5884 6624	Kerang Primary School	03 5450 3181
Deniliquin North Public School	03 5881 1042	Kerang South Primary School	03 5450 3900
Deniliquin South Public School	03 5881 2045	Cohuna Consolidated School	03 5456 2361
Edward Public School	03 5881 2612	Murrabit Primary School	03 5457 2284
Mayrung Public School	03 5882 4243		
St Michael's Parish School	03 5881 1787		
Moama Public School	03 5482 1564		
Moama Anglican Grammar	03 5480 5900		
Finley Public School	03 5883 1135		
St Joseph's Primary (Finley)	03 5883 1630		

Crisis and help lines

Children and families			
Child Protection Helpline	13 21 11	Kid's Helpline (5-25 years)	1800 551 800
PANDA (pregnancy and newborn)	1300 726 396	Kid's Helpline (Parent Support)	1800 551 800
Parent Line NSW	1300 1300 52	Centrelink Families Line	13 61 50
Parent Line VIC	13 22 89	Family Relationship Advice Line	1800 050 321
Karitane Careline (child nurse)	1300 227 464	Relationships Australia	1300 364 277
Tresillian Parent's Help Line	1300 272 736	Breastfeeding Helpline	1800 686 268
The Orange Door (parenting/DV)	1800 290 943	Pregnancy Choices Helpline	1800 551 800
Community Health Intake (CCIS)	1800 654 324	Family Drug Support	1300 368 186
Family Advocacy NSW (disability)	02 9869 0866	National Autism Helpline	1300 308 699

General			
Accessline (24/7 mental health)	1800 800 944	Health Access (AH GP)	1800 272 767
Lifeline (24/7 crisis support)	13 11 14	Health Direct (24/7 advice)	1800 022 222
Suicide Call Back Service (24/7)	1300 659 467	MensLine (24/7 counselling)	1300 789 978
1800RESPECT (24/7 DV)	1800 737 732	13 YARN (24/7 First Nations)	13 92 76

General			
NSW Domestic Violence Line (24/7)	1800 656 463	Link2home (24/7 homelessness)	1800 152 152
Full Stop (24/7 domestic violence)	1800 385 578	Beyond Blue (24/7)	1300 224 636
NSW Sexual Violence Line (24/7)	1800 424 017	Griefline	1300 845 745
Butterfly Foundation (eating disorder)	1800 334 673	ListenWell (Wellways)	1300 111 400
Alcohol Drug Info Service (24/7)	1800 250 015	QLife (LGBTQIA+)	1800 184 527

Health services

Deniliquin area		Barham area	
Infinity Pharmacy	03 5881 2081	Barham Pharmacy	03 5453 2260
Soul Pattinson Pharmacy	03 5881 2233	Terry White Chemmart Barham	03 5453 2048
Deniliquin Health Service	03 5882 2800	Barham Multipurpose Service	03 5451 1000
Deniliquin Dental Clinic	1800 450 046	Cohuna Dental Clinic	03 5456 4554
Child and Family Health Nurse	1800 654 324	Barham Child and Family Health Nurse	03 5451 1000
Community Health	03 5882 2900	Koondrook Maternal Child Health Nurse	03 5450 9333
Community Mental Health	1800 800 944	Barham Community Health	03 5451 1000
Headspace Echuca	03 5485 5048	Headspace Swan Hill	03 4010 7100

Children and family services

Deniliquin and Barham		
Community Care Intake Service (CCIS)	Telephone based central access point for community health services, including child family health nurse, counsellor, dietician, speech, OT, social worker. Weekdays 8.30am - 4.30pm	1800 654 324
Deniliquin Community Health Child and Family Health	Pregnancy care, immunisation, vision screenings for preschoolers, hearing screenings for newborns, speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, dietician, child protection counselling and oral health. Outreaches to Barham	1800 654 324 03 5882 2900
Intereach NDIS Early Childhood Intervention	Children up to 6 years with developmental delay or concern or up to 9 years with diagnosed disability	1300 488 226
Intereach Family Links	Families with children up to 18 years to build parenting skills and outcomes	1300 488 226
Intereach ROAR Program	Free early intervention mental health support for children and young people	1300 488 226
No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS)	Loans for the purchase of essential goods and services up to \$2000, or up to \$3000. Repayments are set at an affordable amount over 12 to 18 months.	1300 488 226

Deniliquin area		
Intereach New Parenting Group	Peer support group for new parents	1300 488 226
Intereach Aboriginal Family Support	Free service to build parenting skills and improve wellbeing	1300 488 226
WARATAH for kids	A free multi-disciplinary clinic with a Speech Pathologist or Occupational Therapist for children up to 7 years. Referral needed through Deniliquin Clinic or Shiloh Medical Practice	03 5881 1464 03 5881 7597
Vinnies Reconnect Youth Program	Early intervention for young people aged 12-18 years at risk of homelessness or disengagement from school	1800 791 371
Mission Australia Family Preservation Service	Support for families with children aged 0-18 years experiencing trauma, violence, mental health or drug and alcohol issues	02 6932 7500
Mission Australia Parents Next	Support for parents of children aged up to 6 years to return to work or training	1800 791 371
Flourish Deniliquin	Support for mental health issues and the NDIS	1300 779 270
Deniliquin Playgroup	http://www.deniplaygroup.com.au	
Deniliquin Toy Library	Lending service with more than 5,000 toys and guidance from an early childhood trained coordinator.	03 5881 2394

