



Family Handbook

Lifestreamers Childcare is a ministry of Lifestreams Christian Church. The following information should provide you with most of the things you need to know however please feel free to talk to one of our team members if you have any further questions.

Philosophy

Lifestreamers Childcare focuses on providing a high quality service which meets the needs of the families and children associated with it. We believe in the importance of a warm and caring team who work together to provide a nurturing and secure environment where children can “be”.

We have a consistent team across the service that interacts with all children on a regular basis. We desire to promote a sense of “belonging” for our children through encouraging family input into our policies, programs and day-to-day experiences. Our hope is to build a close-knit network of children, families and the Lifestreams team and to foster a community of supportive relationships.

We believe that children “become” by learning through play. We provide a mix of experiences that fosters their curiosity, challenges them to explore, provides opportunity to master skills in their own time, promotes independence, develops the ability to communicate and form strong relationships with those around them. We value the importance of mixed age group play and learning.

We have a strong focus on sustainability and embrace the responsibility to improve our social, economic and environmental performance without impairing future generation’s ability to enjoy the same conditions that we do today. To this end, we will implement strategies to ‘reduce, reuse, recycle and turn-it-off’ so that through our actions the children will also develop a desire to embrace environmental responsibilities.

We believe that God created us all as unique individuals and we respect the cultural, linguistic and social diversity of our community. We aim to foster equity, tolerance and inclusiveness in our children through involvement with a diverse range of people. We believe that community engagement is important as it helps to shape children’s knowledge of the world as well as being and becoming contributors to the world. Our goal is to serve you through open communication, respect, confidentiality, support and trust. Our team has a shared commitment to uphold Christ’s love and compassion in all our interactions with families and children.



Family Involvement

We believe that fundamental to a successful service is the relationship between families, children, educators and management. Here at Lifestreamers, we appreciate that your time is precious however we would strongly encourage you to be involved in the life of our centre. Our programming, planning and policy review is reliant on input from you so if you have any concerns, ideas or suggestions, please speak to a team member about them.

We have an open door policy should you want to look in and see how your child is going. We look forward to working with you to make your child's time with us a positive experience.



Times of Opening

Care is available for children aged 6 weeks to 12 years and we are open from 7.00am until 6.00pm, Monday to Friday. We are closed on Public Holidays and for two weeks over the Christmas period.

Our Vacation Care program, called **BLAST**, runs during the school holidays each year for primary school aged children. Existing enrolments will have first priority for the use of this service. The program will officially run between the hours of 8.00am and 5.00pm and will be open to other children as space permits. If you require longer hours, please let us know and we will book your child in for the Long Day. They will still be a part of the BLAST program but will join the whole centre outside of BLAST times.

Contact Information

The office is attended between the hours of 8.00am and 4.00pm. Any questions or enquiries during this time should be directed to **9313 1600**. If you need to contact us between 7am-8am and 4pm-6pm, we have a line that will go straight to the childcare area. The number is **9313 1308** and is only for drop off and collection instructions etc. and not for general enquiries. Alternatively, you can email us at childcare@lifestreamers.com.au

Social Media

We have a Facebook page you might like to connect with "Lifestreamers Childcare", this will have regular posts about what we are doing in our centre and what is happening in and around our community.

The First Weeks

The introduction into long day care can be difficult for children and parents. Our team recognizes that family needs will vary greatly in the orientation process and individual needs will be met as best we can. Our highest priority is child welfare and happiness when welcoming new families into our centre through the settling in period.

The following outlines some helpful hints on settling your child into care:

- Be sure to familiarize your child with the environment, educators and other children by visiting the centre prior to commencing care.
- Easing your child into half days for the first two weeks is an option we are happy to provide.
- Bring along a favourite toy, blanket or comforter to support your child when they are separating from you or settling to sleep. This can help your child feel more secure.
- Try to talk positively at home about childcare, mentioning the names of educators, other children and fun activities your child might partake in.
- Inform the educators of what your child enjoys such as successful ways of settling them to sleep, foods they like and dislike and so on. This assists educators in getting to know your child.
- When leaving your child it is best to make sure you say goodbye, reassure them they will be alright and you will return later, this helps them to settle.
- At first some children protest strongly while others may take a day or two to realize that you are leaving them and begin to protest after several days. Children soon learn though that you do return and in the mean time they are well cared for.

