**Child Care**

**Information**

The Tongala Community Centre Inc (TCAC) Committee of Management is the Licensee of this centre. The TCAC Coordinator is the responsible person for the operation of the child care centre.

Care is provided by two Early Childhood Educators and additional staff are employed as required. Our staff hold current Working with Children and Police Checks and work within the Children’s Services Regulations.

**Philosophy**

The aim of the centre is to provide an inclusive environment of social interaction for children up to 6 years of age. Working in partnerships with families, each child’s individual needs are taken into consideration during planning and programming.

**Objectives**

* To provide a warm, friendly environment where children can feel safe and secure to play and interact with other children while developing their language, social, emotional, physical and cognitive skills.
* To provide an affordable service which is accessible to families within the local area.
* To provide a quality program appropriate to the individual child’s age and culture.
* To provide the primary caregivers of young children the opportunity to participate in various activities or courses.
* To review the program and its operation on an ongoing basis, in relation to the families who use this service.

**Standards**

TCAC Child Care operates in accordance with the Children’s Services Regulations 1998. A copy of these regulations is available at the centre for your perusal. Our program is appropriate for development and cultural awareness.

State and Federal legislation states that no eligible child shall be discriminated against.

**Activities**

Children are encouraged to explore a wide range of materials and gender inclusive activities. These include

* Music and dance (movement, finger plays, singing, actions).
* Art and craft - cutting, pasting, painting, printing, collage, modelling, construction).
* Creative play - role playing, building blocks, jigsaws.
* Home corner - dress-ups, cooking.
* Outside play - sand, swings, games, water-play.
* Story-telling - listening and telling.
* Group activities.
* Quiet corner

We recommend that you dress your child in comfortable ‘messy play’ clothing to allow for participation in these activities.

**Program, planning and evaluation**

Our program is designed to meet the social, emotional, physical, cognitive language and cultural needs of children attending the centre. There is a basic routine that, along with the program, is flexible to children’s individual needs.

A weekly program is displayed on the notice board in the entrance to the centre for parents and guardians to see. Please see a staff member if you have any suggestions or concerns regarding any activities.

**Enrolments**

An enrolment form must be fully completed before your child may be left for a session. Any allergies must be made clear to staff, including food, medications or materials.

Child care is available for three sessions per week. We are a registered Restricted Service Childcare Centre and can accept up to twenty children at each session. All bookings are at the discretion of the Committee of Management.

**Session times**

Wednesday 9 am to 2 pm

Thursday 9 am to 2 pm

Friday 9 am to 2 pm

**Arrival**

Parents dropping children off are required to sign and complete the attendance book - providing the name of your child and time of entry, and to pay for the session.

**Children must not be left for a session prior to 9 am**

Insurance and other legal considerations do not apply before this time. Staff are also busy preparing activities and arranging bookings and cancellations at this time.

**Departure**

Before departing, parents must sign and record their child’s departure in the attendance book.

Please note each session finishes at 2 pm each Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Once again insurance and other legal considerations do not apply after 2 pm.

**Booking procedure**

Bookings are made weekly by placing your child’s name on the booking sheet in the entrance. There are separate sheets for each session. Bookings can also be made by telephoning the centre.

**Waiting list**

If a session is fully booked please place your child’s name on the waiting list, we will contact you if there are any cancellations. If your child is on the waiting list and does not get into that session, then staff will automatically book them in for the following week.

**Cancellations**

If your child is unable to attend a session, we ask that you please cancel as soon as possible, otherwise a fee may be charged.

**Fees**

Please refer to the fee policy attached.

Fees are determined by the Coordinator and the Tongala Community Activities Centre Committee of Management. Every endeavour is made to keep fees as affordable as possible.

The fee for the session is to be paid on the day of attendance. Parents and carers experiencing difficulty in payment of fees may contact the Coordinator at the Tongala Community Activities Centre to discuss an arrangement for payment of fees.

The Committee of Management reserves the right to withdraw services for non-payment of fees. As well as the right to charge for non-attendance when reasonable notification is not provided.

**What to bring**

***Bags***

Please send alonga bag withyour child’s name clearly labelled on it. It should contain a change of clothing in case of accident, as well as any nappies, creams or special requirements**.**

***Hats and coats***

Please provide a hat for your child relevant to the particular season. We will endeavour to provide outdoor play for all sessions, weather permitting, and a coat may also be advisable for colder days.