Barham area		
Barham Community Health Early Childhood Health Centre	Services for families with infants & children 0-5 years, may include infant health screening, feeding advice, sleep and settling advice, parent and child groups, new mothers' groups, immunisation programs and referrals	03 5451 1000
Koondrook Maternal and Child Health Centre	An outreach service providing in-home support for families who are experiencing early parenting difficulties.	03 5450 9333

National		
Triple P Positive Parenting Program	Free online parenting courses	https://www.triplep-parenting.net.au/
Partners in Parenting	Online program for families to protect teens from depression and anxiety disorders	https://partnersinparenting.com.au/
Raising Children	Comprehensive Australian parenting information	https://raisingchildren.net.au/
Karitane	Free support and resources for parents. In-person and virtual services including parenting centres and toddler clinic	https://karitane.com.au/ Careline 1300 227 464
Tresillian	Free support and resources for new parents, including virtual and residential services, sleep school and sleep app	https://www.tresillian.org.au/ Parent's Help Line 1300 272 736

National		
Australian Breastfeeding Association	Breastfeeding and postnatal resources, including help line, virtual village, workshops	https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/ Breastfeeding Helpline 1800 686 268
Office of the Children's Guardian	NSW government authority that manages child safe worker checks	https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/
Counselling Online	Free 24/7 service for people affected by drug and alcohol abuse	https://www.counsellingonline.org.au/
Reach Out	Mental health support for young people and parents	https://au.reachout.com/
Way Ahead	NSW education services for mental wellbeing	https://wayahead.org.au/
Transcend Australia	Support for trans and gender diverse children	https://transcend.org.au/
Gateway Health Gender Service	Family-centred support for trans, gender diverse and non-binary children aged 3 - 17	https://gatewayhealth.org.au/services/lgbtiqa-community/gender-service/
Cyber Safety Project Families Hub	Parent webinars, workshop modules and resources to manage online safety	https://cybersafetyproject.com/families-hub/



Children's safety

Our statement of commitment to child safety

You can find more information about child protection in our *NQS2.60 Child Safety and Protection Policy*

River Region Early Education is committed to an organisational culture of child safety to protect children from harm and hazard and to enable them to be happy, safe, participating and empowered.

- We prioritise and share the responsibility for child safety across the organisation.
- We ensure children are safe and feel safe in indoor, outdoor, and online environments.
- We value children and ensure their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives.
- We have zero tolerance for child abuse and support employees and volunteers to be able to identify, reduce and remove risks of harm, abuse and neglect.
- We ensure child safe recruitment, orientation, and performance review practices so that people working with children are suitable and supported.
- We support employees and volunteers to have the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training.
- We respect diversity and uphold equity to ensure the safety of children with diverse needs, abilities and backgrounds who may be particularly vulnerable.
- We facilitate open, two-way communication with families and communities to promote the rights of children.
- Our complaint processes are child-focused, transparent, and complaints are addressed promptly, thoroughly, and fairly.
- Any allegations, disclosures, or suspicions of child abuse or other safety concerns are treated seriously and consistently and in line with our legal and moral obligations to report to relevant authorities.
- We have specific policies and procedures in place that support all people within our organisation to achieve these commitments.

If you have any concern about the safety or wellbeing of a child attending our services, please contact a Nominated Supervisor or the General Manager.

Authorisations

You can find more information about authorisations in our *NQS7.43 Authorisations Policy*

We are required by law and regulation to request verbal or written authorisations from parents for certain activities and situations. This includes authorisations for:

- Collection of children,
- Permission for children to leave the service premises, including for excursions,
- Administration of medication, and
- Transportation.

Please note that the health and safety of children is a priority and there are some situations where an authorisation might be refused. Please refer to our policy for more information.

Court orders and child custody

You can find more information about court orders and parental access in our *NQS2.50 Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*

Where there is a restriction of access to, or contact with a child, a copy of the relevant court order must be provided to the organisation where it will be kept on file. A court order plan will be developed in collaboration with the family.

Where a copy of a court order, has been supplied, if attending a service, the non-custodial parent will be requested to leave the premises and, failing this, the Nominated Supervisor will notify the police and custodial parent.

In the case of custody or access disputes where a copy of a court order has **not** been supplied, a known parent **cannot** be denied contact with their child.

Digital technology and photography

You can find more information about digital technology and photography in our *NQS7.67 Digital Technology and Social Media Policy* and *NQS7.64 Photography Policy*

With the constant and emerging development of digital technologies, supporting educators and children to understand the benefits, identify the risks, and take action to address them, is key to keeping children safe online.