What to Bring

- A bag for childcare; a small backpack is ideal.
- A broad rimmed, bucket or legionnaire hat. Caps are not suitable.
- A full change of clothing (including underwear) kept in a plastic bag in their backpack.
- Nappies and wipes if required.
- A piece of fruit to share.
- A healthy packed lunch. Please keep in mind that we are a **NUT FREE** service.
- A drink bottle filled with **WATER ONLY** to reduce sugar intake and help protect children's teeth.

Label Belongings

Please ensure all items belonging to your child are clearly labelled with their names. This will assist us in keeping track of your items.

Toys from home

Please do not allow your child to bring personal items, jewellery and toys to the service. Items can be lost or broken and this can be upsetting to children so we ask that these be left at home.

Arrival and Departure

Families are to enter through the Lifestreams Christian Church foyer and proceed down the hall on the left to the glass security door. If you have a swipe, the sensor is on the left hand side about shoulder height. If you do not have a swipe, there is a doorbell up higher on the same side. Once you have entered, please sign your child in and put their bag in the designated area in their room. Encourage your child to place their fruit in the basket and take their drink bottle to the trolley.

If there is a change of routine for your child at pick-up time, please let the team know. Children can become distressed if they are waiting after their friends have gone home and are not prepared. If you are running late, please contact us on **9313 1600**, so that we can reassure your child. The office closes at 4.00pm so if you need to contact us after that, please call **9313 1308**. This number is only to be used for emergencies and for afternoon pick-up instructions.

Children will only be released to the people listed on the enrolment form. Should you require someone else to collect your child, you will need to phone and leave their relevant details. Upon arrival he/she will need to show some form of photo identification.

Swipes

Once your child has started and you have paid your enrolment fee, you will be able to collect a swipe to enter the childcare area. If you arrive to drop off or collect your child outside of office hours then please speak to a team member about collecting a swipe for you. Additional swipes can be purchased for \$20 should you need another one.

When you leave the centre at the end of your time with us, we would appreciate you handing in your swipe to assist us in maintaining a secure environment.

Sign-in and Out

It is a requirement for legal and safety purposes that every child entering the service is signed in and out each day. Children/siblings under the age of 18 are not permitted to drop off or collect children.

Food and Drink

The children will have a snack of fruit for morning tea. All children are asked to provide one piece of fruit that we cut up at the required time. We will have shared fruit time, where children use tongs to help themselves to the variety of fruit on offer.

Children will also need a drink bottle with **water** only. Any other drinks will be put away until the child goes home.

Children will only eat what is packed for them in their lunch boxes. Please send in the foods that they like but no lollies, chocolates, chips etc.

The **Loop Café** prepares nutritious balanced meals that you may order for \$6.00 and is a popular option for our families. You can place an order directly at the café on your way in or out, they are open 8.00am – 2.00pm, Monday – Friday.

The children will be provided with afternoon tea. This will include fruit, water and a snack. From time to time, they will have cooking experiences. The food can be eaten or taken home.

Birthday Celebrations

Your child's birthday is a very special event in their life! If you would like to bring a cake to share amongst the children you are welcome to. All cakes must be **nut free** please. To celebrate your child's birthday we will make a special time during the day to sing happy birthday together with our educators and children.



Daily Programs

Our educators are committed to the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education. The Early Years Framework describes the principles, practice and outcomes essential to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school. The Framework has a strong emphasis on play-based learning as play is the best vehicle for young children's learning, providing the most appropriate stimulus for brain development. The Framework also recognizes the importance of communication and language as well as social and emotional development.

Our educators seek to create positive learning environments and experiences for each child based on their interests and experiences from home. Please make an effort to let our team know what has been happening for your child so we can involve them intentionally in our program.

As Lifestreamers Childcare is a ministry of Lifestreams Christian Church, children will be involved in experiences which may include but not be limited to, Christian grace, prayers, songs and Bible stories.

Our days generally commence with inside play time as children arrive and settle into their environment, from there we head into morning fruit and outdoor play time. We highly value outdoor play and provide age appropriate learning experiences for the children in our outdoor surroundings. After outdoor play we join together in our groups for craft, mat sessions, stories and songs and then lunch, rest & sleep, afternoon tea and more outdoor play as weather permits.

