

Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School



Little Grammies Parent Handbook



BUNBURY CATHEDRAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL

LITTLE GRAMMIES PARENT HANDBOOK

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Welcome to Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School

Welcome to Little Grammies – a great introduction to the wonderful School Community that is Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School.

Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School is an independent, Anglican, day and boarding school, which has been offering outstanding educational opportunities to boys and girls from Kindergarten to Year 12 since 1972.

Our thriving and well-respected School is set on 33 hectares of natural bushland, 10 kilometres south of the city of Bunbury.

The School has a proud history of academic achievement, supported by strong and positive educational leadership that promotes excellence in teaching and pastoral care. Students have access to a wide range of co-curricular activities, which enable them to flourish as individuals.



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BCGS Early Childhood Philosophy

We believe Early Childhood is a very special time.

We believe in a time for childhood; therefore, our approach is influenced by best Early Childhood practice. We are guided by the principles of the Early Years Learning Framework and the Australian Curriculum.

We believe in a time for connections; therefore, our global view is shaped by our respect for the diversity, beliefs and welfare of our students. Fostering positive relationships with children, their families and the community, is critical for their success at school. We are united in our vision by forging strong relationships with parents, as we appreciate them as the child's first teacher.

We believe in a time for discovery and wonder; therefore, our classrooms seek to provide a warm, welcoming, safe environment that fosters creativity. We plan experiences which promote connections to nature and our outdoor environment. By listening and responding to children we also provide opportunities for their agency. By interweaving the inquiry and visible thinking processes, students are given the opportunity to develop deeper understandings throughout their learning.

We believe in a time for learning; therefore, our programs aim to deliver an active, collaborative and engaging curriculum by providing authentic learning experiences. We have high expectations for our students and promote a growth mindset. We encourage them to see challenges as opportunities, and value effort and critical thinking.

We believe in a time for children; therefore, we nurture and develop the whole child academically, spiritually and emotionally. We aim to foster resilience by encouraging students to be responsible risk takers. The Bunbury Grammar Family is a community that values time.



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Early Years Learning Framework

The Early Years Learning Framework is a National Early Learning Framework for children from birth to five years. As the early years are a vital time for children to learn and develop, the framework has been developed to ensure your child receives a quality educational program. Educators will use the framework, in partnership with families, to develop learning programs responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities and recognise that children learn through play. The Early Years Learning Framework describes childhood as a time of belonging, being and becoming.

Belonging is the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel they belong because of the relationship they have with their family, community, culture and place.

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

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

Through the Framework's five learning goals, educators will assist your child to develop:

- A strong sense of their identity;
- Connections with their world;
- A strong sense of wellbeing;
- Confidence and involvement in their learning; and
- Effective communication skills.

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. We aim to guide your child in becoming an effective learner through creating an environment that is challenging and stimulating. The overall aim of our program is to help your child develop in all areas necessary for success, now and in later years.



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National Quality Framework

The National Quality Framework is a Government initiative, which sets a National Quality Standard, creating greater consistency for early childhood education and care services across Australia. This initiative aims to improve educator-to-child ratios in services, increase skills and qualifications, and develop national regulations and a quality ratings system, which will help you to make informed choices about the education and care you choose for your child.

Little Grammmies' aim is to exceed the National Quality Standard across all areas of our service. We will develop and maintain a quality improvement plan to show what is happening in our centre, and the actions we will take to achieve this. The plan will look at areas such as educational programs and practice, children's health and safety, physical environment, staffing arrangements, relationships with children and collaborative partnerships with families and communities.

As Little Grammmies is a relatively new service, we have not been assessed under the National Quality Framework. However, our Before and After School Care service has been assessed and received 'Exceeding National Quality Standards' in 4 out of 7 areas, giving the service an overall rating of 'Exceeding'.

For further information in regards to the National Quality Framework, please speak to Ms Brooke Kelly, Little Grammmies Co-ordinator, or visit www.acecqa.gov.au



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The Program

Little Grammies is a Pre-Kindergarten program for 3-year-olds, which operates from the Early Childhood Centre at Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School. Little Grammies is only available to children who have turned 3 years of age at the time of commencement.

The program runs from 9.00am to 3.00pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays (children can attend one or both days each week). Before and After School Care (BASC) is available in conjunction with Little Grammies from 7.00am to 8.30am and 3.30pm to 6.00pm at an additional cost, if required. The School will ensure that the children are safely transferred between Little Grammies and BASC.

Little Grammies provides children and families with an introduction to the School Community and sets the foundation for future learning. School readiness is strongly promoted as children develop self-help skills, independence and self-efficacy. The program aims to provide a rich learning environment that caters for children's development across the physical, cognitive, language, social, emotional and spiritual domains. Learning occurs through planned and spontaneous play experiences that are based on the strengths, interests and needs of each child.

Using the Early Years Learning Framework, educators will listen, watch and talk to your child to continue building on their learning and plan the next steps. Children will have their own portfolio or collection of learning, which may contain photos and work samples to showcase what they are learning. This portfolio is available for parents to view at the end of each term and by appointment with the educators.