Children are increasing their use of technology to communicate and maintain social connections, learn and relax, but are still developing their knowledge and understanding about risks in online environments and what to do if they feel unsafe. They may not see differences between online and physical environments, for example, they may see online friends as trustworthy, even when they have never met them in person.

We help ensure the safe use of digital technologies and children's safety online by:

- Following the *ACECQA National Model Code for Taking Images or Videos of Children while Providing Early Childhood Education and Care*,
- Prohibiting the use of personal devices for taking images of children and while children are present,
- Only sharing or publishing images of children with consent,
- Masking children's faces in images published online.
- Limiting children's use of digital technologies,
- Actively supervising and monitoring children's use of digital technologies,
- Intentional teaching around digital safety, and
- Protecting the confidentiality of personal information.

Emergency management and evacuations

You can find more information about emergency management in our *NQS2.80 Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy*

In order to prepare children and staff for emergency situations, such as fire, flood or security threat, services rehearse emergency and evacuations drills every three months.

- Families will be notified of upcoming emergency drills via Storypark and in service foyers,

- Children will be given the opportunity to experience responses to emergencies in a calm and safe manner and to learn about safety and emergency services,
- All persons present at the service at the time of the drill are encouraged to participate,
- Families are asked not to enter the premises if an emergency drill is under way, and
- We encourage families to talk to children about their experiences with emergency drills.

Emergencies can arise in a number of circumstances, and we prepare for this by:

- Identifying and managing hazards and risks on a daily basis,
- Having annual risk assessments for child health and safety, potential and medical emergencies, visitors on site, excursions, sleep and rest, and indoor and outdoor environments,
- Having and displaying an Emergency Management Plan, and
- Having and maintaining emergency equipment, including fire safety, first aid and evacuation.

Sun and water safety

You can find more information about water and sun safety in our *NQS2.25 Water, Sun and Heat Policy*

UV radiation from the sun can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer, with infants and toddlers up to four years of age being particularly vulnerable to UV damage. To ensure children at our services are safe, our organisation has SunSmart status, as provided by the Cancer Council NSW.

Our approach to sun safety is guided by the following principles:

- The UV Index is monitored daily, and sun protection measures (seek shade, slip on sun-protective clothing, slap on a hat, and slop on sunscreen) implemented for all children when the UV Index is 3 or higher, including while on excursions,
- Infants under the age of 12 months are kept out of direct sun when UV levels are 3 or higher and their clothing, hats and shade positioning is checked regularly,
- Outdoor learning spaces have adequate shade, and children are encouraged to use them during play,
- UV levels and daily sun protection times are promoted to educators, children and families and are used to plan outdoor experiences, for example minimising time outside during the middle of the day,
- Sun protection is incorporated into learning programs and children are encouraged to take leadership roles in sun protection measures where able, including putting on hats and sunscreen,
- Families are provided with information about sun safety and encouraged to provide sun-protective clothing and hats for their child and demonstrate sun protection behaviours when outdoors, and
- Employees role model sun safe practices by wearing sun-protective clothing and hats and applying SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen when working directly with children outdoors.

To ensure children are safe around water, we make sure:

- Consideration of water hazards is included in all risk assessments, including direct supervision and increased educator to child ratios for water-based activities,

- Regular safety checks include water hazards, and
- Educators have current first aid training, including CPR.

Supervision

You can find more information about supervision in our *NQS2.24 Child Safe Supervision Policy*

We believe that children need safe and secure environments to thrive in their life and learning and that effective supervision is an important part of this. At our services, effective supervision includes:

- Making sure that our indoor and outdoor environments facilitate supervision and that children can't access unsupervised or unsafe areas,
- Including supervision hazards and risk controls in all risk assessments,
- Maintaining required ratios of educators to children and increasing these to manage risks or hazards,
- Where possible, having at least two educators in sight or hearing of children during nappy change and toileting to minimise the risk to children of abuse,
- Making sure educators are trained in active supervision,
- Conducting headcounts of children throughout the day and whenever they move from one space to another to ensure they are accounted for, and
- Having supervision plans for each service that identify high risk areas and activities, placement of educators for supervision, and expectations for active supervision.

Volunteers and students

You can find more information about students and volunteers in our *NQS7.62 Student, Volunteer and Visitor Policy*

We offer opportunities for students from secondary schools, TAFE colleges and universities to undertake practical experience at our services and also engage volunteers for activities like reading and participating in activities and play. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of children:

- All adult students and volunteers must have a current Working with Children Check.
- Children will always be supervised by an employee when students and volunteers are present.



Children's health and wellbeing

Medical conditions

You can find more information about the management of medical conditions in our *NQS2.12 Medical Conditions Policy*

Where a child has a medical condition or food-related allergy or intolerance, a Medical Management Plan or Modified Diet Plan will be developed for the child that will apply across any services they attend.