Rest & Sleep

Our rest and sleep routine varies according to individual needs. We aim to make the time relaxed for all children. A mattress with a sheet is provided for each child, you may wish to bring along a pillow or blanket for use during rest time, please ensure it is labelled.

Toilet Training

Please speak with your child's educator about their toileting needs as we seek to maintain continuity between home and our centre. If your child is currently toilet training, remember to pack lots of spare clothes.

Excursions & Incursions

Throughout the year we like to engage with our community through small excursions and incursions. For example, these include walks around the block on which we are situated, song and story times with the elderly at the Berrington Aged Care facility or visits from local community services such as the fire department. Our annual Farm Day where we join with the **123 Soleil French School of Perth** (who are situated on our campus) is one of the highlights of our year! We have a visiting farm animal petting zoo and a bouncy castle. We will always communicate our plans prior to excursions and incursions to obtain your approval.

Communication

We believe the best way to work with you and your child is by keeping lines of communication open. We have several ways in which we offer communication which include emails, phone calls, face to face, letters and those that are outlined in more detail below.

KeptMe

To maintain communication in Long Day Care between you as parent and our educators, regarding your child's interactions within our centre, we utilise a program called KeptMe.

KeptMe is an award winning mobile solution which empowers educators and parents to play a larger part in each child's growth and development.

Upon enrolment you will be connected to KeptMe through your child's room leader. KeptMe is available on mobile app and web platforms.



Newsletters

We aim to produce a monthly newsletter called “**Life Matters**” which we email out to our families and share on our Facebook page. The newsletter features a monthly update from our Manager, birthday notices, information on upcoming events, policy reviews and updates and more. Please do keep an eye out for the newsletter and if you don't receive one speak with our Manager, it may be that it ended up in your junk mail folder.



Suncare

Children are required to wear a broad rimmed, bucket or legionnaire hat and sunscreen when outdoors. Hats will be worn **all year round** for continuity purposes. It is also a requirement that clothing which covers their shoulders and tops of arms are worn. Therefore, singlets, dresses and tops with straps will not be suitable.

Please apply sunscreen to your child before coming each day. We will have sunscreen available next to the sign in desk should you forget at home and we will reapply sunscreen throughout the day as required. If your child requires a specific sunscreen due to allergies etc. please let staff know in advance and provide sunscreen for them. This can be kept in their bag and should be labelled with their name.



Clothing

It is best to send children in play clothes rather than their 'best' clothes as there will be activities such as painting and water play. While we will make every effort to keep their clothes free from paint, accidents do regularly occur while the children are being creative! On hotter days we love a good splash with water and the clothes can sometimes get a bit wet!

Clothing that is easily managed for toileting etc. is encouraged. Please do not put your child in overalls or belts if they are unable to undo them or do them up themselves. The older children will be encouraged to take themselves to the toilet as needed.

It is best to keep in mind what season we are in and dress your child accordingly, if it's cool then please bring along a jacket or jumper, particularly for outside play time.

Staffing

Lifestreamers is licensed for up to 45 children at a time. All staff will be qualified or in the process of becoming qualified. Our educator to child ratios are as follows:

0 – 2 years	1 : 4 ratio
2 years	1 : 5 ratio
3 + years	1 : 10 ratio

The Manager's office is located in the **Lifestreams Christian Church** office hub on the other side of the church foyer. The premises are shared by other groups who use the other rooms in the vicinity of the childcare.

Fees

0 – 2 years	Daily	7.00am – 6.00pm	\$115
2 – 5 years	Daily	7.00am – 6.00pm	\$105
BLAST Vacation Care	Daily	8.00am – 5.00pm	\$80

All new enrolments will have a once off non-refundable enrolment fee of \$45 for Long Day Care and \$25 for BLAST, this includes a security swipe.

Fees are payable on all booked days regardless of whether your child attends or not. This includes sick days, school holidays, public holidays and family holidays. Failure to pay fees could result in a request by Management to remove your child from the service. If you have any problems paying your fees, please see our Manager.

Accounts for Long Day Care children will be issued by email each fortnight and payment is by Direct Debit on the first Monday of the account period. Families are required to set up the Direct Debit on enrolment.

Accounts for BLAST will be issued after the holiday period and payment is also made by direct debit.