***Lunch and snacks***

Please send along a healthy snack for the session, preferably something they are able to manage themselves. (eg fruit, cheese and biscuits, yoghurt). As we encourage healthy eating, please do NOT send your child with chips, lollies, juices or any other junk/sometime foods.

**Drinks**

We will provide your child with water to drink. If your child cannot manage a cup, is still having a bottle, or has special requirements, please let staff know.

**Clothing**

The children are encouraged to get involved in activities and will best learn by their own experimenting. Staff take care to protect the children’s clothes by providing smocks, but sometime accidents still occur. We encourage you to send your child in easily washable, casual and comfortable clothes that allow for freedom of movement, and independence when going to the toilet. Please NO THONGS as they are dangerous on outdoor climbing equipment.

**Evacuation procedures**

Evacuation procedures have been developed in the case of emergency, to ensure the safety of all children, staff and visitors. These are displayed at the front entrance.

**Behaviour management**

Unacceptable behaviour is addressed with the child at the time of occurrence. The child will be taken aside and spoken to regarding their behaviour and its consequences. The child is asked not to repeat that behaviour and returned to their present activity. Should further occurrences incur during a short period the child will be removed from that activity, given a book to read, and returned to the activity when calm.

**Commitment to child safety**

The Tongala Community Activates Centre Child Care is committed to child safety. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our policies and procedures.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child’s safety, which we follow rigorously. Our organisation is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks. Our organisation has human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers. Our organisation is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.

We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

**SunSmart policy**

* The centre will require children to wear hats that protect the face, neck and ears whenever they are outside.
* Children who do not have their hats with them will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun.
* Children will be encouraged to use available areas of shade for outdoor play activities.
* It will be ensured there are sufficient shelters and trees providing shade in the outdoor area.
* SPF30+ broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen should be applied by parents before a session.
* Learning about skin and ways to protect skin from sun will be incorporated into program activities.
* Staff and parents will be provided with educational material on sun protection.
* Staff will act as role models by
	+ Wearing appropriate hats and clothing outdoors.
	+ Using SPF30+ sunscreen for skin protection.
	+ Seeking shade whenever possible.

**Illness**

**How sick is too sick?**

Like adults, children sometimes wake in the morning wishing they could have a day off from the usual routine. Later, again like adults, by the time breakfast is over, they are feeling better and are ready to face the day’s activities.

**On occasion, however, children should stay at home**, in their own interest and the interests of the other children.

You should keep your child at home if he/she has:

* A high temperature in the morning, or feels feverish,
* Signs of conjunctivitis – red and/or inflamed eyes with any discharge.
* Any rash or skin irritation you cannot identify.
* Impetigo eg ‘school sores’.
* Diarrhoea.
* Been vomiting during the past 24 hours.
* Is unusually tired, pale, irritable or lethargic.
* Has an eye, ear or throat infection and is on antibiotics. Your child should stay at home until he/she has had the medication for at least 24 hours.

**If you are not sure, please phone the centre.**

**Infectious and communicable diseases**

Infectious and communicable diseases have regulated isolation and quarantine periods. Children are unable to attend child care until the required period has passed.

**Immunisation**

From 1 January 2016, all parents and guardians seeking to enrol their child at an early childhood service in Victoria must provide evidence that their child is:

* Fully immunised for their age OR
* On a vaccination catch-up program OR
* Unable to be fully immunised for medical reasons.

The ‘No Jab No Play’ law applies to all childhood education and care services in Victoria including Occasional Childcare.

**Parents must notify staff if their child has contracted an infectious or communicable disease. Any incidence** of **head lice** should be immediately notified to staff.

**Complaints**

If you feel you have a genuine concern regarding Occasional Childcare please contact:

* Tongala Community Centre Coordinator – Deidre Madill 0437 469 858
* Tongala Community Activities Centre Inc President (03) 5859 1268
* Department of Human Services, Children’s Officer (03) 5434 5555
* Loddon Mallee Region, 37 Rowan Street (PO Box 513), Bendigo 3552.

**Policies**

Our child care policies are available at TCAC, our child care centre and on our website [www.tongala.vic.au](http://www.tongala.vic.au) .

* Complaints Policy
* Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
* Child Care Enrolment Policy
* Behaviour Guidance Policy
* Sun Protection Policy
* Celebration Food Policy
* Fire Policy
* Emergency Management Plan
* Anaphylaxis Policy
* Hazardous Materials Policy