Please notify us if your child has a medical condition by contacting the Nominated Supervisor or completing *Management of a Medical Condition Form* and/or *Individual Diet Form* (available from Administration).

- Provide us with a medical management plan from a registered medical practitioner, and
- Make sure any medication you have for your child matches what is in the medical practitioner's plan.

We will create a Medical Management Plan and Modified Diet Plan (if relevant) in collaboration with you that will be reviewed at least annually. These include details about your child, their medical condition, medication and dosage, triggers, symptoms, action plans, risk minimisation plans and a communication plan.

Medical Management Plans and Modified Diet Plans, if relevant, must be completed and in place before a child can attend the service.

Administration of medication

You can find more information about the administration of medication in our *NQS2.30 Administration of Medication Policy*

If your child requires medication to be administered, a medication record will be created for each day they attend. This will record the details of any medication that has been administered and will include your authorisation.

Your child will only be able to attend the service once the Medication Record has been created, and correctly labelled medication has been provided.

Medication must match what is on the Medical Management Plan and must be:

- Within its expiry date,
- In its original container,
- With an original label created by a dispensing pharmacist stating the name of the medication, the name of the child to whom medication is to be administered and the instructions for administration, and
- Supplied for every day your child attends.

We may administer medication for asthma or anaphylaxis in an emergency without prior authorisation. If this happens to your child, you will be notified as soon as possible.

Allergies and anaphylaxis

You can find more information about anaphylaxis in our *NQS2.12 Medical Conditions Policy* and the management of food allergies in *NQS2.14 Nutrition and Food Safety Policy*

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction to a substance and, while not common, it is life threatening. While prior exposure to allergens is needed for the development of true anaphylaxis, severe allergic reactions can occur when no documented history exists.

In education and care settings, allergic reactions and anaphylaxis are most likely to be caused by:

- Food, particularly peanuts, tree nuts, seafood, eggs and cow's milk,
- Animals, insects, spiders and reptiles,
- Latex and rubber products, or
- Band-Aids, Elastoplast and products containing rubber-based adhesives.

We follow general risk minimisation strategies which include:

- Providing training for educators that includes anaphylaxis management,
- Ensuring educators and those preparing and serving food are aware of the needs of children with food-related allergies and their food, drink and utensils are clearly indicated or labelled,
- Closely supervising children while they are eating and drinking to ensure they do not share food or utensils or eat food that is not prepared for them,
- Sensitively separating children with food-related allergies from children who have food containing allergens while they are eating or drinking,
- Reviewing ingredients in cooking, craft, or science experiences to ensure they are safe and inclusive, and
- Providing information to families where they may need to modify the food provided for their child if another child has a severe allergy or risk of anaphylaxis.

Where there is a child or staff member with food allergies that may be life threatening, families will be made aware of the specific allergens via signage at the service and asked to consider eliminating these foods from their child's lunchbox.

Managing illness and injury

You can find more information about the management of illness and injury in our *NQS2.11 Incident and First Aid Policy*

Your child may develop signs that they are unwell while they are at our services. This may be a range of symptoms or indications that your child has a fever or infectious disease.

If this is the case, we will keep you informed of any signs and contact you to **collect your child within one hour** when any symptoms or range of symptoms indicate they are not well enough to be at our service. In the event we are unable to reach you, we will call the emergency contact to pick up your child.

Some behaviours which indicate that the child is unwell include:

- Irritable, agitated, fretful, crying, behaviour different to normal,
- Lethargic, quiet, decreased activity,
- Noticeable reduction in appetite or fluid intake,
- An unusual colour, smell or consistency of urine or faeces,
- Rash,

- Breathing difficulty, including coughing,
- Poor colour, pale skin,
- Pain, and
- Sensitivity to light.

If your child is injured while at our services, we will:

- Administer first aid if needed,
- Call emergency services if needed,
- Contact you or an emergency contact to notify you or to arrange collection of the child,
- Provide reassurance and comfort to the child until they are collected or can return to play.

If your child becomes ill or experiences an injury, a *Child Incident Record* will be completed and given to you to view and acknowledge within 24 hours.

We will notify the Regulatory Authority of any serious incident, including,

- The death of a child,
- Where emergency services attended or should have attended,
- Where a child has an injury or trauma and requires urgent medical attention or has an injury, trauma or illness and attended or should have attended hospital, and
- Where a child is missing, taken from the service without authorisation or locked in or out of a service.

Infectious diseases

You can find more information about infectious diseases in our *NQS2.70 Disease Prevention and Immunisation Policy*

If there is an outbreak of an infectious diseases, families will be notified and asked to keep any infectious child at home in accordance with the Exclusion Periods recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/attachments/Exclusion-for-common-concerning-conditions-poster.pdf>

You are required to notify the service immediately if your child or their sibling is diagnosed with an infectious disease, including:

- Gastroenteritis
- Pertussis (whooping cough),
- Poliomyelitis,
- Measles,
- Mumps,
- Rubella (German measles),
- Meningococcal C,
- Diphtheria,
- Haemophilus influenza Type b (Hib), or
- Tetanus.