Late fees

Lifestreamers Childcare is licensed until 6.00pm each night. Please make an effort to be at the centre prior to this so the team can pass on any messages and be able to leave on time.

Our team work long hours with your children and have their own families to go home to each night. It is important that their time is respected. Children who are collected after 6.00pm will be charged a fee to cover overtime rates for two staff that have had to stay later than their shift. The fee will be \$25 for each 15 minutes or part thereof.

Overdue Fees

Parents/guardians with overdue fees will be encouraged by the nominated supervisor/manager to discuss any difficulties they may have in meeting payments and make suitable arrangements to pay. If this is not done, or the agreed arrangements are not kept, the following procedure will apply:

- after two weeks overdue – a written reminder will be forwarded to the parent/guardian;
- after three weeks overdue – a letter will be sent advising that the place may be cancelled if the account should become four weeks overdue. The letter will include a reminder that parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss payment difficulties and make suitable arrangements to pay with the nominated supervisor/coordinator;
- after four weeks overdue – if no arrangements to pay have been made or kept, the place will be cancelled and family notified.

Centrelink

Lifestreamers Childcare is registered with Centrelink for the purpose of fee assistance. Eligible families will need to register their child with Centrelink for Childcare Subsidy.

Direct Debit

Direct debit is set up on enrolment and is included in the enrolment form. Families are to nominate their desired account and sign the authority. Your account will only be debited the amount owing on the selected date. This is not a set amount and will reflect your usage over the nominated period.

Fees associated with Direct Debit are passed on to the family, they are:

Bank account	Per transaction	\$0.75
Visa/Mastercard	Calculated on transaction value	0.90% + \$0.75
Amex	Calculated on transaction value	3.85% + \$0.75
Failed transaction	Per failed or returned transaction attempt	\$2.75
Claim/Chargeback	Only charged when payment is reversed	\$33.00
Refund	Per refund (credit/debit card only)	\$2.75

Withdrawal

If you are withdrawing your child, we require at least two weeks' (14 days) notice in writing to childcare@lifestreamers.com.au.

Illness

It is inevitable that children will pick up colds, coughs etc. when coming into contact with other children in the childcare environment. While this can be upsetting and worrying for parents and children alike, it does help to build up their immune systems!

Children who are unwell or tired need to be kept at home until they are fully recovered. This helps stop the spread of illnesses to other children and staff. Please email or call if your child is going to be absent. Children who have not arrived by 10am and we have not heard from the family, will be contacted for safety reasons.

If your child becomes unwell during the day, we will call you to come and collect them. Please collect them promptly. If we are unable to contact you, the person listed as an emergency contact will be called.

If there is an outbreak of an illness (e.g. chicken pox) and your child is not immunised against it, you will be asked to keep them at home for the duration of the outbreak, as per our *Health, Hygiene and Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy*, which can be found on our website.

Illnesses (such as gastro, chickenpox, measles, head lice etc.) will be communicated so that families are aware. Please advise us ASAP if your child contracts any contagious illnesses.

Medications

If your child requires medication while in care, a Medication Authority form is required to be filled out and signed by the parent/caregiver. Medication cannot be administered without this written authorization. All medications **must** be given to the educators and not left in your child's bag.

Allergies & Health Management

If your child has an allergy or illness please ensure you inform us of this in the enrolment form before your child starts care at our centre. For allergies including **anaphylaxis** or **asthma**, a letter from your doctor, including an action plan and medication requirements needs to be provided so we can assist in managing the health care for your child.

Policies

All of our policies are available on the website and are required to be read as part of the enrolment process. Any updates throughout the year will be included in emails or newsletters for family reference.

Please be aware that acceptance of your enrolment is subject to your agreement to abide by the guidelines and policies set by Lifestreamers. Please feel free to approach the team if you have any questions and we will do all we can to assist you.

Grievance Procedure

Families may make a complaint directly to their child's **educator**, the **Nominated Supervisor** or **Manager**: (I-Yin Lim) or the **Lifestreams Operations Manager**: (Graham Faulkner).

In order to assist families who wish to contact the Regulatory Authority the contact details are;

Education and Care Regulatory Unit
111 Wellington St
East Perth 6004
Ph. 6551 8333
Freecall 1800 199 383
ecru@communities.wa.gov.au

PO Box 6242
East Perth Business Centre
East Perth 6892