The Early Learning Centre is an integral part of The Cathedral School’s commitment to providing children with the best possible environment in which to explore, learn and grow.

Children from 6 weeks to school age are able to participate in age-appropriate programs under the watchful eye of professional and caring staff. With an emphasis on learning through play and positive social interactions with peers, children begin developing the framework for a life-long educational journey.

**PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT**

The Cathedral School’s Early Learning Centre provides a safe, caring and Christian environment which fosters and supports the learning and personal development of each child.

Learning is seen as a partnership and shared responsibility between the Centre, family and student. A climate of mutual trust and respect is created through open, positive communication between staff, parents and children.

**DAILY PROGRAM**

As children progress through their early childhood years, they undertake a journey of discovery. Each day in the play-based early childhood program brings exciting new experiences which gradually build their understanding of the world and their place in it, and develop their confidence to participate in this world.

The daily program is structured to include both indoor and outdoor play, group and individual activities, teacher-directed and child-initiated activities, plus supervised meal times and rest time for all children, according to their age and requirements.

**ASSESSMENT AND RATING**

The Early Learning Centre operates an approved service under the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2011. The Centre meets government requirements regarding activities, programming, staff qualifications and child-staff ratios according to the current legislation.

Assessments of the service are conducted by the regulatory authority - the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) - against the National Quality Standard and National Law to ensure that the quality of education and care is being maintained. In the most recent assessment, the Early Learning Centre was rated as ‘exceeding’ in all areas.
**HOURS OF OPERATION**

The Centre is open from 7.00am to 6.00pm. It is closed on weekends and public holidays, and there is a three-week closure around Christmas each year. The dates of the closure depend on when Christmas falls.

**EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK**

The Early Learning Centre offers an integrated play-based program which offers every child the opportunity and the time to play, to discover and explore, to question and predict, to wonder, to imagine, and to make things happen in a personally significant way.

The curriculum in the Early Learning Centre is aligned with the National Quality Framework.

The curriculum documents used include:

- The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, and
- The Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines

The Early Years Learning Framework aims to extend and enrich children’s learning from birth to five years, while the Kindergarten Curriculum is specifically designed to further enrich children’s learning in the year prior to their entry to school.

The Early Learning Centre has six rooms, each catering to a specific age range, in addition to four Kindergarten rooms. The rooms are geared to the children’s stage of development and qualified, dedicated staff provide developmentally appropriate programs designed to nurture each child’s physical, social, emotional, cognitive, spiritual and creative development.

**DISCOVERERS (FROM 6 WEEKS)**

From their earliest days, babies are discovering things about themselves and the world around them. They learn through sensory play in a well resourced environment that stimulates their development. Caring staff follow the necessary routines to ensure a smooth transition for each child from home to the Centre.

**EXPLORERS (FROM 12 MONTHS)**

For toddlers, play is the way they learn about themselves and the world. Through their explorations, they begin to master many fundamental physical, social and intellectual skills and concepts. Qualified staff foster this play in a nurturing environment, giving children the confidence to explore and grow.

**INVESTIGATORS (1 - 2 YEARS)**

Children learn by doing. Children are offered high quality play experiences that support their natural quest to find out ‘why’. The planned activities allow them to investigate new concepts and give them opportunities to make choices and be responsible within the friendly play based program.

**VENTURERS (1 - 2 YEARS)**

As children grow, they continually venture into the unknown. This is how they learn about their world and the people and things within it. The Educational Leaders provide a variety of engaging and stimulating activities to encourage the children to meet challenges, use their initiative and build a healthy self-esteem.

**CREATORS (2 - 3 YEARS)**

The world of play develops into planned and experimental exploring, problem-solving, imagining and creating. As relationships develop with their peers, children are encouraged to make play safe, just and equitable for all participants.

**INVENTORS (2 - 3 YEARS)**

As children develop the capacity to pretend, their imagination enables them to invent a fictional world where they can explore roles and relationships. Through such activities, friendship groups are formed, power relationships are negotiated and life experiences are examined. Such symbolic play is crucial in supporting children’s developing early literacy skills.

**KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM (3.5 YEARS +)**

The Cathedral School Early Learning Centre operates a Queensland Government Approved Kindergarten Program which is an ideal preparation for the school-based Prep year. Cathedral Kindergarten children receive priority entry to Prep at Cathedral the following year, but a separate application is required to be submitted to the school. We strongly recommend an early application to avoid disappointment.