A child with any of the conditions listed above should be **kept at home** for the prescribed period. Children who are not immunised will be automatically excluded from the service in the event of an outbreak of relevant infectious diseases if advised by the public health officer.

When to keep your child at home

You can find more information about exclusion due to illness in our *NQS2.70 Disease Prevention and Immunisation Policy*

In order to prevent the spread of infectious diseases through interpersonal contact, our services follow the advice about exclusion periods from the National Health and Medical Research Council as shown in the NHMRC Exclusion for Common or Concerning Conditions poster (displayed in services) and Staying Healthy Guidelines.

Please keep your child away from the service if they are unwell and/or:

- If they have symptoms of an excludable infectious disease,
- If they have ear, eye or discoloured nasal discharge or a severe cough,
- If they have a fever over 38°C or have been treated for a fever with paracetamol or ibuprofen within the previous 12 hours,
- For 24 hours from the commencement of antibiotics, and/or
- Until they are symptom-free for 24 hours or 48 hours for gastro-like symptoms (vomiting and/or diarrhoea).

Hygiene

You can find more information about hygiene in our *NQS2.10 Hygiene and Infection Control Policy*

Maintaining an effective level of hygiene is one of the most important and regularly implemented practices in our services. Effective hygiene strategies and practices assist services to protect all persons from, and minimise the potential risk of, disease and illness.

- Services demonstrate to children the hygiene practices which reduce the likelihood of cross infection and explain the reasons for them.
- Services plan experiences that promote basic hygiene awareness and assist children to become competent and independent and develop valuable life skills.
- Children, families and educators are encouraged to wash their hands on arrival and before leaving the service to prevent the spread of germs.
- Additional hygiene and infection control procedures will be put in place if there is an outbreak of an infectious disease in the service.



Food safety and nutrition

You can find more information about food safety and nutrition in our *NQS2.14 Nutrition and Food Safety Policy*

We recognise the importance of healthy eating and safe food handling and storage for the safety, wellbeing, and development of young children. We:

- Ensure children have access to safe drinking water at all times,
- Encourage and support breastfeeding and appropriate introduction of solid foods for infants,
- Provide a positive eating environment that is relaxed and social and reflects cultural and family values,
- Promote the benefits of healthy food and drinks based on the Australian Dietary Guidelines,
- Ensure adequate health and hygiene and safe practices for handling, preparing, and storing food, and
- Manage food-related allergies and intolerances to ensure children are safe and well.

Where food is not provided, we can provide you with information about healthy lunchbox ideas. We ask families to provide:

- Nutritious snacks packed for morning and afternoon tea, for example fruit, dried fruit, crackers, rice cakes, or yoghurt.
- Nutritious lunch, for example a sandwich, yoghurt or salads (left over dinner to be reheated),
- A labelled water bottle with water for your child to access throughout the day, and
- Bottles prepared at home with formula, milk or substitute that are clearly labelled with the child's name and contents – let us know if you would like us to provide you with labels.

Parents who are breastfeeding are welcome to attend services and will be provided with a comfortable space to feed their child.

Where food and drink is provided, we ensure it is nutritious and adequate in quantity and has regard to individual dietary requirements, each child's growth, and development needs and any specific cultural, religious, or health requirements.

- A weekly menu will be made available,
- The menu includes morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea as well as a late afternoon snack as required, and
- Milk or water is offered with each meal.

Please communicate with the Nominated Supervisor in advance if anything on the menu poses problems for your child's dietary requirements.

Physical activity and active play

You can find more information about physical activity in our *NQS2.22 Physical Activity Policy*

River Region Early Education recognises the importance of physical activity for all children and adults in promoting physical and mental health and developing gross motor skills and physical confidence.

We follow the Australian Government (Department of Health and Aged Care) 24-hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years, which is in line with the Early Years Learning Framework.

Age group	Physically active play hours/day	Restraint hours/day	Sedentary screen time hours/day
Infants (birth to 12 months)	Several times	Up to 1 hour	None
Toddlers (1 to 2 years)	At least 3 hours	Up to 1 hour	None
Preschoolers (3 to 5 years)	At least 3 hours (including 1 hour energetic play)	Up to 1 hour	Up to 1 hour

We support the development of children's physical skillset by:

- Providing babies with encouragement and safe areas to practice rolling over, sitting, crawling, standing, and walking,
- Providing regular opportunities for outdoor play in all weathers,
- Providing experiences for children that draw on elements of dance, dramatic play, and creative movement, and
- Talking with children about the human body and how important physical activity is for an individual's health and wellbeing.

We help children grow healthy and develop good habits for life by:

- Limiting the time they spend sitting or lying down, except when sleeping,
- Avoiding sedentary screen-based activities, and
- Spending quiet time with children reading, storytelling, doing puzzles or doing other activities that support their development.