At Little Grammies, we also show ongoing learning through daily educational stories, photographs, project work and a program documenting the day's progress. We provide a program that is developmentally appropriate to the needs of the children attending.

The qualified Early Childhood Educator delivering Little Grammies has developed the program in consultation with the Early Childhood Teacher to ensure it provides a logical and smooth transition into Kindergarten. The educator is responsible for creating an atmosphere and environment which is responsive to the needs of each child and the group as a whole, while reflecting the service's philosophy and goals.

The program is balanced with indoor and outdoor learning experiences, quiet and active periods, time for individual educator and child interactions, and individual and group interests, as well as being flexible enough to allow for spontaneity and the unexpected.



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Programs and documentation are put on display to allow parents/guardians to view them and provide feedback and comments, should they wish. Programs reflect cultural awareness, and celebrate special events with the children that reflect cultural heritage and ethnic origins of the children and School Community. Families are encouraged to have input into the program development.

Orientation and Introduction Session

Little Grammies children and parents must attend an orientation session before they commence. This is an individual session with the Early Childhood Educator, the family and the child. To book an orientation session, please contact Ms Brooke Kelly, Little Grammies Co-ordinator (details on page 12).

During this orientation session, children get to know their Early Childhood Educator while exploring the centre's environment and participating in some activities. Parents and/or guardians have the opportunity to meet the Early Childhood Educator for an overview of the program and to ask any questions regarding the program.

First Day

The following tips are designed to help make the introduction into Little Grammies as smooth as possible for you and your child:

- Ensure your child goes to bed early the night before to get a good night's rest.
- Talk to your child about their first day – be positive and keep it simple.
- Aim to arrive at 8.45am for goodbyes at 9.00am.
- You can sit and play with your child before you leave but try not to draw out the goodbye.
- Bring your child's hat with their name on it, which will stay at the centre.
- Bring a named water bottle and a small pillow/cushion for rest time.
- Bring a piece of fruit to share for morning tea and a packed lunch.
- Have a spare set of clothes in their bag.



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Settling into Care

Introducing your child to care can be an emotional time. It is reasonable to expect some tearful goodbyes in the early days; however, there are many ways to assist your child with this transition.

Prepare your child by booking an introduction and orientation session to enable them to become familiar with this new environment. It is also a great opportunity for you to spend time with the educators. Understanding your child's needs and providing an environment that meets those needs is crucial. Our educators play an active role in gathering information from you and your family to create a smooth transition between home and the educational environment.

On your child's first day at Little Grammies, an educator will assist in settling your child. Communication between the parent, child and educator is crucial during transition. We encourage you to participate in our programs, providing an insight into your child's day-to-day activities. You are welcome to spend time in the centre and share those special moments with your child, or phone us during the day to check on your child's progress.

Room details and Routine

Our routines allow times for individual play/learning and small or large group play/learning. Children's language and literacy skills are further developed during these times, as children are involved in storytelling, drama and games. Music also plays a role during these sessions, as children are able to experiment with dancing, singing and exercising their bodies.

Educators provide a range of active and restful experiences, and support children to make appropriate decisions regarding participation. Appropriate physical spaces are made available for children to engage in these experiences.

Little Grammies is equipped to cater for all aspects of children's learning including physical, social, emotional, personal, spiritual, creative, cognitive and linguistic. Children's learning is dynamic and complex and the Centre's environment is specifically designed to accommodate for this.



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Fees and Charges 2023

The cost of the service is \$650 per term for the one-day program and \$1,300 per term for the two-day program; this includes all resources. Parents will be invoiced for each term two weeks prior to the start of the term. Payment must be made before the commencement of each term.

Term start and finish dates for 2023 are shown below:

Term 1 (10 weeks)

Commences Tuesday, 31 January and ends on Thursday, 6 April.

Term 2 (10 weeks)

Commences on Thursday, 27 April and ends on Thursday, 29 June.

Term 3 (9 weeks)

Commences on Tuesday, 25 July and ends on Thursday, 21 September.

Term 4 (9 weeks)

Commences on Tuesday, 10 October and ends on Thursday, 7 December.

Parents are required to confirm two weeks prior to the end of each term that they will be returning in the following term. This can be done directly with the Little Grammies Co-ordinator.

Withdrawal Policy

Withdrawal from the service within a term requires a minimum of two weeks' notice in writing to the Little Grammies Co-ordinator. Application for refund of pre-paid fees must be done in writing at the time of notification of withdrawal and will be forwarded to the Chief Financial Officer for decision.

Absenteeism Policy

If your child is unable to attend a booked session, please contact the Little Grammies Co-ordinator before 9.00am on that day. A significantly extended period of absence due to medical reasons may attract a fee waiver, but will require a medical certificate and must be referred to the Chief Financial Officer.



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Clothing

Children attending Little Grammies are required to wear the School navy blue sports uniform shirt, which is available from the Clothing Shop. They may also wear the School hat. This is not compulsory; however, a hat is required to play outdoors. Children may wear pants, shorts, skirts and shoes of your choice.