The Kindergarten curriculum focuses on child-centred activities which foster Identity, Connectedness, Wellbeing, Active Learning and Communicating. Working alongside children, qualified early childhood teachers initiate opportunities for them to express their thoughts and ideas, to test their theories and to reflect upon their thinking. The curriculum is emergent and play based and planning is differentiated to ensure that children’s strengths are built upon.

Children may attend Kindergarten for full day or school hours only in a 3, 4 or 5 day program.

Kindergarten entry age is related to the government-regulated Prep entry age (i.e. 4 ½ years at 31 December prior to starting Prep):
Date of Birth | Kindergarten | Prep
---|---|---
July 2013 – June 2014 | 2018 | 2019
July 2016 – June 2017 | 2021 | 2022
July 2017 – June 2018 | 2022 | 2023

**SPECIALIST LESSONS**
The Kindergarten, Inventors and Creators classes benefit from specialist lessons by The Cathedral School teachers in the areas of Music, Physical Education and Christian Education. Kindergarten classes also access the school library and are invited to participate in special activities with the Junior School students.

**RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION**
In keeping with the Anglican ethos and values of The Cathedral School, children in the Early Learning Centre will be introduced to stories from the Bible and will celebrate important Christian events in the calendar (e.g. Easter and Christmas).

**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION**
Parental involvement in the child’s program establishes continuity between home and the Centre. Parents are welcome to visit, contribute to the programs and share in the activities of the Centre.

Open and honest communication between families and Centre staff will provide the best outcomes for your child. The online My Family Portal gives access to information about your child’s program and participation.

**HEALTH AND WELFARE**
The Early Learning Centre is committed to the health and wellbeing of children in our care, their families and our staff. We support and promote Queensland’s immunisation laws, sun safety habits and healthy eating guidelines. We also ensure that the children’s program involves appropriate amounts of physical activity and rest each day.

**HOW TO APPLY**
To register your interest in a place at the Early Learning Centre, please use our online portal. www.cathedral.qld.edu.au/earlylearningcentre.

If you are unable to register online, please contact the Centre for assistance Ph 4722 2093.

Your application will be acknowledged and you will be requested to pay the registration fee to have your child’s name placed on the Wait List.

The position of your child on the Wait List is linked to these factors:

- the child’s date of birth
- the date the application is received
- the family’s connection with The Cathedral School (siblings or other family members at the school)
- the Australian Government’s Priority of Access Guidelines

When there is the likelihood of a position becoming available for your child, we will contact you to:

- attend an interview with the Coordinator
- provide the child’s original birth certificate and immunisation records for sighting/copying
- complete a detailed Enrolment Form
- pay the Confirmation Fee ($75) within 14 days of being offered a place in the Centre.

Most placements will commence from January, but there are sometimes vacancies during the year which may be filled from the Wait List. Places offered in the ELC will be for specific days, and are not transferable.

**TRANSITION TO PREP**
Prep enrolment is secured in your child’s Kindergarten year. However, it is important to reserve your place early. In fact, some of our babies are already booked in for Prep! A separate application is required for school entry. Please contact our School Registrar for an Application Form, or pick one up from ELC Reception. It is never too early to apply!
EARLY LEARNING CENTRE FEES

Valid at 1 January 2018

ENROLMENT FEES

Registration Fee (not refundable) $ 25
At time of application

Confirmation Fee (not refundable) $ 75
On acceptance of a place

DAILY PROGRAM FEES

Level 1 - Discoverers, Explorers, Investigators and Venturers $94.00
Level 2 – Creators and Inventors $90.00
Kindergarten (Long day program) $90.00
Kindergarten (School hours only) $73.00

Fees are set annually and take effect on 1 January, but the School Board reserves the right to change the fees if necessary during the school year. Parents will be advised in writing at least one month before a new fee structure comes into effect.

FEE PAYMENTS & GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE WITH CHILD CARE FEES

The Cathedral School Early Learning Centre is an approved child care provider, so parents can access government assistance to help with the cost of child care. All Australian residents using child care provided by approved providers are eligible for a Child Care Rebate (CCR). In addition, some families may also be eligible for a Child Care Benefit (CCB) which is a means tested income payment, assessed by Centrelink.

Fees are charged for days booked and are applied to parents’ accounts each week. Payments are processed electronically using the bank or credit card details provided by parents. Families can select a weekly or fortnightly payment arrangement.

There are no refunds for booked days that are not used (including public holidays), and we are unable to provide make-up days for your child in place of the days they have been absent.

If you require any further information, please contact the Centre:
Email - elc@cathedral.qld.edu.au Phone - 4722 2093