Sleep and rest

You can find more information about sleep and rest in our *NQS2.15 Sleep and Rest Policy*

River Region Early Education has a commitment to providing appropriate and safe opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest, and relaxation. Children will have their own sleep routines which the service will implement in consultation with you and your child.

- Children will be offered the opportunity to rest in an appropriate area under supervision.
- Sleep and rest will be documented, and routines are flexible to meet individual needs.
- If the child is displaying signs of tiredness, they will be provided with the opportunity to rest.
- Children who do not need a rest will be able to participate in quiet activities.

We follow and advocate for the safe sleep practices for babies outlined by Red Nose Australia:

- Always place a baby on their back to sleep.
- Keep a baby's face and head uncovered.
- Keep a baby smoke free before and after birth.
- Provide a safe sleeping environment, night, and day.
- Sleep baby in their own safe sleep space in the parent's room for the first 6 months.
- Breastfeed baby.

We encourage families to:

- Regularly update the service on their child's sleeping routines and patterns and changes to their individual needs,
- Provide specified bedding if required,

- Bring in comfort objects for their child that may help them sleep or rest (the item will be gently removed once the child is asleep if it is a potential hazard and for all infants aged 0-12 months, unless they are being supervised by an educator), and
- Dress their child or provide clothing suitable for sleep and rest (clothing without hoods, cords or ties near the head, no jewellery etc).

Toileting

You can find more information about toileting in our *NQS2.13 Nappy Change and Toileting Policy*

River Region Early Education recognises the importance of ensuring toileting and nappy change routines maintain hygiene standards to minimise the spread of infectious disease, ensure children feel safe and comfortable and are adequately supervised, facilitate positive interactions and support children's independence.

Educators aim to follow the family's lead regarding toilet education for children, so this can occur concurrently at home and at the service.

- Please ensure that an adequate amount of underwear and change of clothes are provided.
- When children commence toilet training, please ensure you provide a disposable nappy for sleep time if required.
- Toileting accidents will be dealt with in a positive manner.
- Educators will at all times encourage children to be independent in their toileting habits and provide assistance as and when needed.
- Educators will be respectful and sensitive to children's dignity and right to privacy while maintaining adequate supervision.
- Nappy changes will be recorded so families are aware of the child's daily routines.



Operations

Opening hours and holidays

The licenced hours of our services are listed below. We are unable to operate outside of these hours.

- Deniliquin Childcare, Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm
- Deniliquin Preschool, Monday to Friday, 8.15am to 3.45pm
 - Optional After Preschool Care from 3.45-5.15pm
- Barham Early Learning Service Preschool, Monday to Friday 8am to 3.45pm
 - Optional After Preschool Care from 3.45-6pm
- Barham Early Learning Service Long Day Care, Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm
- Mobile Service
 - Monday (Pretty Pine) 8.30am to 3.30pm
 - Tuesday (Blighty) 9am to 4pm
 - Wednesday (Wanganella) 8.30am to 3.30pm
 - Thursday (Conargo) 8.30am to 3.30pm
 - Friday (Bunnaloo) 9am to 3.30pm

All of our services are closed for the following Public Holidays (fees are charged for permanent bookings on these days):

- Australia Day
- ANZAC Day
- Good Friday and Easter Monday
- King's Birthday (June)
- NSW Labour Day (October)
- Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day

All of our services close for two weeks over the Christmas and New Year period (no fees are charged for these days).

- Preschool services operate in accordance with NSW school holidays.
- Families will be notified of close down periods and any additional closure days via Storypark.

Closure and opening dates 2025 - 2026	
Thursday 18 December 2025	Last day for children all services
Tuesday 6 January 2026	First day for children - Deniliquin Childcare and Barham Dragonflies
Tuesday 20 January 2026	First day for children - Deniliquin Mobile
Monday 19 January 2026	Barham Preschool school holiday program begins
Friday 30 January 2026	Organisation training - all services closed
Tuesday 3 February 2026	First day for children - Deniliquin and Barham Preschools

Preschool Term Holiday Dates 2025-2026 (Barham and Deniliquin)

Monday 29 September – Friday 10 October 2025	2025 Term 3 break
Friday 19 December 2025 – Monday 2 February 2026	Christmas / New Year break
Monday 6 April - Thursday 16 April 2026	2026 Term 1 break
Tuesday 7 July - Friday 17 July 2026	2026 Term 2 break
Tuesday 29 September - Friday 9 October 2026	2026 Term 3 break

Mobile Term Holiday Dates 2025-2026

Monday 29 September – Friday 3 October 2025	2025 Term 3 break
Friday 19 December 2025 – Monday 19 January 2026	Christmas / New Year break
Monday 6 April - Friday 10 April 2026	2026 Term 1 Mobile break
Monday 6 July - Friday 10 July 2026	2026 Term 2 Mobile break
Monday 28 September - Friday 2 October 2026	2026 Term 3 Mobile break

Childcare Holiday Dates 2025-2026 (Barham and Deniliquin)

Friday 19 December 2025 – Monday 5 January 2026	Christmas / New Year break
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Delivery and collection of children

You can find more information about delivery and collection in our *NQS2.50 Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*

For the safety of children, entry to services is restricted by a keypad located at the entryway of services (other than the Mobile service).