Children also require a spare change of clothes in their bag in case of accidents (this can be a shirt of choice). Please dress your child in play clothes that wash easily, so that they may enjoy all activities. In choosing what your child should wear to the Centre, please consider the following:

- They will be working with messy materials such as paint, glue, water and sand so their clothes must be able to withstand a little wear and tear.
- Clothing must provide some protection and be comfortable for both indoor and outdoor experiences.
- Children will be climbing, running, jumping and swinging, so they will need clothes that neither restrict their activity nor reduce their safety.
- Children will need clothes which allow them to develop independence (i.e. pants that can come off easily for toileting).
- Please clearly **name all clothing and footwear**.



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Policies and Procedures

Little Grammies has a number of policies and procedures pertaining to the care of your child. Our policies are located in the Centre's foyer and are available to be reviewed at any time. Below are some important policies that you should be familiar with. For more information on our policies, please speak with the Little Grammies Co-ordinator.

Accidents and Incidents

Our educators take a proactive approach to safety at all times and conduct thorough risk assessments of all play areas so that effective supervision strategies are in place and each child can feel safe and free to explore their environment. All educators employed at Little Grammies hold Senior First Aid qualifications, including asthma and anaphylaxis training. Should an accident or sudden illness occur, educators will immediately commence first aid and, if necessary, you will be contacted to collect your child. In emergency situations, you will be advised of the plan of action regarding further medical treatment. The Centre also has access to the School Nurse.

If, in an emergency, you or your authorised nominee cannot be contacted, the Nominated Supervisor will provide the medical officers with information regarding your child. A team member known to the child will then accompany them to the hospital and stay until you arrive. Full documentation of the incident will be made.

Health and Hygiene

Children and educators are actively encouraged to practise good personal hygiene, as we believe this helps to minimise the instances of illness. We also believe that if your child is ill, the best place for them is to be at home where they can recover faster. If your child presents at the Centre with signs of illness, the Nominated Supervisor may advise that they are not well enough to participate in the service's daily activities. You will then be asked to make alternative arrangements until they are well or the exclusion period has ended.

Should your child become ill, educators will commence observation, documentation and first aid. You may be contacted to collect your child from the Centre and asked to seek further medical advice. It is important that you read the Medication Policy carefully to know the guidelines for educators to administer medication to your child, including Panadol, prescription and non-prescription medication. A list of common infectious illnesses, their exclusion periods, and policies and procedures related to illness and minimising the spread of infectious diseases are available in the foyer.



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Emergency Evacuation

Emergency evacuations, as well as lockdown procedures, are regularly practised and the Centre has individual plans for local emergencies including intruder on premise and bushfire. Fire extinguishers are strategically located throughout the Centre. As part of our fire safety measures, all children in attendance at the Centre are recorded on the attendance sheet. Each child is identified during a fire drill. This is why it is important to ensure that you sign your child 'IN' and 'OUT' of the Centre each day.

Immunisation

As part of our enrolment process, you will be asked to provide details of your child's immunisation status. In the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease it may be necessary to exclude any children who are not immunised for their health and wellbeing. Please refer to our policies on immunisation, exclusion and notifiable diseases available in the foyer.

Medication

If your child requires medication to be administered whilst in care, a medication record must be filled in and signed by a parent. The medication must be in its original packaging and accompanied by a prescription label/doctor's letter (for non-prescription medication) which states who the medication is for and the dosage. Medication must be handed to an educator and will be stored in a locked cupboard. Under no circumstances is any type of medication to be left in your child's bag. Please refer to the Medication Policy for further information.

Confidentiality of Centre Records

We value your privacy. For more information on our privacy and confidentiality policies, please ask your educator for more information.

Sun Protection

At BCGS, we take care to protect children and team members from direct exposure to the sun. Shade structures are maintained and regular maintenance and safety checks are conducted as required, initiated by the Little Grammies Co-ordinator. We recommend that parents pack clothing that will protect children from the sun, including a hat and t-shirts (instead of singlets). Sunscreen will be applied, with written permission from the parent, 20 minutes before going outside. For more information on the Centre's Sun Protection Policy, please ask the Little Grammies Co-ordinator.

Signing in and out

It is a legal requirement that each child must be signed in and out of the Centre by the parent and/or guardian every day they attend. This is particularly important, as these records are used in case of emergencies.



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Contact details

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the program, please contact the Little Grammies Co-ordinator. You will also need to arrange a suitable time for your individual orientation session.

Ms Brooke Kelly

Little Grammies Co-ordinator

Telephone: 0409 028 208

Email: Brooke.kelly@bcgs.wa.edu.au

Kindergarten

Please note that enrolment into Little Grammies does not guarantee you a place in Kindergarten at Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School. If you would like an Application for Enrolment form for this purpose, or to arrange a personalised tour of the School, please contact our Enrolments Office on (08) 9722 6004 or email enrol@bcgs.wa.edu.au