- PIN codes will be given to families at orientation and should be shared with anyone you have authorised to collect your child.
- Do not share codes with unauthorised people, including older siblings.
- Codes will be changed annually and if we identify that a code has been given to an unauthorised person.

You will have authorised on enrolment or during an enrolment update who can collect your child, and you can change this information at any time.

- If someone unknown arrives to collect a child, they must provide photo ID that proves they are authorised.
- Please let us know if someone other than you or another parent will be collecting your child.
- Both parents of a child have the lawful authority to collect their child unless there is a Magistrates Court or Family Law Court order that prohibits this – please make sure to notify us if there is an order regarding your child.
- We can refuse to allow a child to be collected by a person if we feel the child will be at risk.
- On arrival and departure, you or the person collecting your child will need to sign them in or out of XPLORE (see below).

- When collecting your child, please make sure to sign any medication forms, collect medication and help your child collect their belongings.

In the event that a child has not been collected by closing time, we will begin to contact you on the numbers provided.

- It is essential that you keep contact details up to date at all times
- If we cannot contact you, we will begin to contact the people listed as emergency contacts.
- Where no contact has been made and 30 minutes has passed since the end of licenced operating hours, the police will be called.
- A late collection fee may apply for every 15 minutes your child remains uncollected after the end of licenced hours.

Signing in and out

You can find more information about delivery and collection in our *NQS2.50 Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*

Your child must be accurately signed in and out of the service every day they attend. This is a legal requirement, and this information is used for checking general attendance, in emergencies, and for the calculation of Child Care Subsidy.

We track attendance in the XPLOR app:

- Use the XPLOR app on the iPad in the entryway of services or the XPLOR Home app on your phone (you can download it from the App or Google Play stores).
- Add other people authorised to drop off or collect your child by adding a Contact.
- Don't forget to sign your child in at the start of the day and out when you leave.
- You will also have to sign for any days that your child is absent on a day they are enrolled, for example due to illness, holiday or a Public Holiday.
- If there is a power or internet outage, you can sign your child in and out on a printed attendance record that will be provided by staff.

Please make sure an educator is aware that your child is arriving or departing.

Absences

You can find more information about absences and cancellations in our *NQS7.53 Fee Policy*

If your child will be absent for days they are enrolled, you should notify the service through the XPLOR app and/or notify an educator.

- Please give us as much notice as possible of planned absences and contact us immediately if your child is absent because of an infectious disease
- If we have not received notification and your child does not arrive by the expected time, we will try to contact you or an emergency contact to ensure your child is safe and well.

For our centre-based childcare services:

- For planned absences where we are notified by 8am on the previous day, a discounted fee for that day may apply.
- Families eligible for Child Care Subsidy (CCS) can get up to 42 allowable absence days per child each financial year.

- Allowable absences are for days a child would normally attend and get CCS and includes Public Holidays.
- Allowable absences can be for any reason, for example the child is on holiday, and no evidence is needed for any used within the allowable limit.
- Absences and limits can be checked in the MyGov account and in XPLORE.
- If the allowable absence limit is met, additional absences may be applied for and may require evidence – see the Services Australia website for more information (below).
- Where a family has exceeded the limit of any allowable or additional absences, full fees will be charged for any day their child is absent.

<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/child-care-subsidy-if-your-child-absent-from-child-care>

Changes to bookings and cancellations

You can find more information about bookings and cancellations in our *NQS6.40 Enrolment and Orientation Policy* and *NQS7.53 Fee Policy*

If you would like to change the day or days your child attends our services, please make a request in writing to the service or to Administration.

- Changes cannot be offered on a temporary basis, for example to accommodate a holiday.
- Where the service is fully enrolled or there is a waiting list for places, changes may not be able to be accommodated.
- If you need to cancel your child's enrolment, please give us two (2) weeks' notice in writing.

Casual bookings

You can find more information about casual bookings in our *NQS6.40 Enrolment and Orientation Policy*

For our childcare services, individual days may become available to eligible children where an enrolled child notifies the service that they will be absent, for example because of a family holiday. Other families can request to fill one or more casual places if:

- Their child has a current enrolment at any RREE service or at least one parent is an employee of RREE, and the child is not enrolled in school,
- Their child's enrolment record is up to date, including immunisation and medical information,
- They have no outstanding fees, and
- Their child participated in an orientation at that service.

You can apply for casual places through the XPLORE app:

- Priority of access may be applied,
- Normal daily fees apply for casual places and Child Care Subsidy will only apply if the casual place is in a service where the child has a current ongoing enrolment,
- The child permanently enrolled for the place has the priority of booking and so the casual place will be withdrawn with 24-hours' notice if the family of the permanently enrolled child notifies the service that their child will no longer be absent, and
- If the casual place is no longer needed, families need to give 24-hours' notice or full fees will be charged.

Fees and subsidies

You can find more information about fees in our *NQS7.53 Fee Policy*

Fees are reviewed annually by our Board and families will be given at least 14 days' notice of any changes to fees.

Fees are payable on a fortnightly basis, and families can check their account and see an up to date balance in their XPLORE account.

- **Fees must be paid within seven (7) days of invoice for every day a child is enrolled at the service.**
- Fees must be paid in full by the end of the year and fees may apply for late payment.
- Any overpayment of fees or change in fees which creates a credit for a family will be credited to the family's account.
- Payment can be made by Direct Deposit, EFTPOS, Direct Debit (third-party fees may apply), cash (except for gap fees) or through Centrepay.
- A statement of entitlement will be provided every two weeks.

The Australian Government provides assistance for eligible families to help meet the cost of child care.

- Up to date information about Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is provided on the Services Australia website here <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/child-care-subsidy>
- It is the responsibility of families to check their eligibility for CCS, apply through Services Australia, and keep their information up to date.
- Subsidies are paid directly to us which then reduces the fees charged to the family.
- The amount that a family pays is called a *gap fee* and must be paid electronically.

The NSW Government Start Strong program provides fee relief to families with preschool-aged children in education and care services, including preschool, long day care (childcare) and mobile preschool.

- Families must complete a fee relief declaration and consent form to opt in to fee relief (except for Mobile preschool) and Administration will provide this before the start of each calendar year.

For families who are having difficulty paying fees, a payment plan can be created to help pay any overdue fees while maintaining regular ongoing payments. Please contact Administration for more information.

Fee schedule (as of 1 July 2025)

Fees are payable within seven (7) days. Fees are per day unless specified otherwise.

For more information about fee payments, enrolments and wait lists, contact Administration during office hours (Monday to Friday, 8.45am – 3.45pm):

- Address: 364 Whitelock St, Deniliquin
- Phone: 03 5881 2394
- Email: admin@rree.nsw.edu.au

Deniliquin Preschool SE-00007099		
Address: 370 Whitelock St (PO Box 427) Email: preschool@rree.nsw.edu.au Mobile: 0457 812 394		
Age/group/type	With Fee Relief	Without Fee Relief
3 years	\$18	\$72.35
4 to 5 years	\$13	\$67.35
Equity Fee	\$0	\$54.35
Other	Permanent	Casual
After Preschool Care (3.45 – 5.15pm)	\$18	\$23

Barham Early Learning Service SE-00006556 CCS Provider # 190024010X		
Address: 49 Noorong St Email: barhamelc@rree.nsw.edu.au Mobile: 0491 201 588		
Kookaburra and Possums Rooms	With Fee Relief	Without Fee Relief
3 years	\$18	\$72.35
4 to 5 years	\$13	\$67.35
Equity Fee	\$0	\$54.35
Third (or more) day(s) of preschool (CCS applies) 8.45am – 3.45pm	\$93.78	
Other	Per day	
Before Preschool Care (CCS applies)	\$10	
After Preschool Care (CCS applies)	\$25	
Dragonfly Room (childcare)	Per day	
Full day 8am – 6pm (CCC applies all ages)	\$127	

Deniliquin Childcare SE-00007098 CCS Provider # 190012176T	
Address: 362 Whitelock St (PO Box 427) Email: mobile@rree.nsw.edu.au Mobile: 0428 569 050	
Age/group/type	Daily fee (10 hours) including meals
Puggles and Possums (0 to 2 years)	\$146.75

Joeys (2 to 3 years)	\$142.75
Wombats (3 to 5 years)	\$140.50

Deniliquin Mobile Service SE-00014785 CCS Provider # 190018913X		
Address: 360 Whitelock St (PO Box 427) Email: childcare@rree.nsw.edu.au Mobile: 0437 921 204		
Preschool	With Fee Relief	Without Fee Relief
3 to 5 years	\$4.35	\$20.45
Equity Fee	\$0	\$16.10
Childcare (CCS applies)	6.5-hour day (Bunnaloo)	7-hour day (all other venues)
0 to 2 years	\$87.75	\$94.50

Additional fees	
Late fee (late payment)	\$20/week
Late collection fee	\$20/15 minutes
Administration fee	\$30

Additional discounts	
Absence discount	\$10/day
RREE educator discount	20% of gap fee (CCS/childcare) or \$5/day (preschool)
RREE non-educator discount	\$5/day

Deniliquin Toy Library		
Membership type	Annual	6-months
Group	\$120.00	\$70
Family (Non-Duty)	\$72.00	\$50
Family (Duty)	\$48.00	\$30
Other		
Trial (2 months non-duty)	\$20	
Casual	\$10 / visit	

Eligibility for Equity Fee is determined by:

- Low income with current Health Care or Pension Card with the parent's and child's name,
- Identification of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background in enrolment form,
- Identification of home language other than English in enrolment form, and/or
- Diagnosed disability or additional needs with NDIS Plan # or copy of most recent report or assessment.